



PLANNING STAFF REPORT

MEMO DATE: February 27, 2020

MTG. DATE: MARCH 11, 2020

TO: Village of Cottage Grove Plan Commission

CC: Village of Cottage Grove Board of Trustees
Matt Giese – Village Administrator
Lisa Kalata – Village Clerk
Larry Konopacki – Village Attorney
Kevin Lord – Village Engineer

FROM: [Erin Ruth, AICP – Village Planning Director](#)

RE: **Site Plan for Miracle League Baseball Field at Bakken Park**

BACKGROUND

Property Owner: Village of Cottage Grove

Location: Bakken Park

Area: 28.6 acres

Agent: Bill Schultz – Miracle League of Dane County
Sean Brusegar – Director of Parks & Rec., V. of Cottage Grove
Andy Meesmann – Snyder & Associates

Existing Zoning: Park & Open Space

Proposed Zoning: Park & Open Space

Future Land Use Plan: Park & Open Space

OVERVIEW

The Miracle League is a national entity with 240 member organizations. They build specialized baseball fields with rubberized (wheelchair accessible) surfaces to allow participation by children and adults with physical and mental disabilities. They use a “buddy system” to match each player with an able-bodied peer.

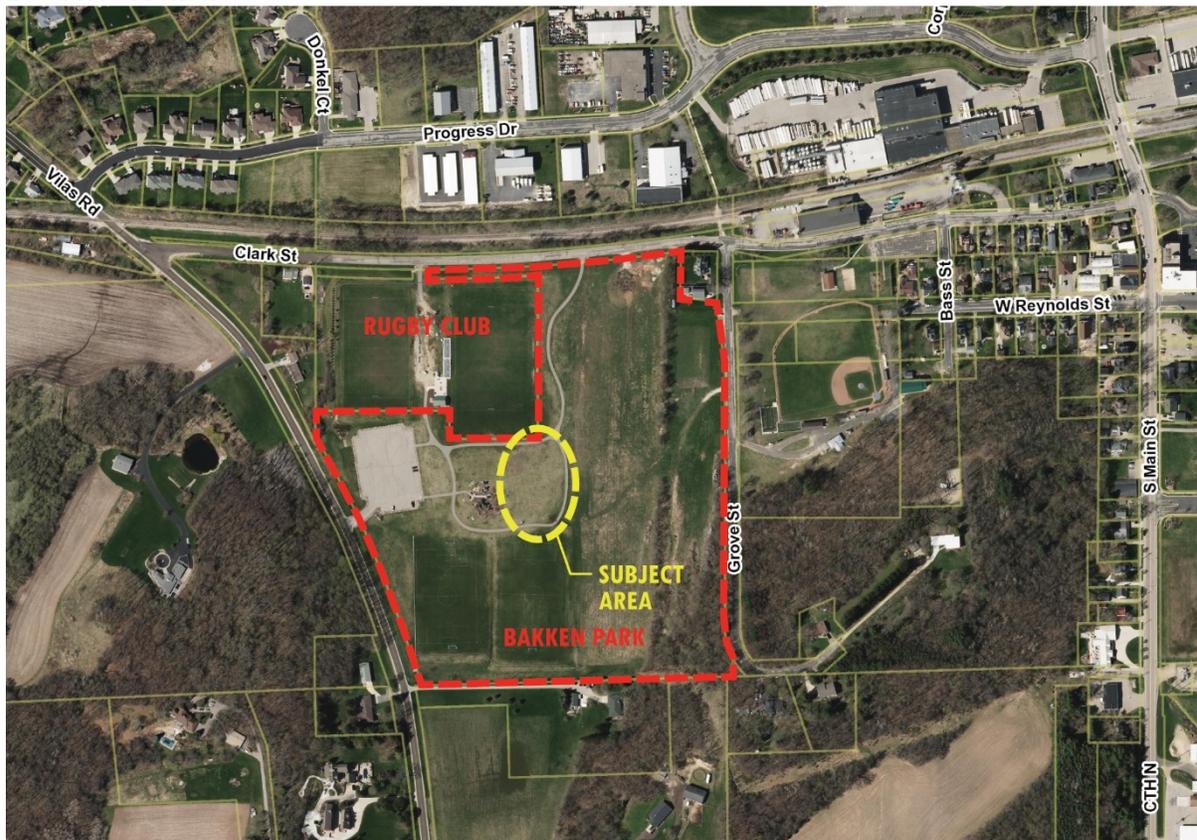


Miracle League of Dane County is collaborating with the Village to build a facility in Bakken Park. It would be the first such facility in the Madison region. Existing facilities in Wisconsin can be found in Milwaukee and Manitowoc.

The proposed facility will be located immediately east of the existing playground and forthcoming splash pad. The facility includes the rubberized field, dugouts, bleachers, picnic tables, a drinking fountain, fencing, lights, and landscaping.

Occupancy is expected to include 36 to 50 users and an additional 30 to 40 spectators during games. The field will be used by Miracle League on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings from 5:30 to 9 from May to mid-August.

LOCATION MAP



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY

The property is designated as Park and Open Space on the Future Land Use Map. The proposed site plan amendment is consistent with that designation.

The Park and Open Space Plan approved in 2018 included a master concept plan for Bakken Park. This specific opportunity was unknown at the time the plan was drafted and



approved. However, additional baseball/softball fields are part of the master plan. The specific location proposed for the Miracle League Field contains tennis courts in the master plan, but the courts can easily be accommodated nearby in the future. The Miracle League Field is a unique opportunity that is expected to provide a positive feature for Bakken Park that will complement the adjacent playground, splash pad, and shelter.

In the opinion of staff, the proposed site plan is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY

The Bakken Park parcel is zoned Park and Open Space, as regulated by 325-42 of the zoning ordinance.

Per 325-42(2)(a), both active outdoor public recreation land uses are permitted by right within the district.

The proposed project meets all intensity and bulk requirements of the district.

The baseball field is considered an 'active public outdoor recreation' land use per 325-49(C)(2), which has the following requirements:

(a)(1) Facilities using lighting and adjoining a residentially zoned property shall install and continually maintain a bufferyard with a minimum opacity of 0.6. Said bufferyard shall be located at the property line adjacent to said residential property.

The proposed Miracle League Field does include field lighting, and the park parcel is adjacent to residential parcels on the west, south, and northeast sides. However, the park parcel is quite large (38 acres) and the respective property lines are all more than 600' from the field. So while the parcel is technically adjoining, the field itself is not. In the opinion of staff the bufferyard should not be required. The proposal includes substantial landscaping on the west and northeast sides. While the full bufferyard should not be required the project could benefit from additional canopy trees to the south of the field. Staff recommends three located between the south side of the field and the pedestrian/bike path.

(a)(2) All structures and active recreational areas shall be located at least 50 feet from any residentially zoned property.

As noted above, the field is more than 600' from any residentially zoned property.

(a)(3) Facilities that serve a community-wide function shall be located with primary vehicular access on a collector or arterial street.

The parking lot serving the field is accessed from Vilas Road.

(a)(4) Facilities serving a community-wide function shall provide an off-street loading area if the majority of the users are children.



(b) Parking requirement: 1 space per 4 expected patrons at maximum capacity.

The Miracle League Field will be served by the existing Bakken Park parking lot, which contains 148 spaces. Per the applicant the maximum capacity is expected to be 50 users and 40 spectators, totaling 90 which would require 23 parking spaces. Therefore the existing parking lot should be adequate to handle the field in addition to the playground and splash pad. The field's organizers plan to coordinate schedules with the rugby facility (Miracle Field games will mostly occur on weeknights and most rugby tournaments occur on weekends).

The parking lot has enough accessible spaces per ADA. However, given the specific nature of the Miracle Field there may be demand for more than the minimum amount of ADA spaces. The Parks Dept. should coordinate with the Miracle League on signing standard spaces as ADA spaces during games, maintaining a clear drop off area within the lot, or other accommodations as necessary. This may require some trial periods during the first season to determine the best approach.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the proposed Site Plan be **APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS**, with the following conditions:

1. Plant three additional canopy trees between the south side of the field and the existing pedestrian/bike patch to provide additional screening for the field lighting.
2. The Parks Dept. and Miracle League shall coordinate the most effective use of the parking lot on game nights to ensure the needs of the field's users are accommodated.