

Wednesday, September 28, 2011

GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING UPDATE

Senior Parking Available October 3rd!

Middle School Interscholastic Athletic Program to Begin Week of October 3rd

Site Status Recap:

West (back) Parking Lot – Over the past six weeks, the progress in the West lot has included the removal of all soil piles, according to approved plans, and cleaning of the asphalt, which was tested and not found to be contaminated. The Town is currently implementing the Interim Remediation Measures (IRM) approved by the EPA, DEEP and DPH, which will allow access to the full lot. The IRM includes installing a fence around the West lot to limit access to contaminated soil between the lot and Fields 2/3/4. This work is expected to be completed this week, weather permitting. When done, the lot will be open for public use, including senior parking beginning Monday, October 3, 2011.

Fields 6 & 7 (Turf) – Approved interim remediation efforts will begin this week for fields 6 & 7. This will include removing shallow soil (the top 6 inches) and disposing of the soil at a permitted facility. Please note that workers will be wearing Tyvek suits (white body suits) and gloves. This will prevent the workers from contacting the soil directly, and will help to keep their clothes clean. Weather permitting, it is expected that fields 6 & 7 will be open for practice and games in mid to late October.

Fields 3 & 4 (Turf) – We will begin installing fencing around PCB areas surrounding fields 3 and 4 this week. Interim remediation plans will also be prepared to address these areas; these plans will be submitted to the EPA, DEEP and DPH for approval. Weather permitting, it is expected that fields 3 & 4 will be open for practice on October 17th.

Fields 2 & 5 (Grass) – Interim remediation plans proposed for field 2 include removing soil from a small area of shallow soil contamination. This plan, which would allow for fall field maintenance to be completed before the winter arrives, is being submitted to the EPA, DEEP and DPH for approval. At field 5 the results of testing of shallow soil show no PCBs present in the field area and low levels of PCBs (less than 1ppm) in the grass covered outfield. Therefore, a request will be submitted to the regulators to open field 5 for use.

Environmental Study Status Recap:

Project Management: The Town Department of Public Works (DPW) is now overseeing the interim remediation measures planned and the long-term environmental study and remediation for the project. DPW has hired AECOM, an environmental consulting company, to be responsible for managing the project and leading the environmental study and remediation efforts. AECOM has a long history of working with the Town on important environmental remediation and protection projects.

Immediate Next Steps: The immediate focus is on completing the necessary interim remediation measures so that the west parking lot can be opened, competitive play on fields 6 and 7 can be resumed, practice on fields 3 and 4 can be resumed, and fields 2 and 5 can be opened for routine fall maintenance.

A comprehensive environmental study of the soil to support the MISA project will begin in October. A large rig will be used to drill down beneath the ground surface to collect samples. This drilling will be done through the parking lots at the High School. The work will be performed on the weekends (in order to limit interference with parking during the week), and will commence this Sunday (10/2/11). The work will be limited to the daytime hours, so as to minimize any noise impact to the community.

Public Health: As described by the DPH at our public meeting, to be exposed to health risks associated with PCBs, one must come into contact with the material (i.e., directly touching it, breathing it, or ingesting it). The potential risks will also vary by individual depending on how often the contact is made, the general health of the individual, age, etc. Areas of potential environmental concern will be fenced (thus isolating people from contacting the materials) until they are “cleared” for use by EPA, DEEP and DPH.

Middle School Interscholastic Sports Program:

The Middle School Interscholastic Athletics program will begin with tryouts and practice the week of October 3, 2011. The restoration of field #1/Cardinal Stadium and the imminent return of fields 6 & 7 for high school games, coupled with approved access to some Town fields, has provided the necessary space to begin to run the middle schools' program. Please see the middle school web sites for specifics on the times, dates, and locations for tryouts, practices and games.

Ongoing Communications:

Public Updates will continue on a monthly basis at a minimum, and more frequently as needed. The Public Updates are posted on the GPS Web Site, and are sent via email and/or Parentlink to GPS families, GHS neighbors, community officials, and the local media.

Also, the Town of Greenwich and AECOM will develop a Public Participation Plan (PPP). This plan will outline our communications and outreach program for the project.

For all information requests, please contact:

Kim Eves, Greenwich Public Schools Director of Communications
203-625-7415 or kim_eves@greenwich.k12.ct.us

Acronyms:

DEEP = CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
DPH = CT Department of Public Health
DPW = Town of Greenwich Department of Public Works
EPA = US Environmental Protection Agency
MISA = Music Instructional Space and Auditorium
PCB = polychlorinated biphenyls