

April 4, 2019

Vanessa Jones
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Mayor and Council,

I am currently employed by the NSHA. I am a physiotherapy assistant, which works in the community. In January, the town gave us access to the walking track at the stadium to encourage older adult with mobility aides or gait disturbances to ambulate in a safe environment. For the past three months we have seen improvements in our client's endurance, safety, confidence, and pain management. We have also addressed concerns about transportation and isolation of our older adults. Our clients, have met old friends and enjoys their chat time.

When reviewing Nova Scotia's Action Plan for an Aging Population, it discusses the barriers for older adults concerning transportation, isolation, the social and economic contributions and promotion of physical activity and regular exercise. "Walking is one of the most effective ways adults of any age can maintain mobility and improve their health, both physical and mental. Furthermore, research suggests that "older people who are physically more active and who exercise regularly are more likely to walk independently and do other activities of daily living on their own compared to sedentary elders." Engaging in a structured exercise program can make a difference among frail older adults who do not currently exercise." I am quoting this cite because I believe it is key to keeping our older adults in their homes longer. Walking is important, our seniors are important, and we know that Amherst has many seniors in its community.

My request is that we give our older adults a safer place to walk. An outdoor track system that they could easily use a mobility aide on or a person with foot drop may not have to worry about catching their toe and tripping themselves or fatigue themselves out before they begin. I am thinking of a rubber like surface that is anti-slip and porous. One company I researched was called "Rubberway". Jerry's park maybe a good choice, smaller track, bathroom facilities, plus the extra equipment that is already there. And although I am targeting the older adults, even our athletes or runners would appreciate an improved shock absorbent track, low impact, and a non-slip surface.

In closing, I look forward to a response from the Town of Amherst.

Thank you,

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