

To the County Council:

Please do not substitute the artificial turf at North Potomac Community Center (NPCC) with grass. If you do, there will not be a suitable place to play outdoor soccer from December to March every year because the Montgomery Park soccer fields are all closed during those months. Outdoor fields are the best place to play to help avoid respiratory illnesses like Covid. Right now, the NPCC field is used by a lot of soccer players on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. The Rec. Dept. has the registration information that shows high weekly usage all year. In addition, the Rec. Dept. uses NPCC on Saturdays for a Women's 25+ league and on Sundays for a Men's 65+ league for their spring and fall seasons.

If the County wants to continue to offer soccer leagues, then the County will need artificial fields so the leagues can start playing in March to avoid the excessive July heat we have been experiencing. This year we are starting the 55+ league season in March, which is three weeks earlier than usual, at NPCC to try to avoid playing in excessive heat. Lastly, a level field like NPCC is a safe place for players to play. I have witnessed two players suffer ACL knee injuries when they stepped in divots on the sometimes-bumpy grass fields at Avenel Park and Laytonia Park. Thank you, Otto Gonzalez (a Mont. County resident since 1991 and participant in Montgomery Rec soccer since 1996).