

February 4, 2021

Honorable City Council President Joseph P. Lopes
133 William Street
New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740

Dear City Council President Lopes,

We, the undersigned, are submitting this letter concerning the future status of the Whaling City Golf Course as it relates to the proposed advanced manufacturing campus. Our recommendation is to keep an 18-hole full length golf course configuration at the site no matter the circumstances surrounding this or other uses of the property on Hathaway Road. This recommendation is based on the idea that operating a full length 18-hole golf course is the most optimal way of keeping this city enterprise as a functioning going concern to serve the recreational public golfing needs of the city and the surrounding region. This can only be accomplished with an 18-hole golf course and is compatible with any increased interest in 9-hole play. A full length 18-hole golf course is better positioned logistically for the golfing public and financially for the city to handle this trend, with two nines available for play as opposed to a 9-hole facility with only one nine available for play, while continuing to accommodate all other forms of golfing activity efficiently.

The trend in 9-hole play is not indicative of the whole number of rounds played. The number of 9-hole rounds played to date in 2020 according to the National Golf Foundation as a percentage of all rounds played, 18-holes or 9-holes, is 33% for people considered core golfers that play 8 or more rounds per year. The occasional golfer, those that play less than 8 rounds per year, their 9-hole rounds played still do not represent a majority of all their rounds played with 48% of their rounds as 9-holes and 52% of their rounds as 18-hole rounds. The 33% 9-hole rounds played figure closely resembles the number of 9-hole rounds played by all golfers using Whaling City Golf Course in 2020 versus all rounds, 18 or 9 holes, combined.

The golf industry has responded to these nationwide statistics with the facilities available for play across the country. In 1974 there were more 9-hole courses than 18-hole or more courses in the United States, today 9-hole courses have fallen to only 25% of the total golfing facilities in the United States. There is a small increased trend toward playing nine holes but the industry is accommodating the trend with 18-hole golf courses. This is how this trend should be addressed and it is how Whaling City Golf Course currently addresses this trend. Whaling City Golf Course accommodates weekday night leagues during its peak 9-hole play in the summer months for its core golfers. Those new golfers that play 48% of their golf as 9-hole rounds and other golfers not participating in leagues are accommodated on the second nine holes at Whaling City Golf Course's 18-hole golf course during this peak period.

Keeping Whaling City Golf Course as an 18-hole course is the best way to accommodate all forms of golfing at the Hathaway Road site now and in the future, under any land use circumstances including an advanced manufacturing campus as proposed, to keep it a viable recreational and financial enterprise as part of the New Bedford Park Department's portfolio of assets.

Sincerely,

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