



## **Future of Turf Fields at EBU**

For some time, EBU has been considering converting one or more of our grass fields into artificial turf. Such conversion would be a major investment, one that must be fiscally sound and without the potential to negatively affect future Club operations. It is also important that the investment benefit all Club players, whether recreational, academy or select. The Club is in a strong financial position and, after careful consideration of all of the above factors, we believe the time is right to take the first steps necessary to make EBU turf fields a reality.

Recently the Club formed a Turf Field Exploratory Committee for the purpose of evaluating the specific pros and cons of undertaking this endeavor. One of our club members, civil engineer Adam Artz, generously offered his time and company resources to perform a feasibility assessment. The outcome of the assessment was very positive, and there are a number of locations at Voigt Soccer Park where grass fields could be converted to artificial turf.

We've also had a member attorney review our agreements with the City of Brookfield as well as applicable city and state ordinances and regulations, generously done "pro-bono" at no charge to the club. We would need to work closely with the City and gain approval for any enhancements to the soccer park, but the initial attorney review concluded that a turf field(s) would be possible pending approval and funding.

As with all clubs in the area, we've experienced a very difficult year with the wet Wisconsin weather resulting in many canceled or rescheduled practices and games. One of the major benefits of an artificial turf field is that its usage is not affected as dramatically by inclement weather. Because of better drainage and the absence of soil, artificial turf fields are ready for play after (or even during) a weather event much sooner than a natural grass field might be.

The durability of turf also means that the potential exists to play more games, more often. Where a natural grass field might need to be "rested" so that maintenance can be performed between games, an artificial turf field does not require this. A turf field(s) would also give us the benefit of playing outdoors for a much longer period of the year.

I've had many conversations with EBU's Director of Coaching, Joe Luedke, and he strongly believes that a turf field(s) is necessary to maintain competitive equality with other area clubs, the majority of which already have access to turf fields. Clubs with turf fields enjoy the advantages of fewer disruptions to player, parent, coach and staff schedules, more practices and closer adherence to coaches' planned training regimens, and increased flexibility in scheduling and rescheduling games. We believe EBU players and parents deserve those same advantages.

It is an exciting time for the Club. I'm confident that turf field(s) will help to take us to the next level and provide many benefits for years to come. However, we will need the support and help of our members and the community to achieve our goal. Volunteer participation, fundraising, individual donations, and corporate sponsorships are all necessary to make a project of this scope possible. It is an aggressive timeline, but our goal is to be playing on the new field(s) in the Fall of 2020.

Please email me directly if you would be willing to undertake a role in bringing turf field(s) to EBU. We need assistance in the areas of marketing, fundraising, communications, administration, legal, finance, and construction. Even if you don't have a background in any of these areas, we would welcome any help you would be able to provide. I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

Rich Waple  
EBU President

[Rich.waple@elmbrookunited.com](mailto:Rich.waple@elmbrookunited.com)