

Big Plans for Little League in Windham

By Michael Ryan 9/4/2025

WINDHAM - There is already no doubt that if the town of Windham builds it, they will come, leaving only the question, when will it be built? The answer came, last week, when local government officials approved an offer from Delaware Engineering for professional services, leading to the creation of a recreation facility outside the hamlet of Hensonville. A little league baseball field will be a key part of that project after months of controversy surrounding the initially proposed location. Town council members, in the winter of 2024, announced a tentative plan to construct two itty-bitty ballfields at the popular Windham Path. Their announcement resulted in a storm of resistance from a group called Friends of the Windham Path, demanding the fields be built elsewhere. Numerous town council meetings were heated to the point of having a police presence. Lines were drawn in the sand with the possibility mentioned by the opposition group of pursuing legal action. No common ground was reached by last September, although town officials said they would make a decision before the end of autumn, likely moving forward, with Friends of the Windham Path holding their ground. It appeared the situation could get messy when, with two outs in the bottom of the 9th inning, the Windham Foundation unexpectedly stepped

to the plate and hit a walk-off homerun. Foundation members announced they had purchased 34 acres of land along Route 65A (Seeley Road), ending the turmoil in a heartbeat. Town supervisor Thomas Hoyt noted the Foundation, for several months, had been quietly working to buy the property, not wanting to reveal their intentions until they came to fruition. Foundation president Paul Mutter, at that time said, “the parcel will take on a new use as home to a seven-plus acre Little League Baseball facility.” The remaining 27 acres are set aside for future community uses. Government officials took on the project after issues related to parking and residential development arose at the current little league field, located along South Street for generations. Ownership of the seven acres has been transferred to the town. Delaware Engineering chief John Brust, at least week’s council session, presented details of the professional services proposal. “The town board is envisioning the property will initially be utilized for the construction of a little league baseball field,” the contract states. There will also be, “an adjoining playground, open fields for future soccer and/or baseball practice fields and parking areas,” the contract states. “Initial discussions with funding entities suggest that this will be a \$1.2 million capital project,” the



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contract states. Town officials are optimistic that price tag could be substantially reduced by securing grants and other outside funding sources. Delaware Engineering fees are not-to-exceed \$147,500, the agreement states, performing jobs including planning and surveying. Other included tasks are: providing detailed design and construction plans, stormwater preparation, site plan approval thru the local planning board, writing construction bid specifications and construction support (to be determined). The agreement states Delaware Engineering will partner with the town board to conceptualize the following Phase One enhancements: — Two-way entrance road, parking lot with spaces for 50 vehicles, little league baseball field with constructed infield; —Drainage underlying baseball field and a grandstand behind home plate suitable for 100 spectators. Grandstand will be constructed over ADA compliant restrooms and storage rooms for maintenance equipment; —Warm-up pitching and batting cages. Outfield electronic scoreboard, adjacent pavilion and adjoining playground; —Electric service for grandstands, maintenance, scoreboard and future outfield lighting. Municipal water and sewer service; —Most of the 7.2 acre lot will be level and graded so that a future soccer field and or baseball practice field can be situated to the south of the proposed little league field. A skateboard park is also envisioned. Supervisor Hoyt noted the water and sewer hookups will be integrated into a

longterm plan for the area in and around Hensonville. “Maybe we can get the sewer lines to Elm Ridge, which has had issues for years, and establish another loop for our water system,” Hoyt said. “We don’t just want to run a bunch of pipe out there. We want to be looking out for the community down the road too,” Hoyt said. It is expected the job will be put out to bid in early 2026, with a potential ceremonial first pitch and umpire yelling “play ball” that autumn. Government officials took on the project after issues related to parking, residential development and safety arose at the existing little league ballpark, located for generations along South Street in Windham.