

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 12

**...and the rest of
the story****To the editor,**

In his rush to assign blame for the defeat of his “pet project,” the Granite Knolls sports complex, Supervisor Grace conveniently forgot to mention a few facts, facts that don’t exactly fit his one-sided narrative.

For starters, there is absolutely no community consensus—nor has there ever been one—that a major sports complex should be built at Granite Knolls. I should know. I was supervisor in 2010 when the property was purchased. Sure, there was “talk” about a future sport complex, but there’s a difference, a big difference, between “talk” and a consensus to

move forward on a “dream.”

In 2010, when the Granite Knolls property was purchased, the only plan for its use was to spend up to \$25,000 to clean up what had been a pre-existing ball field so that a small portion of the new park could be used, on a limited basis, for two “practice fields.” An active sports complex wasn’t on anyone’s radar, not even the Recreation Commission’s.

At this point in time, I’m not for or against creating a sports complex at Granite Knolls. I’m FOR having a community-wide dialog about whether the community needs, wants or can afford another Legacy Field, and if so, is Granite Knolls the right place for it. (Could the narrow road, with no shoulders, safely handle two passing SUVs?) Even many of the parents I’ve met whose children participate in the sports leagues question the need for more fields. As one mother said to me recently: Why don’t we do a better job of taking care of the fields we already have instead of building new ones?

Taxpayers shouldn’t be bullied into supporting someone else’s pet project.

There’s a second important fact that Supervisor Grace doesn’t like to talk about, and that’s what a new sports complex might cost taxpayers. Mr. Grace keeps saying that Spectra will be building the fields at no cost to the Town. But think about what he’s not telling us.

Exactly how much money will Spectra really put into the project? There’s nothing in writing. Will the company pay for the extensive storm water infrastructure that will be needed to prevent flooding and icing on Stoney Street? Will the company build the access road to Town standards? What will it cost the Town to finish off the 90’ baseball field? What about bathrooms? And what will it cost taxpayers, year after year after year, to maintain the complex?

There’s a time and place for wishful thinking and a time and place for hard reality. Sadly, all too often, Supervisor Grace focuses on the former and while completely ignoring the latter. We need Town Board members who know how to balance the two extremes, communicate with their constituents, and who don’t rush ahead with a project before all the

environmental impacts have been satisfactorily addressed.

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