

Stouffville Tribune

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Stouffville track project hits snag

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Millard Street residents are objecting to a proposed overhead lighting system that would complete Stouffville's track and field sports project at Stouffville District Secondary School.

Jack Patriquin wrote a letter to Council Tuesday which stated "misleading information" about lit tennis courts and soccer fields is a "waste of taxpayers money," and contradicts an artist's sketch that has been on display at the school.

Although he is not opposing the proposed running track, Mr. Patriquin said the lit courts to be situated directly behind his house would not be fully utilized and would disturb his privacy.

"I can't imagine parents allowing the children I see using the fields to stay out until 10 or 11 p.m.," he concludes.

Meanwhile, Dennis Holroyd, who lives adjacent to the playing fields, and who said he is representing 16 Millard Street residents, told officials "the lighted area is much too close to our properties and will depreciate the value of our homes."

"From my experience an increase in activity means an increase in vandalism," Mr. Holroyd said.

"Tennis courts create a lot of noise," he said, and urged officials to give more consideration to the lighting.

He suggested new locations for the tennis courts be considered and that they should be situated 150 yards from any one residence.

Martin Johannessen, past-president of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Soccer Club (WSSC), and member of the Stouffville Track Advisory Committee (STAC), said the WSSC has been trying to get lighting for the past 15 years.

He also explained the light given off by the 50-foot, \$190,000 lighting system would give off no more light than normal moonlight, or the rays from streetlights.

But Aiden Sergeant, vice-president of the WSSC, objected to the location of the tennis courts altogether, claiming the Town's current courts aren't being used and that soccer fields are being used.

He added the soccer club objects to losing a field for a paved tennis court.

Mr. Sergeant said most of the 14-team WSSC members are 15 and under and are "too young to use lighted fields."

But Ged Stonehouse, another member of STAC, said the soccer mini-field has been monitored for use and was used "only once" in the past seven days.

He added that that moving the courts would only dissatisfy homeowners at the other end of the field.

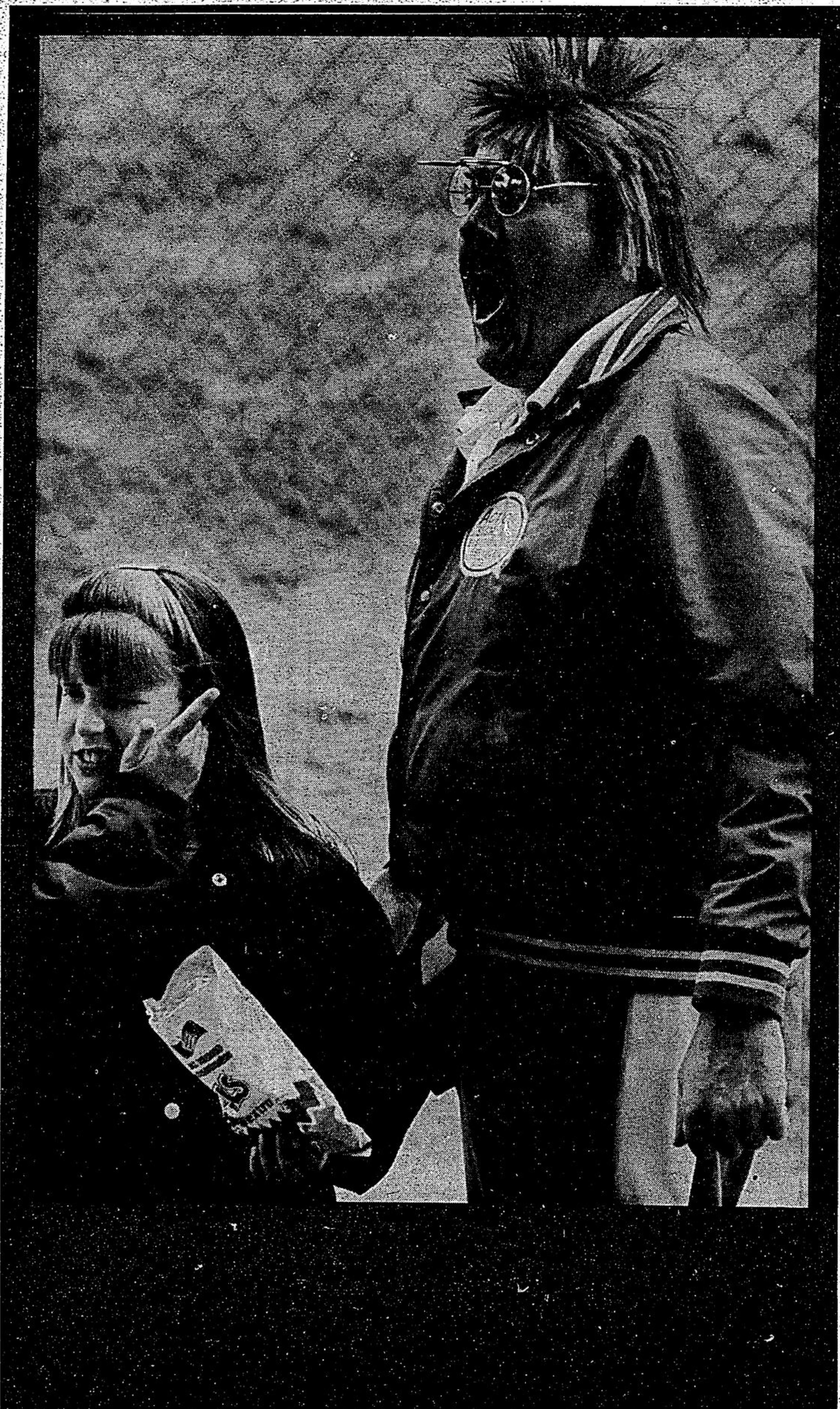
Meanwhile Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Fran Sainsbury said "it has always been the intention and an ongoing process to construct tennis, track and lighting," on the site and added a proper project would include many facilities, including tennis, to avoid a "piece-meal" project.

She also pointed out Stouffville has only 100 acres of parkland and the Town should utilize what little space it has to maximum effectiveness.

She also said Millard Street homeowners knew when they purchased the homes that the field would someday be upgraded to include such facilities.

"For every dollar we spend on recreation we save \$4 on police. We have been experiencing a lot of vandalism lately and the youth will gain from this project. In fact, it will help everybody and the lights will ensure children can get home safely," Mayor Sainsbury said.

Council said the project should go as planned and the groups should work together to come to a compromise.



OUTDOORS



SPORTS



EVENTS

