

May 15, 2024

To Mayor and Council of The Town of the Blue Mountains:

Moreau Park is an important part of our community. For over 50 years it has been the place our children can learn and play baseball. We are concerned about the Public Survey Report that is to be presented to Council on May 21, 2024 and feel that the report should not be accepted until the town has completed an investigation into all the facts concerning Moreau Park and not just uninformed opinions.

It should be acknowledged that the facilities at Moreau Park, with the exception of the dog park, were all community funded and community built. Most amenities were built by Pete Moreau, the Beaver Valley Athletic Association and the Beaver Valley Kinsmen. Moreau Park was a baseball diamond first. It is the only baseball facilities we have in our town. It took a lot of time and money from our service groups to create Moreau Park. The Lennox diamond was built by the Beaver Valley Kinsmen as a memorial to Bill Lennox and has a plaque bearing his name and picture. The Moreau baseball diamond, a tribute to Pete Moreau, who spearheaded our first baseball diamond, proudly displays memorials to Bill Lennox, and the youth we lost in a tragic car accident in 2007, Andrew McKean, Michael O'Hara, Drew Perry, and Michael Flemming.

The Staff Report states that respondents are concerned that the baseball diamonds are underutilized. There are currently 145 children playing on 10 different teams enrolled in the BVAA's baseball program. The Clarksburg Blues, our senior men's team has over 20 participants on their team. On Tuesday, May 14, all three diamonds were in use, with teams having to split their practice times on the BVAA and the Lennox diamond. Each diamond had one team from 6:30 pm – 7:30pm and the second team from 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Five teams were sharing three diamonds, which cannot be considered underutilized. Anyone who goes past the baseball diamonds on a weeknight (around 7 PM), would see all three diamonds being used by many different aged children and adults. Where would our youth practice and play baseball if you eliminate any of our ball diamonds. Baseball diamonds are primarily used in the evenings and on weekends. During the day most children are in school and most parents at work. The baseball diamond use is very similar to the soccer field use and the ice surface use in the arena, all are seasonal, all are used primarily by the youth in our community, all are used primarily in the evenings and on weekends.

Having three diamonds in the same park allows parents with more than one child to be present for different age groups. It allows more diverse practices as coaches can have more varied drills on different diamonds. As the diamonds are different sizes it allows the BVAA to easily accommodate all age groups in their baseball program. Running baseball tournaments at Moreau Park benefits both minor baseball and the community as families that travel to Thornbury for the tournaments often stay in the area for the whole weekend. Having three diamonds in a single location is key to being able to run tournaments.

Our baseball facilities at Moreau Park do not include any batting cages or bullpens. The ball players have to warm up in the space available between the baseball diamonds. There is not enough room there to support a paved walking path. A paved path would create a hazard for the players who usually use the grassy areas. It would also create a hazard for anyone walking in the area as they could easily be hit with a stray or foul ball.

It does not make sense to be considering relocating one or more of the baseball diamonds to make room for new amenities. If the town wishes to create new amenities e.g. a splash pad, a pool, a bike park, etc. it would be more cost effective to put the new amenities in a different location, rather than moving existing structures. For example, Bayview Park would be a much more logical place to locate a splash pad or pool, people already swim there as it is on the bay. There would be much more room for a paved walking path at Tomahawk around the soccer fields. Tomahawk would also provide more space for a bike park.

We feel that it is important for the town to include all the important information in the report about Moreau Park before the report is accepted by Council. This would include input and discussions with those who participated in building these facilities, those who have memorials to family members at the facility and those who currently run programs and use the facilities. Those who use the baseball facilities the most, the BVAA and the Clarksburg Blues should be in talks with the Town to discuss their usage of Moreau Park and how these new designs would affect their programs. Currently the Town has not entered into any discussions with these group regarding the Moreau Park Revitalization proposals. The Council members would benefit from a visit to Moreau Park on a week night so they can see how the park is utilized, before accepting the report on revitalization and proceeding with any further plans.

Thank you,

Ron and Cindy Lennox

Brother of Bill Lennox

Members of this Community since 1960 and 1996

BVAA Members

Previous Kinsmen Members

Previous Member of the Clarksburg Blues

Parents and Grandparents of Baseball Players