Mahone Bay Youth Soccer Association

Presentation to Public Meeting [July 5/07] re Town Council's Proposed Development

Plan for Old School Field and adjacent Woodlands

Let's Build On Our Strengths: It's The Only Game in Town!

- The Mahone Bay Youth Soccer Association is registered and incorporated under the Societies Act. Its registered address is in the Town of Mahone Bay. It is proud to be a Mahone Bay based organisation, and uses the Mahone Bay name for all its competitive teams, in the South Shore and Nova Scotia Provincial leagues.
- The Club has a duly elected Board and proper By-laws as required by the Societies Act.
- The Club is huge by Town and Town area standards. It's the Town's biggest youth and or recreational organisation. It's bigger than CBL. It's bigger than the Swimming Pool.
- **In fact it's the only game in Town: the club is the only organisation in town committed to training young people in a team sport, and fielding teams under the banner of Mahone Bay.**
- **There is no ball club. There is not even a ball team playing under the name Mahone Bay. There's no Mahone Bay based hockey club…there's no lacrosse. There a swimming pool and there's a tennis club.**
- **WE SHOULD BE BUILDING ON THAT ONE STRENGTH…..NOT PUTTING IT AT RISK**
- It has over 170 registered players, male and female, from the town and surrounding areas. In the Town itself over 50% of the 4 to 14 year olds [the age groups the club presently caters for] living in the Town play with the club.
- The club has programs for the following age groups: U-14, U-12, U-10, U-8, minis and preschoolers.
- The club has competitive teams as follows: U-14 boys, U-14 girls, U-12 boys, U-12 girls, U-10 coed-all playing in the Tier 2 South Shore District League. There is also an Under 14 boys Tier 1 team playing in the provincial league.
- By 2009 the club will have two U-16 teams, and by 2011 U-16 and U-18/Senior teams. It will have these teams just as surely as elementary school kids become junior high kids and junior high kids become senior high kids.

Fields

- The club is already using **three** fields
  1: the Old School field: used for its U-14 tier1, U-12 boys, U-12 girls, U-10 coed games and practices.
  2: the Bayview School field: used for the U-14 boys tier 2 and U-14 girls tier 2 games and practices. When the Bayview school field is too wet, these games and practices are switched to the Old School
  3: The ball field at Jubilee Park: used for U-8s and the younger groups.

- **The Old School Field** is the club's best quality and most used field. It is one of the best soccer fields on the South Shore. **It is the club's flagship field**.
  The Soccer Club regards the Old School field as indispensable Town recreational infrastructure. It has been used for recreation for decades. It has had town and community money spent on developing it. The Soccer Club has spent thousands of dollars on it for annual aeration, lime, fertilizer, and sod.
- **The Jubilee Park ball field** is not a soccer field, and, with its fences, can only be used for mini soccer. It cannot be used for full field soccer.

- **The Bayview Field** is not a Town field or even a school board field. It is privately owned. Bayview is a P3 school, privately built. The soccer field is mediocre, was poorly built [on a swamp] and has serious drainage problems. The soccer club has negotiated to use it for its two U-14 tier 2 teams on condition we don't use it when it gets wet. At any time, the owners can deny the Soccer Club use of the facility.

The "go and use Bayview" fix has no credibility: it ignores the actual facts.

The Minimum Requirement for The Mahone Bay Soccer Club to function is two full sized fields available on a daily basis.

That's why the present Town Council Proposed Development would be a disaster for the Soccer Club.

If the Old School Field is lost, the Soccer Club could not continue its present programs, let alone cater for its future teams.

The developer, Mr. Youden, has no plans to replace the field his development would take away, and The Town Council has provided no replacement in the development plans it has approved in principle.

Build on Strengths **Mahone Bay a Centre for Recreation**

The Soccer Club has been a Mahone Bay success story. Not only does it provide for recreation and fitness for young people in the Town, but it brings adults and young people from outside. The Tier 1 team brings soccer opponents-their players and parents-from all over the province. The tier 2 teams bring in soccer opponents-their players and parents- from all over the South Shore. **It's soccer's Wooden Boat Festival**.
It's a Mahone Bay Institution 4 home games per week all youth age group
two/teams per game= min. 30 players say 35 brothers/sisters/parents/grandparents etc
that's 140 visits per week times 15 wks= 2100 person visits to Mahone Bay for soccer games, not counting practices

LET'S BUILD ON OUR STRENGTHS

The Mahone Bay soccer club plans to offer programs from pre-schoolers to men and women-recreational and competitive.

A development proposal for the town should not cut back on an existing recreational facility that is essential to existing programs. The Old School field is essential to the Town's soccer club, and no credible, realistic and imminent alternative has been offered or planned.

Alternatives

Later on in this meeting, the Soccer Club will be asking for two realistic alternatives to be acted on by Town Council.

The Soccer Club has come to this public meeting in good faith. The Town Council has asked for input on alternatives. The test for council is if they will deal with the alternatives with an impartial, open mind.

Submitted by Bob Sayer on behalf of the Mahone Bay Soccer Association July 2007