

Under a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, the Recreation Commission Rideout Project Subcommittee hosted a public hearing on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, at 6:30 pm at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center and via Zoom video.

Attended:

Subcommittee: Phil Griffiths (Commission Chair), Daniel Rodriguez (Commissioner), Leigh Jackson (Recreation Director), DJ Fimiani (Assistant Recreation Director), Bob Beatty (Recreation Operations Manager), Mardi Hutchinson (Recreation Supervisor)

Also in Attendance: Jessica Porter (Assistant Town Manager), Meggi Leduc (Community Engagement Manager)

Guests: Mark Novak and Meghan Donahoe (*Activitas*)

Residents: Wendy Rovelli (Select Board), Irl Smith, Dan Frost, Chuck Slagen, Alyssa Brown, Carol Kerr, Martin Kelly, Mike Carey, Ann Sgarzi, Patricia Cross, Mike Berry, Marissa Alikpala, Cynthia Katz, Jean Easterday, Kristen Harding, Vanessa Sedo, Jen Pascucci, Roberto Diaz

Call to Order:

At 6:30 pm Mr. Griffiths called the meeting to order; the roll was called, and a quorum was confirmed.

Introduction of Public Meeting for Rideout Courts

Mr. Griffiths opened the meeting and welcomed the residents in attendance. He explained that the purpose of the meeting was to review proposed options for resurfacing and possibly reorganizing the tennis, pickleball, and basketball courts at Rideout Park, and to gather public input before the Rideout Project Subcommittee determines a final recommendation.

Project Background

Mr. Griffiths provided an overview of why the project is necessary:

- Both Rideout and Emerson courts require major reconstruction, but Rideout’s courts are in significantly worse condition and must be addressed first.
- Complete replacement is required; “patching” or resurfacing is no longer viable.
- Depending on materials selected, the project cost is estimated between \$800,000 and \$1.3 million.
 - Standard asphalt is the lower-cost option but has a lifespan of 5–10 years and requires frequent maintenance.
 - Post-tension concrete has a 25–30 year lifespan, significantly reducing long-term maintenance costs.
- Funding sources include:
 - *Recreation Revolving Fund (approx. \$392,000)
 - ARPA funds (\$130,000)
 - Town Meeting appropriation (\$108,000)
 - A CPC funding request to cover the cost difference needed for post-tension concrete.
 - *Error found, total amount from Rec Revolving is \$397,000

- If CPC funding is not awarded, the Town will proceed using asphalt because the courts must be rebuilt regardless.

Mr. Griffiths stated that construction is expected to take 2–3 months, beginning in summer or fall 2026, depending on contractor availability and material curing times.

Purpose of the Hearing

Mr. Griffiths explained that the core question before residents is the future configuration of the Rideout courts. The current layout includes three tennis courts with six overlaid/temporary pickleball courts. With pickleball demand continuing to grow, the Town must decide whether to keep the current configuration or convert some—or all—of the tennis courts into dedicated pickleball courts.

Activitas would present several layout options, including the possibility of maintaining tennis, expanding pickleball, or shifting fully to pickleball.

Mr. Griffiths emphasized that no expansion of the court footprint is proposed (just resurfacing; *added post-meeting for clarity*) and that the Subcommittee will compile feedback and make a recommendation to the full Recreation Commission later in the fall.

Mr. Griffiths then introduced the consulting team from *Activitas*, including Mark Novak and Megan Donahue, who were present to walk the community through several design options and explain the associated costs and technical considerations.

Activitas Information Session

Mark Novak, Design Principal at *Activitas*, opened the presentation. He explained that *Activitas* is a Dedham-based landscape architecture and civil engineering firm specializing in recreational and athletic facilities throughout Massachusetts, New England, and beyond. He introduced Megan Donahoe, a landscape architect on the project team, who would later present the conceptual design options.

Existing Conditions Review

Mr. Novak described *Activitas*' assessment of the Rideout courts, conducted approximately one year ago shortly after Thanksgiving. Their review included both Rideout and Emerson facilities, but the presentation focused entirely on Rideout. He explained that the Rideout courts have reached the end of their useful life and are in a state of advanced deterioration.

Observations included:

- Extensive spider cracking throughout the asphalt surface.
- Surface delamination and worn acrylic coatings.
- Pooling and “birdbaths”, especially along the southern end of the courts, indicating improper drainage and settlement in the asphalt base.
- Multiple patch repairs, many of which are now failing.
- Seam cracks around fence posts and net posts where concrete footings have heaved and reflected through the asphalt surface.

Mr. Novak emphasized that once asphalt begins to fail in this way, patching only provides a temporary fix—typically lasting 1 to 2 years at best—before cracks re-emerge.

Age and Expected Lifespan

The Rideout courts are approximately 20 years old, which is the upper limit for asphalt-based recreational surfaces. Mr. Novak noted that even in other applications, such as running tracks, an asphalt base typically begins to fail after 20 years.

He explained that this deterioration is why the Town is considering post-tension concrete, which is increasingly being used by municipalities across the region for tennis and pickleball surfaces due to its longevity and durability.

Site Analysis

As part of the site analysis, *Activitas* documented every crack and failure on the courts:

- Approximately 510 linear feet of cracking was identified.
- About 175 linear feet had been previously repaired, but those repairs have now failed.

Mr. Novak stated that the extent and severity of cracking confirms that the courts have exhausted their serviceable lifespan and require full reconstruction rather than resurfacing or patching.

He also described issues with the existing perimeter fencing:

- The fence is in “fair” condition, but several fence post footings are heaving, causing cracks to telegraph through the surface.
- Because the concrete footings must be removed as part of the reconstruction, the entire fence will need replacement.
- *Activitas* will attempt to recycle fence posts and rails where possible; concrete footings will be removed and ground for reuse as aggregate.

Mr. Novak then summarized the spatial observations from the site visit:

- The southern and eastern edges of the courts show significant puddling and settlement.
- The entire net line is unstable, with visible heaving and cracking.
- Orange lines on *Activitas*’ diagrams depict areas of significant cracking; yellow highlights indicate locations of past crack repairs that are failing.
- The courts’ orientation (slightly northeast–southwest) is not ideal, but still acceptable; the plan is to maintain the current orientation during reconstruction.

Conceptual Design Options

Megan Donahoe, Landscape Architect with *Activitas*, presented the three conceptual design options developed for the Rideout court reconstruction. She explained that all options are informed by guidance from the USA Pickleball / American Sports Builders Association (ASBA) Pickleball Construction Manual, which provides national standards for recreational, competitive, elite, and stadium-level play.

Each option maintains the existing court footprint and orientation while exploring different combinations of tennis and pickleball facilities.

Option 1 – Renovate in Kind (3 Tennis Courts + 6 Lined Pickleball Courts)

- Maintains the current configuration of three regulation tennis courts.
- Adds striping for six pickleball courts (overlined), using portable pickleball nets—no permanent posts.
- Provides:
 - New tennis net posts, nets, and center straps

- New 10-foot chain-link perimeter fencing in existing locations
- Two single-leaf gates located on the north sides, consistent with current access points
- Replacement of the asphalt walkway disturbed during construction

This option most closely resembles the existing facility, with continued flexible use for both sports.

Option 2 – Eight Permanent Pickleball Courts

- Converts the full footprint to eight (8) dedicated pickleball courts.
- Includes:
 - Permanent pickleball net posts, nets, and center straps
 - A divider fence between the upper and lower rows of courts (4–6 ft. high)
 - New 10-foot perimeter chain-link fencing and gates in existing locations
 - A new asphalt walkway

This configuration maximizes dedicated pickleball capacity within the current footprint.

Option 3 – One Tennis Court + Six Permanent Pickleball Courts

- Retains one regulation tennis court.
- Converts the remaining area to six (6) permanent pickleball courts.
- Includes:
 - Permanent pickleball net posts and nets
 - A divider fence between the upper and lower bank of pickleball courts
 - New perimeter chain-link fencing and gate locations consistent with existing conditions
 - A new asphalt walkway

This option preserves some tennis use while significantly expanding permanent pickleball facilities.

Cost Estimates

Mr. Novak returned to provide an overview of the anticipated construction process and the cost opinions associated with the three conceptual court layout options.

Construction Approach

Mr. Novak described the standard renovation sequence for the Rideout courts:

- Removal of all existing fencing, including posts and concrete foundations
- Pulverization of the existing asphalt surface, which is then reused and compacted as part of the new base
- Compaction and proof-rolling of the rebuilt base, followed by formal compaction testing to ensure stability
- Installation of new court surfacing, net posts, and associated hardware
- Replacement of the asphalt walkway disturbed during construction

Add Alternates

Two optional “add alternates” were presented:

1. Electrical Conduit for Future Court Lighting
 - Installing underground conduit now is significantly more cost-effective than trenching later.
 - This alternate does *not* include lighting—only the infrastructure should the Town ever choose to add fixtures.
2. Upgrade from Asphalt to Post-Tension Concrete Base

- Post-tension concrete (PT) has become an increasingly popular choice for municipal courts due to its durability.
- While more expensive upfront, PT offers much longer service life and far better resistance to cracking and surface failures.

Asphalt vs. Post-Tension Concrete

- Asphalt Courts
 - Modern asphalt includes more recycled content, resulting in reduced longevity compared with past decades.
 - Even with a fiberglass membrane added to control strip cracking (included in the cost estimate), the expected lifespan is 12–15 years.
 - Strip cracking—fine, widespread surface cracks—cannot be fully predicted or prevented.
- Post-Tension Concrete Courts
 - PT courts act as a single, unified slab, reducing cracking, settlement, and surface failures.
 - They are commonly used in university, municipal, and compromised-soil settings.
 - Installation involves tensioning embedded cables after curing to compress the slab.
 - PT surfaces require normal resurfacing over time but are warranted for 25 years against structural failure.
 - From a long-term cost perspective, Mark described PT as a “wiser investment” for municipal facilities.

Cost Summary

All three design options fall within a similar cost range because they share the same general footprint, demolition, and site preparation needs. Variations are mainly related to fencing layout, numbers of net posts, and divider fences on the all-pickleball options.

Option 1 – Three Tennis Courts + Six Lined Pickleball Courts

- Initial project cost (asphalt with fiberglass + acrylic surfacing): approx. \$500,000
- Add alternate – conduit for future lighting: + \$27,000
- Add alternate – upgrade to post-tension concrete: + \$393,000
- Total with PT base: approx. \$924,000

Option 2 – Eight Permanent Pickleball Courts

- Initial project cost (asphalt): approx. \$530,000
- Total with alternates (conduit + PT base): approx. \$950,000
- Slightly higher cost reflects the additional divider fencing and added pickleball net post foundations.

Option 3 – One Tennis Court + Six Permanent Pickleball Courts

- Cost is nearly identical to Option 2, with only minor differences in posts and divider fencing.

Additional Notes

- Noise Mitigation Fabric:
 - Not included in current cost estimates.
 - Fence will be designed to support it in the future if needed.
 - Mixed performance reviews; typically reduces sound by approx. 20 dB, but does *not* eliminate paddle noise.
- Project Contingency:

- A 15% contingency is carried at this conceptual stage to cover unknown site conditions.
- As design progresses and geotechnical testing is completed, this contingency will be refined.

Technical Q&A Session

Following the presentation by *Activitas* on the three resurfacing options, Mr. Griffiths opened the floor for technical questions.

Phil Griffiths:

- *Question:* Asked whether the layouts showing 6 and 8 pickleball courts were drawn using recreational-level standards.
- *Response:* Yes, they were. Option 2 provides approximately 17.5 feet between courts, allowing space for plays such as around-the-post shots. Option 3 reduces that spacing slightly but still meets USA Pickleball guidelines for recreational play.

Daniel Rodriguez:

- *Question:* Is there a difference between having dedicated courts for tennis and pickleball versus sharing the use?
- *Response:* Not for recreational play. At the competitive level however, the MIAA will not allow any kind of postseason tennis matches on facilities that have pickleball stripes.

Chuck Slagen, 21 Old Mill Road:

- *Question:* Is there a risk in completing construction late in the fall, followed immediately by winter, given temperature-related expansion and contraction?
- *Response:* The project is intended to begin in May, with construction occurring in late spring–summer. The main concern with late-fall work is the acrylic surfacing, which requires temperatures of 50°F and rising. Both asphalt and post-tension concrete require at least 14 days of curing before surface coatings. If weather becomes unsuitable, acrylic surfacing may be delayed until spring, with temporary lines allowing play in the interim (as happened recently in Scituate and Cohasset).
- *Question:* Will the noticeable slope of the current courts be corrected?
- *Response:* Yes. Reconstructed courts will comply with sport standards, with a slope under 1%, ensuring appropriate drainage without the unevenness currently felt.

Alyssa Brown, 5 Concord Green:

- *Question:* Did you consider striping the remaining tennis court in Option 3 for additional pickleball courts (up to eight total when tennis isn't in use)?
- *Response:* Yes, this was considered. The design team chose to present the tennis court as dedicated tennis only to ensure that tennis players retain guaranteed access without pickleball overlap. The committee can still consider this as a future modification based on public input.
- *Question:* How will drainage work under the new design?
- *Response:* The courts will be reconstructed slightly higher, improving surface drainage to the back of the site. Asphalt will be pulverized and reused, creating a more stable base. Post-tension concrete includes a vapor barrier, protecting the slab from subsurface

moisture. No new subsurface drainage structures are proposed; positive surface pitch will handle runoff.

- *Question:* Could the slope be reversed so water drains toward the parking lot rather than toward the shaded back corner, which tends to get slimy?
- *Response:* Possible, but would require more fill, likely increasing costs and potentially impacting ADA routes. The team can explore whether minor adjustments are feasible.

Carol Kerr, 54 Old Stow Road:

- *Question:* Will the contractor or consultant return after construction to inspect for issues, and what warranty protections exist?
- *Response:* Warranty and follow-up requirements will be defined in the RFP and contract. Mr. Novak noted that *Activitas* remains active in the region (including current work at Concord Country Club, Middlesex School, and Fenn School) and will continue supporting Concord as needed. Any issues identified by the Town trigger a warranty claim with the contractor. Asphalt may show strip cracking as early as a few months; PT concrete has a 25-year warranty against structural failure.

Martin Kelly, 1354 Main Street:

- *Question:* Many new facilities include fencing between every individual court. Why is fencing only shown between the two banks of courts, rather than between each court?
- *Response:* Installing fencing between every court requires additional space between courts. To fit 8 pickleball courts within the existing footprint (Option 2), middle fencing was removed. Adding that fencing would likely reduce the layout to six courts, as it would interfere with play space needed for advanced shots such as around-the-post hits. The chosen configuration represents the maximum number of courts that can fit while maintaining recreational-level playability.
- *Question:* If the Town is already removing the fence and rebuilding the base, why can't the courts be widened by 2–3 feet to improve spacing?
- *Response:* Mr. Griffith stated this is a policy decision, not a cost issue. The Town does not intend to encroach further into Rideout Park's open green space, given competing recreation uses. Maintaining the existing footprint was a deliberate decision.

Irl Smith, 537 Hayward Mill Road:

- *Question:* Suggested restoring a south-end gate, which existed before the batting cages and would reduce long walks to retrieve balls that clear the fence. Began to ask whether the single tennis court in Option 3 could also be striped for pickleball (up to six or eight courts total).
- *Response:* Gate suggestion acknowledged as a helpful technical request for the design team to consider. Striping question deferred to the public comment period, as it relates to policy/use, not construction.
- *Question:* Option 3 shows limited space between the western fence and pickleball courts; could the courts be shifted 4 ft toward the tennis court to allow space for a bench and game rotation markers?
- *Response:* Current buffer is roughly 7.5 ft from out-of-play line to fence. Shifting may be feasible, but must maintain safe distances from obstructions for both tennis and pickleball.

The team will examine potential minor shifts, but benches inside the fenced area are not recommended due to safety.

Mike Carey, 260 College Road:

- *Question:* Should puddles be expected on a newly rebuilt court (after 1–2 years)?
- *Response:* No puddles should be present on a properly built court. The base will be tested for planarity, and inspectors will check for depressions after rainfall. A field test (“nickel test”) ensures no birdbaths remain before acrylic surfacing. Normal surface moisture is expected, but true puddling should not occur.

Ann Sgarzi, 33 Maple Street:

- *Question:* Shared that puddling existed “from day one” after the last resurfacing decades ago; the Town had no recourse.
- *Response:* Confirmed the issue is consistent with current observed puddling. This project includes base replacement and planarity testing specifically to prevent recurrence.

Patricia Cross, 80 Conant Street:

- *Question:* If the Town kept all three tennis courts and striped them for pickleball, would that allow six pickleball courts?
- *Response:* Yes: Three tennis courts striped for pickleball = six playable pickleball courts.
- *Question:* Is the only way to get eight pickleball courts to remove all tennis?
- *Response:* Yes: Removing tennis entirely allows eight dedicated courts under Option 2. Additional hybrid layouts (e.g., four PB courts per tennis court rotated 90°) are possible but discarded due to poor east–west orientation, which affects playability.

Mike Berry, 18 Sweet Birch Lane:

- *Question:* Commented that in Option 3, closer spacing between pickleball courts will likely result in more ball interference compared to Option 2.
- *Response:* Confirmed that Option 2 has more comfortable spacing, though Option 3 still meets USA Pickleball minimums. Acknowledged that broader spacing improves play experience.

Wendy Rovelli, 42 Bow Street:

- *Question:* Can the layout in Option 3 be shifted slightly to create additional buffer space between pickleball courts?
- *Response:* Some limited shifting may be possible, but spacing is constrained by: required distance from tennis out-of-play lines to obstructions, placement of permanent pickleball net posts, and fence foundations. Courts currently have 11 ft separation, which exceeds USA Pickleball’s 5 ft minimum. The team can review whether minor adjustments could gain an extra foot or so.

Marissa Alikpala, 163 Belknap Street:

- *Question:* For pickleball players, is Option 1 (three tennis courts with pickleball striping) the most comfortable spacing?

- *Response:* Yes—Option 1 provides the most generous spacing between courts. However, he acknowledged pickleball players will likely want more than six courts. Option 2 offers the best blend of quantity and spacing for dedicated PB use.

Public Comment:

Mr. Griffith opened the floor for residents to provide public comments on which of the three resurfacing options they prefer.

Cynthia Katz, 20 Conant Street

- Expressed concern about equity between Emerson and Rideout.
- Believes planning for both sites should occur simultaneously.
- Values preserving both tennis and pickleball at each park.
- Cited *Envision Concord* goals—residents shouldn’t have to drive across town for their sport of choice.
- Supports Option 1 as the most flexible and inclusive, preserving tennis at Rideout.
- Identified herself as both a pickleball player and someone who values tennis access.

Jean Easterday, 48 Maple Street

- Supports previous sentiment for broader planning.
- Asked whether the Recreation Department has completed a townwide needs assessment (demand for tennis vs. pickleball, class offerings, usage data).
- Recommended a comprehensive plan for both Emerson and Rideout rather than addressing Rideout first in isolation.

Kristen Harding, 39 Assabet Ave

- Supports Option 1 as the most inclusive for all sports.
- Frequent tennis player at Rideout; often sees high tennis usage.
- Suggested implementing a court reservation system (similar to Lexington and Arlington) to reduce conflict between tennis and pickleball users.
- Emphasized tennis as a longstanding sport with proven durability; questioned committing to dedicated pickleball-only layouts for a 25-year surface.

Dan Frost, 10 Old Orchard Road

- Asked about plans for the basketball courts.
 - *Response:* Basketball courts will be resurfaced only, with no layout changes.
- Asked about future public forums or opportunities for input.
 - *Response:* Commission will “stay tuned” as next steps are determined after reviewing this meeting’s input.

Mike Carey, 260 Oak Hill Circle

- Leader of a self-organized pickleball group (~15 players).
- Noted that Option 1 retains portable nets, which require setup, breakdown, and replacement costs.
- Shared player attendance data from Oct 1–21:
 - Average 23 players/day, ranging 9–38 depending on weather.
- Stated pickleball has been active in Concord for 10 years and continues to grow.

- Argued that Concord currently has no dedicated pickleball courts, which he views as inequitable.
- Advocated strongly for creating dedicated pickleball courts in this renovation.

Patricia Cross, 80 Conant Street

- Plays both tennis and pickleball.
- Noted Rideout pickleball sessions tend to cater to intermediate/advanced players, making it hard for beginners.
- Believes flexibility is essential given space constraints and the decision not to expand the park footprint.
- Supports Option 1 as the option that preserves the most flexibility.
- Suggested using wheeled pickleball nets (as used in Acton) to avoid the burden of lifting portable nets; they can be stored on-site and rolled into place.
- Spoke again to emphasize concern about the lack of a town plan to expand total court capacity, despite clear demand for both sports.
- Stated that Option 3 “doesn’t work” for tennis players; their group avoids Rideout on weekends due to heavy pickleball presence.
- Suggested that if no pickleball courts are built in Concord Center, the Town must consider finding more land or expanding the Rideout footprint rather than ruling expansion out entirely.
- Added that increasing the footprint is the only way to maintain both sports across the community.
- Concluded by noting they would be stepping down from the Commission by the time such expansion discussions occur, but believe the issue must be addressed.

Chuck Slagen, 21 Old Mill Road

- Strongly opposed to Option 1 due to double-striped courts, which he finds confusing and visually difficult.
- Dislikes setting up portable nets.
- Supports Options 2 or 3.
- Noted that both 2 and 3 reduce usable perimeter space for benches and storage inside the fence. If the footprint will not expand, seating and storage will likely have to move outside the courts.
- Observed that adding a storage box outside is technically an increase in footprint.

Ann Sgarzi, 33 Maple Street

- Supports comments about equity and access.
- Expressed concern about noise impacts on neighbors if eight pickleball courts were built.
- Advocates Option 1; if Option 2 is considered, believes noise mitigation should be included in the budget upfront, not optional or deferred.

Alyssa Brown, 5 Concord Green

- Views equity differently—Concord already has many tennis courts (HS, Emerson, other facilities), but no public pickleball courts on the Concord side of town.
- Noted rumors that Emerson may never get pickleball courts.
- Believes Rideout is the appropriate location for dedicated pickleball courts.
- Said the 2.5-mile distance from Concord Center to West Concord is not a major burden for players.

Irl Smith, 537 Hayward Mill Road

- Cited a Concord recreational facilities study recommending 8 tennis courts and 6 pickleball courts for a town of this size.
- Currently, Concord has zero dedicated pickleball courts.
- Reported that 20 pickleball players often show up at Rideout, but if just a few tennis players take the courts, pickleball has no available space.
- Supports Option 3 as better aligning with recommended facilities counts.

Roberto Diaz, 21 Hawthorne Village

- Emphasized the importance of tennis for youth development, including scholarship opportunities.
- Believes removing tennis courts would be “*cruel for the kids.*”
- Advocates for keeping both sports.
- Supports Option 1 as the fairest and most inclusive choice.
- Noted that Rideout already offers “six” pickleball courts (striped, not permanent).

Vanessa Sedo, 126 Old Marlboro Road

- Tennis player; supports multi-use layouts.
- Strong concerns with Option 3:
 - Only one tennis court is not adequate for scheduling singles/doubles.
 - Risk that the single court becomes underutilized, pushing tennis players elsewhere.
- Believes Option 3 is not equitable despite appearing to offer both sports.
- Supports Option 1 to ensure tennis remains viable at Rideout.
- Asked whether, regardless of which option is chosen, the Town could implement a posted playing schedule, particularly for organized pickleball groups.
- Believes a schedule would help tennis players and unaffiliated pickleball players plan around group usage.
 - *Response:* Scheduling and reservations would be discussed separately, and the minutes from this meeting will include information on the current reservation system.

Jen Pascucci, 291 Pope Road

- Spoke about the community and well-being benefits of racket sports.
- Noted that both tennis and pickleball participation is growing nationally.
- Described Concord as a “power tennis town” with strong demand across all ages.
- Stated the importance of free public tennis access.
- Supports Option 1 as the only choice that preserves full access for all.

Wendy Rovelli, 42 Bow Street

- Referenced findings from the Recreation Facilities Study:
 - Concord has an overabundance of tennis courts relative to population.
 - Study recommended six permanent pickleball courts.
- Supports Option 3, which provides six permanent pickleball courts while still preserving one tennis court at Rideout.

Carol Kerr, 54 Old Stow Road

- Asked whether tennis courts exist at middle school or elementary schools.

- Clarified during the meeting: No public courts at the middle school.

Chair Phil Griffiths thanked the community for attending and emphasized how valuable and informative the conversation had been for the Commission. He noted that Concord is fortunate to have strong recreational facilities, but some of them clearly need reinvestment, and past planning efforts have underscored the importance of maximizing the use of existing assets before considering new construction. Mr. Griffiths acknowledged the competing interests within shared park spaces and reaffirmed the Commission’s commitment to balancing those needs thoughtfully. He explained that the Commission will review the feedback received with their consultants, provide more information to the public about current court reservation processes, and keep residents updated as next steps are developed.

Recreation Director Leigh Jackson also thanked attendees and announced that the Rideout Subcommittee will hold a public meeting as it works toward making a recommendation; although these meetings do not include time for public comment, they are open to the public and listed on the Town calendar for anyone who wishes to observe the process.

The meeting was officially adjourned at 7:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Meggi Leduc

DRAFT

Under a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Recreation Commission Project Subcommittee was held on Monday, July 7, 2025, at 1:30 pm at the Beede Swim & Fitness Center and virtually via Zoom.

Attended:

Rideout Subcommittee: Phil Griffiths (Commission Chair), Leigh Jackson (Director of Recreation), Bob Beatty (Recreation Operations Manager), DJ Fimiani (Assistant Recreation Director), Mardi Hutchinson (Recreation Supervisor), and Erik Shaw (Assistant Superintendent, Highway & Grounds)

Also in Attendance: Jessica Porter (Assistant Town Manager, via Zoom), Meggi Leduc (Community Engagement Manager)

Residents: Wendy Rovelli (via Zoom)

Call to Order:

At 1:35 pm Mr. Griffiths called the meeting to order; the roll was called, and a quorum was confirmed.

Approval of Minutes from January 8th and June 2nd, 2025:

Ms. Jackson moved to approve the meeting minutes, and Mr. Beatty seconded. All in favor.

Review Subcommittee Questions and Answers

Mr. Griffiths explained that the Subcommittee had previously submitted a series of follow-up questions to the consultant *Activitas* regarding their initial feasibility report. Rather than bringing the consultant back in for a meeting at this stage, the Subcommittee requested written responses to support continued internal review.

Most questions focused on Rideout Park's tennis and pickleball configuration options, as the other three sites in the study did not raise significant new considerations.

Key Questions & Responses: (Summarized)

Court Dimensions & Layout

- Spacing Between Pickleball Courts
 - Current concept provides 17 ft 4 in between courts.
 - Minimum standards per USA Pickleball require 8 ft between courts, 8 ft at end lines, and 5 ft from sidelines to fencing.
 - Proposed layout meets and exceeds minimum spacing.

Netting/Fencing Between Courts

- Between Pickleball Courts
 - No court-to-court netting is shown in the current design. It can be added if desired.
- Between “Upper” and “Lower” Courts
 - Concept includes a 4 ft high fence between the upper and lower courts (baseline-to-baseline).

Tennis & Pickleball Coexistence

- If One Tennis Court Is Retained
 - A single existing tennis court could accommodate six pickleball courts in addition to one tennis court.
 - Conversion of two tennis courts into eight pickleball courts is not feasible due to space limits.
- Tennis Overlay on Pickleball Courts
 - Not feasible. Permanent pickleball posts create safety hazards for tennis players.

In Consideration of Whether We Should Consider Adding Pickleball to Basketball Court

- Pickleball + Basketball on Smaller Court
 - Permanent pickleball courts cannot coexist with basketball.
 - However, basketball could remain with alternate pickleball striping and portable nets.
- Capacity on a Full-Size Basketball Court
 - A 60' x 94' basketball court can accommodate three pickleball courts with dividers.
 - If coexisting with basketball, fencing would be required to separate activities.

Basketball–Pickleball Separation

- Divider Needed
 - An 8 ft high chain-link fence is recommended between the basketball layout and the pickleball layout.

Site Furnishings

- Benches / Seating
 - Not included in current design or cost estimates.

Converting a Basketball Court to Tennis

- Not Feasible
 - Existing paved area is not large enough to meet tennis court minimum dimensions.
 - Expansion of paved surface would be required, which is not desired.

Basketball + Tennis on Same Court

- Not Feasible
 - Dimensions cannot support a combined-use layout.

Committee Reflections

- Members agreed the responses were very helpful, especially clarifying what is and is not physically possible within Rideout's existing footprint.
- Mr. Griffiths reiterated that these questions originated from the Subcommittee's June 2nd conceptual review session.
- Ms. Jackson summarized that this round of Q&A represents the complete list of follow-up items identified so far, and asked the group whether any new questions should be added before moving toward developing a recommendation for the full Recreation Commission.
- Members agreed the technical answers provided sufficient clarity.
- No further questions were proposed at this time.

Discussion of Available Funding

Ms. Jackson presented an overview of all confirmed funding currently available for the Rideout renovation project. This review stemmed from Subcommittee questions raised at the June 2nd meeting regarding how the project would be financed and what limitations existed on various funding sources.

Based on Ms. Jackson’s review of Town Meeting appropriations, ARPA allocations, and Recreation’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), she reported that the project has \$630,847 available, assuming the Subcommittee elects to use all designated ARPA funds.

Breakdown of Available Funds

- ARPA Funds (2023 Town Meeting)
 - \$130,000 designated for Rideout and Emerson Courts.
 - Ms. Jackson noted that for purposes of this project, the full amount is assumed to be used for Rideout (As ARPA funds expire at the end of December 2026, and we won’t have the ability to start the Emerson Courts project before December 2026).
- Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (FY26)
 - \$42,000 – Feasibility funding (Rec Revolving)
 - \$350,000 – Project funding (Rec Revolving)
 - *Total CIP support: \$392,000 (Rec Revolving)
 - Feasibility funding has not yet been spent, so it remains fully available.
 - *Error found, total CIP support is actually \$397,000
- 2019 Town Meeting Appropriation — Rideout Improvements
 - \$108,847 available
 - Non-specific to courts, meaning it may be used for any improvements at Rideout.

Total Available Funding: \$630,847

Clarifications & Questions

- Mr. Griffiths asked whether ARPA funds could be redirected to any other recreation needs.
→ Ms. Jackson confirmed ARPA dollars are restricted to Emerson and/or Rideout court work as designated in the 2023 vote.
- Mr. Griffiths confirmed that CIP funds are also restricted to this project.
→ Ms. Jackson agreed; both CIP line items are tied to the Rideout renovation.
- Mr. Griffiths asked whether the 2019 Town Meeting article allowed broader use within Rideout.
→ Ms. Jackson confirmed it is for Rideout improvements generally, not limited to courts.
- Mr. Griffiths asked if any pressing maintenance needs exist at Rideout that might impact how remaining funds are used.
→ Ms. Jackson noted the playground will require future attention and could benefit from any unused balance.

Discussion of Experience with Rideout Court Maintenance

Mr. Shaw reviewed differences in lifespan, cost, and maintenance requirements for asphalt, asphalt with fiberglass overlay, and post-tension concrete. This discussion was prompted by significant cost variations in the Activitas estimates and the need to understand long-term maintenance expectations before selecting a preferred surface type for the Rideout courts. The existing Rideout and Emerson court surfaces are asphalt, estimated to be 20+ years old, with Emerson possibly 25+ years.

1. Standard Asphalt (baseline option)

- Typical life expectancy: 10–15 years.
- Expected maintenance:
 - Repainting: ~5 years.

- Surface rehabilitation: 8–10 years.
- Asphalt warranties rarely exceed 10 years.

2. Asphalt + Fiberglass Overlay

- Adds protection against cracking and moisture.
- Still requires surface restoration every 8–10 years.
- Adds an estimated \$35,000–\$40,000 over basic asphalt.
- Does not eliminate medium-term maintenance needs.

3. Post-Tension Concrete

- Warrantied for 25 years, with actual lifespan potentially longer.
- Maintenance needs:
 - Primarily repainting lines every 8–10 years.
 - Surface integrity expected to remain stable for decades.
- Historically more expensive, but:
 - Pricing is trending downward as more Northeast contractors now offer it.
 - Cost difference vs. asphalt is shrinking (but still higher).

Clarifications & Questions

- Mr. Griffiths asked whether the maintenance intervals (8–10 years) are consistent across surface types.
→ Mr. Shaw explained:
 - Asphalt requires more frequent and more intensive repairs.
 - Post-tension concrete only needs light resurfacing/painting, not structural restoration.
- Mr. Griffiths asked whether *Activitas* pricing included the fiberglass-asphalt option.
→ Mr. Shaw confirmed no, the bid models included only basic asphalt and post-tension concrete.
- Mr. Shaw added that asphalt's longevity is affected by water infiltration; Emerson courts have lasted longer due to raised substructure that improves drainage.

Review *Activitas*' Four Rideout Design Concepts (and Discuss "Ad Alts")

The subcommittee reviewed cost assumptions and long-term maintenance needs for resurfacing the Rideout courts. Mr. Shaw explained that asphalt pricing continues to rise due to higher engineering standards, and although *Activitas*' estimates are likely slightly inflated, accurate figures won't be known until the project is formally bid. He also noted that the fiberglass-overlay maintenance cycle would cost roughly \$30–40k every 8–10 years.

The group then discussed which design concepts should move forward for Recreation Commission review and public comment. Members agreed that current funding levels will only support one major project at Rideout. They decided not to move forward with any changes to the basketball courts. Given high demand for pickleball and moderate use of tennis and basketball, the committee settled on presenting three options to the public: a like-kind replacement of existing courts; a mixed layout featuring six pickleball courts and one tennis court; and a full conversion to pickleball courts.

Additional discussion addressed the condition of the Emerson courts. Since Emerson receives more use and more complaints than the Rideout basketball courts, the committee acknowledged that short-term maintenance (crack sealing/painting) may be worthwhile if any project funds

remain. The Capital Improvement Plan already includes significant future funding for Emerson basketball and tennis renovations.

The committee also agreed that pursuing CPC funding could help fill potential budget gaps or support interim Emerson improvements. A September placeholder application may be submitted.

Votes:

- The subcommittee unanimously approved advancing the three Rideout design concepts to public comment.
- Members also agreed that all available ARPA funds should be fully dedicated to the Rideout project.

Review Upcoming Meeting Dates

The committee revisited earlier discussions about holding subcommittee meetings in August and September but ultimately agreed that no additional subcommittee meetings are necessary before the public forum. Coordination with *Activitas* for the public meeting logistics can be handled directly by staff.

Discuss Going to Public Meeting in October

The Subcommittee agreed that an October public meeting would allow for stronger turnout and better planning. Staff will circulate a scheduling poll to identify the best October date and begin publicizing the meeting in advance.

The committee also suggested meeting with the West Concord Advisory Committee beforehand to gather input and ensure alignment with neighborhood interests.

Conclusion:

The next meeting will be the public forum in October; no additional subcommittee meetings are needed.

All members voted to adjourn at 2:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Meggi Leduc

Description of violation

Background

In Q4 '24, the Concord Rec Commission began a project to repave Emerson & Rideout courts, later expanding scope (without a recorded vote) to include options for converting tennis/pickleball courts at Rideout into dedicated pickleball courts. No town-wide assessment of sites, site criteria, potential impacts, sound studies, or representation from pickleball/tennis players, neighbors or the broader community was included.

Violation

Although planning had been under way for 9+ months, the 10/21/25 meeting was the **FIRST and ONLY public forum where the community was informed of the project and asked to provide input.**

1. **Limited Public Access:** Zoom access, posted as a participant option, was unavailable town-wide during the meeting. While other boards, e.g., Planning, rescheduled to ensure equitable participation, the Rec Commission proceeded, excluding remote participation.
2. **Questionable Abutter Notification:** Many residents on streets abutting Rideout (Conant, Maple) did not receive notice of the meeting. When asked for the abutter notification list, the Rec Director stated she could not provide it, as the Rec Chair personally handled notifications.

Incredibly, at the 10/28 CPC meeting the Rec Chair indicated few neighbors attended the 10/21 meeting but that he had personally delivered notices to “all mailboxes within 200 yards of Rideout.” Not true. Not only were some direct abutters excluded, but a 200 yard radius would include Commonwealth and Highland Ave: no residents on those streets report receiving the flyer. Where is the list?

3. **No Follow-Up Opportunity:** This meeting was the **ONLY opportunity for public conversation** on a proposed \$900K+ project. Afterward, the Rec Chair:
 - o Barred public comment on Rideout at all remaining Commission/Subcommittee meetings. Unfathomable.
 - o Stopped distribution of public letters on Rideout to Rec Commission/Subcommittee members until a later date, reducing their time to understand the issues.
 - o Set a cutoff date of 11/21/25 after which no further comments on Rideout will be accepted, prematurely closing public comment.

On 11/5, 40+ abutting neighbors submitted a petition to the Rec Commission/Subcommittee. On 11/13, we learned the petition and all Rideout correspondence had not been distributed to Commission/Subcommittee members at the Chair's directive.

4. **Insufficient Committee Composition:** The Rideout Subcommittee has only two voting members; the member list is not posted. No tennis/pickleball players or neighbors are on the subcommittee.

5. **Lack of resident identification:** Part 1 of the 10/21 meeting, public commenters were not asked to state their name and address. A directional vote on options was conducted, with no validation that all who voted were Concord residents.

These actions demonstrate a pattern of controlling and limiting public input, procedural deficiencies, lack of transparency and preventing meaningful community and committee participation. Faith in the people/process is shattered.

Action Requested

The lack of process, public input, and transparency has irreparably harmed this project's credibility. We respectfully ask the Town to proceed with repaving Rideout with existing mixed-use courts **but** to establish a new subcommittee to step back and conduct a comprehensive, data-driven, town-wide courts assessment to determine the optimal distribution of tennis and pickleball courts across Concord.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of the Attorney General
One Ashburton Place
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

OPEN MEETING LAW COMPLAINT FORM

Instructions for completing the Open Meeting Law Complaint Form

The Attorney General's Division of Open Government interprets and enforces the Open Meeting Law, Chapter 30A of the Massachusetts General Laws, Sections 18-25. Below is the procedure for filing and responding to an Open Meeting Law complaint.

Instructions for filing a complaint:

- o Fill out the attached two-page form completely. Sign and date the second page. File the complaint with the public body within 30 days of the alleged violation. If the violation was not reasonably discoverable at the time it occurred, you must file the complaint within 30 days of the date the violation was reasonably discoverable. A violation that occurs during an open session of a meeting is reasonably discoverable on the date of the meeting.
- o To file the complaint:
 - o For a local or municipal public body, you must submit a copy of the complaint to the chair of the public body AND to the municipal clerk.
 - o For all other public bodies, you must submit a copy of the complaint to the chair of the public body.
 - o Complaints may be filed by mail, by email, or by hand. Please retain a copy for your records.
- o If the public body does not respond within 14 business days and does not request an extension to respond, contact the Division for further assistance.

Instructions for a public body that receives a complaint:

- o The chair must disseminate the complaint to the members of the public body.
- o The public body must meet to review the complaint within 14 business days (usually 20-22 calendar days).
- o After review, but within 14 business days, the public body must respond to the complaint in writing and must send the complainant a response and a description of any action the public body has taken to address the allegations in the complaint. At the same time, the body must send the Attorney General a copy of the complaint and a copy of the response. The public body may delegate this responsibility to an individual member of the public body, its counsel, or a staff member, but only after the public body has met to review the complaint.
- o If a public body requires more time to review the complaint and respond, it may request an extension of time for good cause by contacting the Division of Open Government.

Once the public body has responded to the complaint:

- o If you are not satisfied with the public body's response to your complaint, you may file a copy of the complaint with the Division by mail, by email, or by hand, but only once you have waited for 30 days after filing the complaint with the public body. Mail may be sent to: The Division of Open Government, Office of the Attorney General, One Ashburton Place - 20th Floor, Boston, MA 02108. Emails may be sent to: openmeeting@state.ma.us.
- o When you file your complaint with the Division, please include the complaint form and all documentation relevant to the alleged violation. You may wish to attach a cover letter explaining why the public body's response does not adequately address your complaint.
- o The Division will not review complaints filed with us more than 90 days after the violation, unless we granted an extension to the public body or you can demonstrate good cause for the delay.

If you have questions concerning the Open Meeting Law complaint process, we encourage you to contact the Division of Open Government by phone at (617) 963-2540 or by email at openmeeting@state.ma.us.



OPEN MEETING LAW COMPLAINT FORM

Office of the Attorney General
One Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108

Your Contact Information:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Ext. _____

Email: _____

Organization or Media Affiliation (if any): _____

Are you filing the complaint in your capacity as an individual, representative of an organization, or media?

(For statistical purposes only)

Individual Organization Media

Public Body that is the subject of this complaint:

City/Town County Regional/District State

Name of Public Body (including city/
town, county or region, if applicable): _____

Specific person(s), if any, you allege
committed the violation: _____

Date of alleged violation: _____

Description of alleged violation:

Describe the alleged violation that this complaint is about. If you believe the alleged violation was intentional, please say so and include the reasons supporting your belief.

Note: This text field has a maximum of 3000 characters.

What action do you want the public body to take in response to your complaint?

Note: This text field has a maximum of 500 characters.

Review, sign, and submit your complaint

I. Disclosure of Your Complaint.

Public Record. Under most circumstances, your complaint, and any documents submitted with your complaint, is considered a public record and will be available to any member of the public upon request.

Publication to Website. As part of the Open Data Initiative, the AGO will publish to its website certain information regarding your complaint, including your name and the name of the public body. The AGO will not publish your contact information.

II. Consulting With a Private Attorney.

The AGO cannot give you legal advice and is not able to be your private attorney, but represents the public interest. If you have any questions concerning your individual legal rights or responsibilities you should contact a private attorney.

III. Submit Your Complaint to the Public Body.

The complaint must be filed first with the public body. If you have any questions, please contact the Division of Open Government by calling (617) 963-2540 or by email to openmeeting@state.ma.us.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the provisions above and certify that the information I have provided is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

*For Use By Public Body
Date Received by Public Body:*

*For Use By AGO
Date Received by AGO:*

To: Recreation Commission

From: Kathleen Clute

Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 1:45 PM

Subject: Comments in advance of Oct. 21 public hearing

I'm a Pickleball player who has participated all summer with the Team Reach groups at Rideout. I would like to see the town reconfigure the tennis courts to be 1 tennis court and 6 permanent Pickleball courts. I would also like to see the courts resurfaced with high-tension concrete.

Thanks for your consideration,

Kathy Clute

10 Brook Trail Road

To: Recreation Commission

From: Dinos Gonatas

Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 5:46 PM

Subject: rideout park court resurfacing

Hello,

I won't be able to attend the meeting on the 21st but wanted to give my feedback on the options:

option 1 is similar to the existing layout. It only makes sense to go to the other options (2 & 3) IF with the current layout, pickleball players are turned away from lack of pickleball courts. Does this happen? I have not seen the courts completely used up. Going from option 1 to option 3 is a significant reduction in tennis courts (3 -> 1).

None of the above options make sense if the courts ARE NOT MAINTAINED. Concord Rec spent a lot of money resurfacing the courts around 10 years ago but they NEVER had someone fill the cracks after winter. It costs very little to do this, but without it, resurfacing is \$ down the drain.

Dinos Gonatas

To: Recreation Commission

From: Siegmar Knebl

Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 7:01 AM

Subject: Tennis courts - option 1 vote!

All courts must stay, I vote option 1. They are in high demand. If pickleball courts are needed, then convert a basketball court somewhere else to pickleball, or build entirely new courts at a new pickleball site. Do not locate pickleball courts anywhere near tennis courts, they are not compatible. Pickleball players are noisy and chatty, very disruptive to tennis play.

Siegmar Knebl

To: Recreation Commission

From: Carol Kerr

Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 8:51 AM

Subject: Rideout meeting

Last night's meeting was very informative - thank you! As additional suggestion, if there is not room for benches on the Rideout courts, perhaps move the gate next to the picnic tables for easy and quick access, which is important to pickleball.

Carol Kerr

To: Recreation Commission

From: Wendy Rovelli

Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 7:26 AM

Subject: Additional Comment about Pickleball at Rideout

Congratulations on last night's public forum. it was well attended and had a good exchange of ideas and feedback.

I wanted to share an additional comment that I thought of after the meeting that I think is relevant. I hope you will share this with members of the subcommittee. Today at Rideout, there are no public pickleball nets that are available for pickleball. The self-organized players have purchased and managed the nets in locked cabinets. People often asked to use the nets and we in turn explain how we have leaders that are responsible for overseeing play and the proper set-up/use of the nets. I have also seen people come and set-up their own nets to play with friends and family, because they want to play with their set of friends and/or at a time that better fits their schedule (I have done this myself). My point is that I think there could be even more demand for pickleball than you observe today, so I think that should be a consideration.

Thanks again for creating the forum that allowed the public to participate.

To: Recreation Commission

From: Michael Carey

Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2025 3:17 PM

Subject: October 21, 2025 Recreation Rideout Subcommittee meeting

I write to thank you and Phil Griffiths, the Chair, very much for arranging the recent Recreation Rideout Subcommittee meeting. I found it a very helpful and respectful exchange of views and I hope that the information and opinions provided give you and the Recreation Commission some useful additional public input.

I also feel that, while writing, I must emphasize to you that the proposed renovation project to the Rideout courts represents a great opportunity to the Town of Concord to provide some courts dedicated to pickleball. The construction of at least six dedicated pickleball courts was a clear recommendation on page 97 of the 2024 Concord Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan. I believe that either options 2 or 3 in the Activitas report would fulfill that Strategic Plan recommendation as well as greatly improve the experiences of the growing population of pickleball players at Rideout. Option 1 simply leaves the current Rideout multi-use court layout unchanged and would represent a **significant lost opportunity** for the town as a whole.

Thank you again for giving us a chance to express our viewpoints.

Regards, Mike

To: Recreation Commission

From: Carolyn Bunch

Sent: Friday, October 24, 2025 8:28 AM

Subject: Pickleball

Good morning

Unfortunately, I was unable to stream the meeting about resurfacing of the Pickleball courts at Rideout Park. I am writing to let you know that I am an avid Pickleball player and have been a resident of Concord for 25 years. As you, I'm sure you're aware Pickleball is full of players that are of all ages, but many of us are older. It is a great sport to keep people moving, especially once a tennis court is too large to cover. Just looking at the numbers you can have two people on a tennis court and you can have eight people on the same amount of space playing pickle ball. We do not have any dedicated spaces for pickleball. Bedford next to the high school has dedicated spaces. Acton has dedicated spaces. All with beautifully maintained and surface courts with nets provide provided by the towns. I would like to strongly vote for six dedicated Pickleball courts in the town of concord.

The town has many tennis courts and no dedicated Pickleball courts Thank you for your consideration and hearing my voice.

Kind regards

Carolyn

To: Recreation Commission

From: Deb Welch

Sent: Friday, October 24, 2025 5:25 PM

Subject: Rideout Options

Hello Concord Rec!

Regarding Rideout Courtney Improvements:

I vote for the option with six dedicated Pickleball courts and one tennis court.

This recognizes that the Recreation Department's long range planning calls for six dedicated courts for Pickleball in Concord. Many other surrounding towns do have dedicated Pickleball courts currently and Concord should have them as well as there is rising demand for places to play pickle ball.

Having access to dedicated pickleball courts in our town also supports aging Concordians as a wide range of ages play pickleball including folks in their 80s.

Thank you very much for your work and your consideration,

Deb Welch

141 Stow Street

To: Recreation Commission

From: Cynthia Katz

Sent: Friday, October 24, 2025 6:29 PM

Subject: Tennis and Pickleball Courts

Hello Concord Rec Department!

I am glad that Rideout Tennis Courts will finally be getting attention.

I support keeping the court configuration at Rideout the same, so that there are 3 tennis courts that are lined for pickleball. The other options don't allow enough tennis courts, which are WELL used at Rideout. Additionally, I support rolling nets, which will alleviate the need for a big bin on the courts to hold the nets, and will be easier to set up.

I also support Pickleball at Emerson Field. With 5 courts there, three could be kept as tennis courts alone, and the other two could be also lined for Pickleball, or even made into the 6 courts that were indicated the town needs. There needs to be both tennis and pickleball at both Rideout and Emerson. Everyone in town who wants to play tennis or pickleball should be able to go to the field that is closest to their home.. I live within earshot of Rideout, and want to be able to play both tennis and pickleball close to home. I do NOT feel that I should have to drive to Emerson to play tennis if one of the options that deletes tennis courts is built. (One court is not sufficient). That makes no sense....and is not consistent with Concord's goals for Envision Concord.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Katz

20 Conant Street, West Concord

To: Recreation Commission

From: Carl Valvo

Sent: Saturday, October 25, 2025 9:09 PM

Subject: Rideout Resurfacing

I understand that the Town is interested in public input on the allocation of court space (tennis/pickleball) at the soon-to-be resurfaced Rideout facility. Given the persistent and growing demand for pickleball courts among all age groups, I support Option 3.

Carl Valvo

87 Stow St.

To: Recreation Commission

From: Jane Fay

Sent: Sunday, October 26, 2025 8:38 AM

Subject: Pickleball

Good morning.

I was unable to attend the hearing this past week but strongly advocate for dedicated pickleball courts at Rideout - option 3. The interest in pickleball remains incredibly strong and continues to grow. The courts remain busy 7 days a week with maximum attendance at open play at both morning and afternoon sessions. Many communities are building dedicated courts and it is a real bonus for a town to have such a great recreational opportunity. Pickleball brings together people of all ages in a fun and active game and anything the town can do to encourage safe play is necessary. Currently the cracks on the courts are unsafe for players and must be repaired. Rolling nets are a poor substitute for built in courts and for the very few who want to play tennis - Emerson or the remaining court on rideout are a good option.

Strongly advocate for Option3.

Thank you.

Jane Fay

40 Caterina Heights

Concord

To: Recreation Commission

From: Leslie Michelle V. Touw

Sent: Sunday, October 26, 2025 1:32 PM

Subject: Rideout courts for BOTH tennis & Pickleball

I am a 70 year old Concordian who still plays weekly competitive tennis as well as social tennis. For the latter, the courts at Rideout serve as an important venue.

Not only do I play tennis there, I've tried playing pickleball there too. But I found that it would ruin my tennis strokes. However, many, including those who can no longer play tennis, love it. Maybe for me too in the future!

It is possible for me to walk to the Rideout Courts and for others in West Concord Village area to be able to walk or bike to these courts for both tennis and pickleball. Not only is it healthier for us, it also contributes to lowering Concord's carbon footprint and promotes stronger localized community interactions and activities. These are all in line with the Envision Concord plan as well.

It is very important that the public courts at Rideout serve the needs of both sports. In fact, I believe that ALL public courts serve both sports and thus provide all the benefits mentioned above. So please resurface the Rideout courts with a mixture of both. And do the same for other courts throughout the various Concord neighborhoods.

For the Rideout courts specifically, I prefer Option 1. Unfortunately, due to a funeral abroad, I was unable to attend the meeting on the 21st. I would have expressed this position there. May it be taken into account through this letter.

Sincerely yours,

L. Michelle Touw

111 Laws Brook Road

To: Recreation Commission

From: Chris Dallmus

Sent: Monday, October 27, 2025 10:26 AM

Subject: Concord Rideout Tennis Court Study

To the Town of Concord Recreation Department:

With respect to the consideration of several options as outlined in the Concord Rideout Tennis Court Study for pickleball and tennis play, for the past three years, I have coordinated Concord Rideout Guided Pickleball Group's Tuesday afternoon pickleball sessions at Rideout. In most instances, our group needs all 6 pickleball courts (*the 3 tennis courts*) for our beginner, intermediate and advanced group play for upwards of 25 to 36 pickleball players. Since our group has not been able to reserve these courts at our specific time, my practice has been to arrive 20-30 minutes early to set up the nets and 'claim' the courts. Over this period of three years, I have only witnessed tennis court use on more than one court. In that instance, on one court, a single tennis player was practicing serves and, on the other, an individual (*tennis pro*) was giving private lessons, under the guise of 'babysitting'. Though not this year, this individual has been using the Rideout courts for these private lessons which, I understand, are prohibited by the town of Concord at Rideout Park. In other instances, and this is not a very common occurrence, one tennis court has been in use by two players. We typically claim the court once they have finished their play. This is a long winded way of saying that, at least on this one weekday afternoon over the course of three years, there has been extremely, extremely limited use of these courts for tennis play.

Throughout the course of a single week, pickleball play is scheduled by the Concord Rideout Guided Pickleball Group on the following days and times:

Monday 9am for 14 Advanced players

Monday 9am for 10 Intermediate players

Monday 4pm for 14 Advanced players

Tuesday 9am for 14 Advanced players
Tuesday 9am for 10 Intermediate players
Tuesday 4pm for 20 Advanced players
Tuesday 4pm for 8 Intermediate players
Tuesday 4pm for 8 Beginner players
Wednesday 9am for 14 Advanced players
Wednesday 9am for 10 Intermediate players
Wednesday 4pm for 14 Advanced players
Thursday 9am for 14 Advanced players
Thursday 9am for 14 Intermediate players
Thursday 4pm for 14 Advanced players
Friday 9am for 14 Advanced players
Friday 9am for 14 Intermediate players
Saturday 9am for 28 All Level/Open Play players
Sunday 9am for 28 All Level/Open Play players

This weekly play provides the opportunity for over 260 pickleball players to utilize the Rideout courts. Balanced against the aforementioned “extremely, extremely limited use of these courts for tennis play”. In my opinion it seems reasonable to conclude that Option 2 is most appropriate, provided the single tennis court is also lined for pickleball play. This permits pickleball play on upwards of 8 pickleball courts, which is the number of dedicated pickleball courts shown in Option 3.

Sincerely,

Christopher Dallmus

Concord Rideout Guided Pickleball Group Leader

To: Recreation Commission

From: Doris Kelly

Sent: Monday, October 27, 2025 5:03 PM

Subject: Rideout Playground Tennis/Pickleball Configuration

My name is Doris Kelly and I live at 1674 Monument St. I was not able to attend last week's meeting to express my opinion on the Tennis/Pickleball layout at Rideout.

I support Option 3 to maximize the pickleball options. I play pickleball at Rideout several times a week and feel that providing space for pickleball is the best option for the most people. There is a solid group of 8-16 players that play pickleball year round during weekdays and around 24 people year round that play on both Saturday and Sunday. The density of players on the surface is much greater than tennis, so more Concord and local area residents could enjoy the courts if they were dedicated to pickleball rather than tennis..

Thank you for your consideration.

Doris Kelly

To: Recreation Commission

From: Ken Freeman

Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 10:52 AM

Subject: Rideout options

Unlike many people who play both pickleball and tennis, I am actually writing to oppose option 3 for Rideout. As was pointed out during the meeting last week, having 1 tennis court is not very useful; it doesn't make sense to go somewhere for tennis when there is only 1 court that may not be available.

I also do not support option 1, although I find it preferable to option 3. Multi-use courts with wheeled nets are not very good for either tennis or pickleball.

IMO, the most sensible and fairest option is option 2. Concord already has 11 excellent tennis courts near the center: 5 at Emerson and 6 at the high school. Many, (likely most), tennis players in West Concord would prefer to drive to the center for tennis as opposed to using mediocre courts at Rideout. And this would give the town's growing pickleball community an excellent set of courts on par with tennis in the center. If we also need tennis in West Concord, I recommend using Willard or CMS.

Regardless of the option chosen, I strongly recommend using post-tensioned concrete. That alone would be a huge improvement over the current conditions.

Thank you for all your efforts.

Ken Freeman

85 Walden Terrace

To: Recreation Commission

From: Kara Barr

Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 11:36 AM

Subject: Rideout resurfacing

Hello,

Im writing in support of option 3 (6 PB/1 tennis) for the resurfacing of the rideout courts.

Best,

Kara Barr

145 Hayward Mill Rd.

To: Concord Recreation Commission

From: Jean and Alexander Easterday (48 Maple St, Concord, MA 01742)

Date: October 28, 2025

Subject: Rideout Playground Tennis Court Resurfacing & Dedicated Pickleball Proposal

Dear Members of the Recreation Commission,

As 30-year abutters of Rideout Playground, we appreciate the Commission's continued commitment to maintaining and improving this valued West Concord community resource.

We recently learned of the proposal to convert Rideout's existing tennis courts into a dedicated eight-court pickleball facility. While the resurfacing project itself is welcome, we are deeply concerned that this conversion appears to be advancing without a comprehensive town-wide study or sufficient evaluation of potential neighborhood impacts such as noise, parking, lighting, and overall recreational balance.

Key Concerns

1. Lack of Comprehensive Planning

When asked, the Concord Recreation Commission confirmed that no Concord-wide review of court locations or suitability for pickleball has been conducted as part of the current repaving effort. A shift of this scale in facility use warrants careful study, transparent public engagement, and alignment with existing planning guidance.

The June 2024 Concord Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan recommends:

Adding at least six (6) dedicated outdoor pickleball courts to the current inventory, preferably separate from Rideout Park; and

Constructing those courts on existing Town-owned land such as the Peabody School fields, where parking is readily available.

Other sites previously identified for potential dedicated pickleball facilities include the **MCI Prison property** and **Emerson Park** (currently offers five dedicated tennis courts and is located less than one mile from **Concord-Carlisle High School**, which has an additional six courts).

2. Noise Impacts

Eight active pickleball courts can generate sound levels exceeding 70 dB within 100 feet - significantly above typical residential background noise. Nearby towns such

as Hingham, Wellesley, and Manchester-by-the-Sea require setbacks of 400-800 feet and the installation of sound-mitigating barriers for comparable facilities.

Acoustical consultants in Massachusetts generally recommend at least 500-800 feet of separation from the nearest residential property line, along with sound-attenuating fencing (10 feet high with absorptive surfaces) and vegetated berms. **The current design and cost estimates for the Rideout project do not include any sound mitigation measures.** Given the playground's close proximity to homes (courts are within 40-60 feet of residences), this omission is a serious concern that warrants professional noise analysis and mitigation planning prior to any approval.

3. Parking and Traffic

Rideout already experiences parking shortages during athletic events. A fully active eight-court pickleball complex could more than double current player volume and exacerbate congestion on nearby residential streets.

4. Lighting and Hours of Use

Plans reportedly include a conduit for potential future lighting, which would extend pickleball play (and associated noise) into late evening hours. This would alter the playground's current character and set a precedent for lighting installations at other neighborhood playgrounds.

5. Equity and Accessibility

Rideout Playground's current mixed-use courts serve both tennis and pickleball players, including many who walk from surrounding neighborhoods. Converting the courts exclusively to pickleball would eliminate that balance and could disproportionately benefit non-resident users drawn by free, dedicated courts.

Request

It would be premature and counterproductive to make a permanent change to the multiuse character of Rideout Playground without a comprehensive assessment of town-wide recreation needs and site suitability. Moreover, proceeding in this manner appears inconsistent with the Recreation Commission's own strategic plan recommendations published in June of 2024.

We respectfully request that the Commission **pause any decision** to dedicate Rideout Playground exclusively to pickleball until:

- A town-wide recreation and sound-impact study is completed;
- Alternative analysis of other sites is compared for feasibility and tradeoffs; and
- The community has a full opportunity for public input and discussion.

We fully support resurfacing the existing courts and exploring expanded recreational opportunities. However, decisions of this magnitude should reflect careful planning, neighborhood compatibility, and Concord's long tradition of thoughtful, collaborative problem- solving.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jean and Alexander Easterday

To: Recreation Commission

From: Dan Stapleton

Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 10:26 PM

Subject: Rideout tennis court restoration - feedback on 3 proposed options

Dan Stapleton

20 Conant Street

West Concord, MA

I request that the Recreation Commission recommend Option 1 (restoring the three tennis courts and lining the courts for both tennis [3 courts] and pickleball [6 courts]). I request that the Commission not recommend either Option 2 (convert to 8 permanent pickleball courts) or Option 3 (6 permanent pickleball courts and 1 tennis court lined for both tennis and pickleball).

Option 1 is the only option that maintains the existing flexibility for both tennis and pickleball. It also represents a Town investment that supports both tennis and pickleball but accounts for a future in which pickleball may not be as popular as it currently is. Importantly though is equity between the two main Town recreation areas (Rideout and Emerson). We are left with the impression that pickleball is not proposed for Emerson due to neighborhood concerns about the adverse effects of pickleball courts (e.g., noise, traffic), but that those concerns are not being considered equally important for West Concord homeowners living next to or near the Rideout courts. And that tennis should be readily available at Emerson but not at Rideout.

Options 2 and 3 also eliminate or greatly reduce walkable access to tennis (still a popular sport) within West Concord. Walkable access to tennis should be available at both Emerson and Rideout, the Town's two main recreation facilities. In particular, no other walkable tennis alternatives (other than Rideout) are available in West Concord. Walkability is a key Town goal.

The adverse effects of the presence of pickleball courts, which are significant, do not appear to have been a consideration during review of the options. Along with this email, I reference the letter provided by Jean and Alexander Easterday dated October 28, 2025 which summarizes these in detail. Also noise attenuation measures have not been included in the cost estimates or discussed relative to efficacy.

I recognize the value of creating opportunities for pickleball, but it seems unfair to abutters and others living within 400 to 800 feet (typical setbacks for pickleball courts) to turn Rideout into the Town's "pickleball center", adversely impacting their quality of life and potentially affecting property values and salability.

Thank you for your consideration.

To: Recreation Commission

From: Jeanne Griffith

Sent: Sunday, November 2, 2025 2:11 PM

Subject: Rideout resurfacing options at Rideout - pickleball courts

Hello,

I am writing in support of resurfacing Option #3 for Rideout, 6 pickleball courts and 1 tennis court.

Pickleball is increasing in popularity at a faster rate than that of tennis. It makes sense to have courts for this growing population. There are multiple locations in town with dedicated tennis courts, while there are no dedicated pickleball courts.

Beginning and advanced pickleball players would benefit from having dedicated courts. As a new player I can tell you that multiple lines on one court can be confusing. Option #3 would meet the needs of the pickleball community and allow tennis to continue at Rideout.

Please approve resurfacing Option#3, 6 pickleball courts and 1 court for Rideout. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jeanne Griffith

396 Thoreau St

Concord, MA 01742

To: Recreation Commission

From: Patricia Cross

Sent: Friday, October 31, 2025 12:32 PM

Subject: Rideout Park Tennis Court Resurfacing

Dear Members of the Recreation Commission

I have been a resident of Concord for more than 30 years having lived in both West Concord and downtown Concord in that time. I now live in West Concord adjacent to Rideout. I am both a tennis player and a pickleball player. Rideout Field is a valuable resource for a diverse population of Concordians engaged in a variety of activities. It is important that it remains so.

I recently attended a meeting at Harvey Wheeler where proposals were presented to convert some or all of the Rideout tennis courts to pickleball courts when the courts are resurfaced. The 3 tennis courts at Rideout are the only public tennis courts in West Concord. The options presented were 1) keep the 3 tennis courts and overlay 6 pickleball court lines, this is what we have now, 2) keep one tennis court and install 6 dedicated pickleball courts, 3) eliminate all tennis courts and install 8 pickleball courts. While the resurfacing project is welcome, I am concerned that the conversion of tennis courts to pickleball courts is advancing without a comprehensive town-wide study or sufficient evaluation of potential neighborhood impacts such as noise, parking, lighting and recreational balance in the town.

KEY CONCERNS

Lack of Comprehensive Planning

At the meeting, town representatives confirmed that no Concord-wide review of court locations or suitability for pickleball has been conducted as part of the current repaving effort. A change of this scale in facility use warrants careful study, transparent public engagement and alignment with existing planning guidelines.

The **June 2024 Concord Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan** recommends:

: Adding at least 6 dedicated pickleball courts to the current inventory, **preferably separate from Rideout Park** and

: Constructing those courts on existing Town owned lands such as the Peabody School fields where parking is readily available .

Other sites identified for potential dedicated pickleball courts are the **MCI Prison property** and **Emerson Field** (there are 4 tennis courts at CCHS less than a mile away).

Noise Impacts

Six pickleball courts generate sound levels of 70dB within 100 feet, eight courts will generate higher levels. This is significantly higher than typical residential background noise. Nearby towns require setbacks of 400-800 feet and sound mitigating barriers for comparable facilities.

Massachusetts acoustical consultants recommend at least 500-800 feet of separation from the nearest residential property line with sound attenuating fencing and vegetated berms. **The current design and cost estimates for the Rideout do not include any setbacks and sound mitigation measures.** In the current plan the courts are 40-60 feet from residential property lines. This is a serious problem that warrants professional noise analysis and mitigation planning prior to approval of changes to the Rideout courts.

Parking and Traffic

Parking at Rideout is very limited. During athletic activities of any kind there are significant shortages. Increasing the number of pickleball courts will increase player volume and exacerbate the shortage of parking.

Lighting and Hours of Use

Plans include a conduit for potential future lighting which would extend pickleball play and the associated noise into evening hours. This would alter the character of Rideout and the surrounding neighborhood in a negative way. This should not be permitted.

Equity and Accessibility

Rideout's current mixed use courts **serve both tennis and pickleball players**, including many who walk from surrounding neighborhoods. Converting the courts to exclusively, or almost exclusively, pickleball would eliminate that balance.

Request

Rideout is a multi-use field and should remain so. It is a central hub for the community and recreational activities in West Concord. .It is premature and counterproductive to make a change to the multi-use character of Rideout Park without a complete assessment of town-wide needs and **site suitability** . This is also **inconsistent with the June 2024 Strategic Plan**. The plan recommends siting at least 6 dedicated pickleball courts **separate from Rideout Park**.

I fully support the resurfacing of the Rideout Courts and keeping them as dual use. However, the decision to dedicate some or all of the tennis courts to pickleball should be paused until a thorough study of alternative sites, sound impacts and full opportunity for public input and discussion has occurred.

Respectfully,

Patricia Cross

80 Conant St.

To: Recreation Commission

From: Ann Sgarzi

Sent: Monday, November 3, 2025 5:57 PM

Subject: Pickleball at Rideout Park | recipients please forward as requested below

Dear Members of the Concord Recreation Commission,

On page 97 of the [June 2024 Concord Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan](#), in section 2D under the heading **Improve or Expand Current Recreation Facilities**, it reads:

“More Outdoor Courts of All Types ... Add at least six (6) dedicated outdoor pickleball courts to the current stock, preferably separate from Rideout Park.” (emphasis added)

And below the heading **Key Opportunities**, on the same page:

... At least six (6) dedicated pickleball courts should be constructed at existing Town-owned land such as the fields at Peabody School, where parking is available. (emphasis added)

On page 35 of the [Executive Summary of the June 2024 Concord Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan](#), it reads:

“Overall Recommendations These are overall recommendations that should be applied to all existing facilities and future improvements and property acquisitions.” (emphasis added)

Followed by, on page 36:

“D. More Outdoor Courts of all Types ... Add at least six (6) dedicated outdoor pickleball courts to the current stock, preferably separate from Rideout Park.” (emphasis added)

What has changed in less than a year and a half such that the Recreation Commission has put forth options for resurfacing the tennis courts at Rideout Park that include two options for dedicated pickleball courts?

At the Recreation Commission’s Rideout Subcommittee meeting held on October 21st at Harvey Wheeler Community Center, the Commission stated more than once that while both the Rideout Park and Emerson Park tennis courts need to be resurfaced, only the Rideout project is being evaluated at this time, and Emerson will be considered after Rideout.

However, [the report submitted to the Town dated April 1, 2025 \(updated April 10, 2025\) by Activitas](#), the landscape architecture and civil engineering consultant retained to evaluate tennis and basketball court conditions and options at both Rideout and Emerson, shows that resurfacing of Emerson Park tennis courts *has* been evaluated—and Activitas was not asked to evaluate options for pickleball at Emerson, only at Rideout.

Why do we spend Town resources on a Facilities Strategic Plan and ignore its recommendations in the following calendar year?

I agree that there is a need for dedicated pickleball courts in Concord. I also agree with our Town-funded Facilities Strategic Plan’s recommendation that they be “preferably separate from Rideout Park.”

I request the Recreation Commission to step back and do a holistic evaluation of the Town’s possible locations for pickleball, rather than making a decision about pickleball at Rideout in isolation of the pros and cons of other possible locations.

And finally, as a Maple Street resident, I would like to note that I am disappointed that the flyer distributed to homes about the October 21st informational meeting was not distributed to my home. And although I live across the street from the houses that physically abut Rideout, at least two of the houses that do abut the Rideout property report that they did not receive the flyer. That is not the spirit of community under which this process should be conducted and a decision made.

Ann Sgarzi
33 Maple Street

PS This *Washington Post* story was published yesterday. It discusses the impact of pickleball sounds and how, in Braintree, MA, tennis courts that were converted to pickleball courts in 2022 have impacted nearby neighbors (gift link) <https://wapo.st/3JDhCSd>

To: Recreation Commission

From: Jean Easterday

Sent: Wednesday, November 5, 2025 8:43 AM

Subject: Rideout Neighborhood Petition - Recreation Commission Pickleball Court Proposal

Dear Concord Recreation Commission,

As direct abutters to Rideout Park, we respectfully submit our signatures in the attached petition to express our collective concern about the Recreation Commission's process and proposal to convert the existing tennis courts at Rideout into dedicated pickleball courts.

While this proposal was first presented to the public at the Recreation Commission's Rideout Subcommittee meeting on October 21, 2025, we understand that **planning has been underway since January—without any meaningful community outreach or input.** It is not clear to us when and how the decision was made to conduct a study for dedicated pickleball options at Rideout less than 6 months after the **June 2024 Concord Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan recommended the addition of new pickleball courts separate from Rideout Park.**

Rideout Park has long served as a valued, multi-use facility supporting a wide range of recreational needs within the West Concord community. Residents have consistently advocated to keep this public space **inclusive and accessible to all, rather than dedicating it to a single activity.**

The current proposal—described by the Recreation Commission Chair as “**making a Pickleball Center in West Concord**” during a January 8, 2025 Subcommittee meeting—is inconsistent with that vision. Converting the existing tennis courts into dedicated pickleball courts would prioritize one group's interests over others, including tennis players, nearby residents, and those who enjoy peaceful outdoor recreation.

While neighbors have not filed formal noise complaints about pickleball at Rideout, this should not be interpreted as an absence of impact. Many have taken steps—such as installing solid fencing—to try to help mitigate sound, demonstrating our willingness to coexist and support diverse recreational uses. However, **altering the current court configuration would place additional strain on the surrounding neighborhood**, which has already worked in good faith to accommodate existing pickleball activity.

We respectfully request that the Recreation Commission direct the Subcommittee to address the immediate need of resurfacing the existing courts at Rideout and defer any new plans for dedicated pickleball courts until a full, town-wide court assessment and recommendation are completed.

Thank you for your attention and for considering the voices of those of us who live, work from home, and play at Rideout Park.

Sincerely,
Rideout Park Surrounding Neighbors



Rideout Community
Petition.pdf

Retain Existing Tennis Court Configuration at Rideout Playground Petition

We, the undersigned neighbors of Rideout Playground, support resurfacing the existing tennis courts at Rideout to maintain their safety and usability. However, we do **not support converting these multiuse courts into dedicated pickleball-only courts, consistent with the recommendation of the June 2024 Concord Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan.**

This change would significantly alter the character of the playground without a comprehensive town-wide study of recreational needs, noise impacts, parking, lighting, and neighborhood compatibility.

We urge the Recreation Commission to:

1. Proceed only with resurfacing the current courts;
2. Preserve Rideout's shared tennis and pickleball use; and
3. Conduct a full town-wide assessment before considering any permanent changes.

Signatures:

	Name	Signature	Address
1	Margaret Grandet	Margaret Grandet	602 Maple St Concord
2	Erin Karr	Erin Karr	82 Laws Brook Rd Concord
3	David Karr	David Karr	82 Laws Brook Rd Concord
4	ROBERT WINDHEIM	Robert Windheim	31 Laws Brook Rd Concord
5	Michelle Windheim	Michelle Windheim	31 Laws Brook Rd Concord
6	Sumi Fasolo	Sumi Fasolo	28 Conant St. Concord
7	Lise Depina	Lise Depina	34 Conant St Concord
8	Carol Yewerton	Carol Yewerton	46 Conant St Concord
9	Rob Devlin	Rob Devlin	70 Conant St Concord
10	CAROLYN STRAUB Carolyn Straub	Carolyn Straub	70 LAWS BROOK Rd CONCORD

Retain Existing Tennis Court Configuration at Rideout Playground Petition

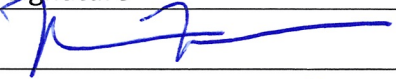
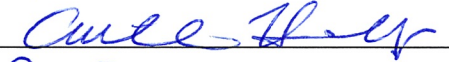

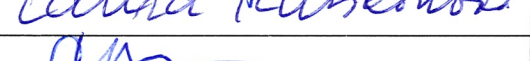

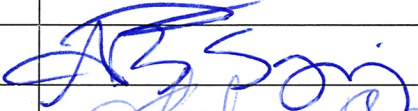



We, the undersigned neighbors of Rideout Playground, support resurfacing the existing tennis courts at Rideout to maintain their safety and usability. However, we do **not support converting these multiuse courts into dedicated pickleball-only courts, consistent with the recommendation of the June 2024 Concord Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan.**

This change would significantly alter the character of the playground without a comprehensive town-wide study of recreational needs, noise impacts, parking, lighting, and neighborhood compatibility.

We urge the Recreation Commission to:

1. Proceed only with resurfacing the current courts;
2. Preserve Rideout's shared tennis and pickleball use; and
3. Conduct a full town-wide assessment before considering any permanent changes.

Signatures:

	Name	Signature	Address
1	Natalie Francoeur		45 Conant Street
2	Caitlin Sheasly		17B Laws Brook Rd.
3	Carl Sheasly		17B Laws Brook Rd.
4	Laura Tilus-Korhonen		18 Maple Street
5	CHRISTOPHER SGARZI		33 Maple Street
6	JONATHAN SONIS		38 Maple Street
7	Ann Sgarzi		33 Maple Street
8	Stephanie Bustillos		28 Maple Street
9	Lily Sonis		38 Maple St
10	Ahmad Haddaddeen		62 Conant St.

Retain Existing Tennis Court Configuration at Rideout Playground Petition



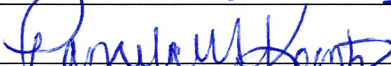
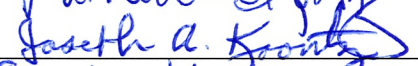
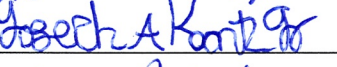


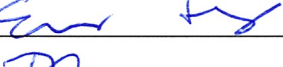
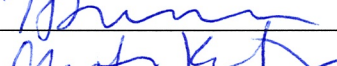
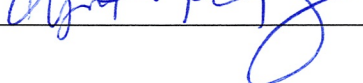
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This change would significantly alter the character of the playground without a comprehensive town-wide study of recreational needs, noise impacts, parking, lighting, and neighborhood compatibility.

We urge the Recreation Commission to:

1. Proceed only with resurfacing the current courts;
2. Preserve Rideout's shared tennis and pickleball use; and
3. Conduct a full town-wide assessment before considering any permanent changes.

Signatures:

	Name	Signature	Address
1	Jean Easterday		48 Maple St Concord
2	AL EASTERDAY		48 MAPLE ST. CONCORD MA
3	Pamela Kuntz		41 Maple St. Concord MA
4	Joseph A. Koontz		41 Maple Street Concord, MA
5	Joseph A. Koontz, JR		41 Maple Street Concord, MA
6	ANTI KORHONEN		18 Maple St Concord, MA
7	Mike Feltel		15 Maple St, Concord MA
8	Emily Huntley		17A LAWS BROOK Rd, Concord, MA
9	Tracie Dunn		26 LAWS BROOK Rd, Concord
10	Cynthia Katz		20 Conant St. W. Concord

Retain Existing Tennis Court Configuration at Rideout Playground Petition

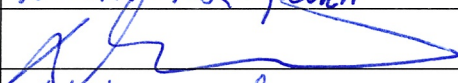
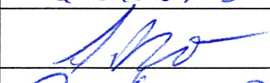

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This change would significantly alter the character of the playground without a comprehensive town-wide study of recreational needs, noise impacts, parking, lighting, and neighborhood compatibility.

We urge the Recreation Commission to:

1. Proceed only with resurfacing the current courts;
2. Preserve Rideout's shared tennis and pickleball use; and
3. Conduct a full town-wide assessment before considering any permanent changes.

Signatures:

	Name	Signature	Address
1	HELEN McLAUGHLIN	Helen McLaughlin	41 Maple Street
2	Daniel Stepleton		20 Conant Street
3	MARK BOASBERG	Mark Boasberg	48 LAWS BROOK RD.
4	Enid Boasberg	Enid Boasberg	48 Laws Brook Rd
5	Ken Natalie O	Kenneth (Natalie O)	54 Laws Brook Rd
6	Lynda Olsen	Lynda Olsen	54 Laws Brook Rd
7	GERTRUDE DERUZZO	76 LAWS BROOK RD.	Gertrude DeRuzzo
8	Aarthi Rao		86 Laws Brook Rd
9	Arthur C. Ellis	Arthur C. Ellis	97 Laws Brook Rd.
10	Tim McInerney		33 Conant Street

Retain Existing Tennis Court Configuration at Rideout Playground Petition

We, the undersigned neighbors of Rideout Playground, support resurfacing the existing tennis courts at Rideout to maintain their safety and usability. However, we do **not support converting these multiuse courts into dedicated pickleball-only courts, consistent with the recommendation of the June 2024 Concord Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan.**

This change would significantly alter the character of the playground without a comprehensive town-wide study of recreational needs, noise impacts, parking, lighting, and neighborhood compatibility.

We urge the Recreation Commission to:

1. Proceed only with resurfacing the current courts;
2. Preserve Rideout's shared tennis and pickleball use; and
3. Conduct a full town-wide assessment before considering any permanent changes.

Signatures:

	Name	Signature	Address
1	Patricia Cross	Patricia Cross	80 Conant St
2	Melissa Krol	Melissa Krol	36 Laws Brook Rd
3	Nick Krol	Nick Krol	36 Laws Brook Rd
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Retain Existing Tennis Court Configuration at Rideout Playground Petition

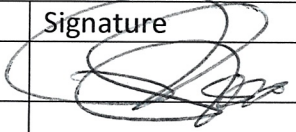
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This change would significantly alter the character of the playground without a comprehensive town-wide study of recreational needs, noise impacts, parking, lighting, and neighborhood compatibility.

We urge the Recreation Commission to:

1. Proceed only with resurfacing the current courts;
2. Preserve Rideout's shared tennis and pickleball use; and
3. Conduct a full town-wide assessment before considering any permanent changes.

Signatures:

	Name	Signature	Address
1	PAUL DERUZZO		76 LAWS BREAK ROAD
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To: Recreation Commission

From: Irl Smith

Sent: Friday, November 7, 2025 5:59 PM

Subject: Slight suggested modification to Rideout courts option 3

I echo Mike Carey's sentiments about the friendliness and inclusiveness of the meeting. I hope you and the rest of the Committee got a good sense of the public interest in dedicated pickleball courts.

This email is regarding the 6 PB + 1 tennis court option, no. 3. At the meeting I suggested some slight modifications, as shown in the attached sketch. Here is the reasoning.

I believe it would be a good idea to include two new gates. One would be at the center of the west edge to allow good access between seating outside the perimeter fence and all six courts. One would be somewhere along the south edge (possibly opposite the existing gate into the batting cage), which would help manage traffic on the courts and also aid in retrieving the rare ball which goes over the south fence. The existing gate at the northeast corner of the tennis court should be retained.

When multiple courts are in use, we pickleballers need a little space to allow placing paddles on the ground (or in a rack) to establish the queue. So I think it would be helpful to shift the pickleball courts slightly to the east, to allow for a queue structure near the west gate. My sketch does maintain the 12-ft spacing between the east fence and the tennis court and suggests a slight reduction in the pickleball court-to-court spacing, to 10 ft, which is still in accordance with recommendations I have read. This would leave enough space for the queue and possibly a bench or two along the west fence.

Finally, I think that striping the tennis court also for pickleball would be a good idea, with tennis players always to have priority on that court (including clear signage to that effect) but making it available for pickleball on days when we have more than a full house and no tennis players are present.



6 PB + 1 T-2PB
courts courts at Ride

To: Recreation Commission

From: Jonathan Sonis

Sent: Tuesday, November 11, 2025 10:43 AM

Subject: Rideout Park: value of mixed use courts

We are writing as direct abutters to the existing tennis courts at Rideout Park to express our support for maintaining the courts for mixed use.

As neighbors, we deeply appreciate having the flexibility for both tennis and pickleball at Rideout. This balance allows our community to make use of the same shared space. If the courts were to be converted for exclusive pickleball use, a significant number of residents who enjoy tennis would lose access to this wonderful public resource.

We wish to emphasize that we genuinely welcome the activity and energy that come with living next to a public park. In the more than five years we have lived on Maple Street, we have not only accepted, but enjoyed, the sounds and liveliness of both tennis and pickleball adjacent to our home. However, we are deeply concerned that converting these mixed-use courts into a dedicated “pickleball center” would fundamentally change the character of Rideout Park into a regional pickleball destination, decreasing the diversity of activities and visitors that make Rideout so special.

We appreciate your attention and look forward to continuing to participate in a thoughtful discussion around the best path forward for the courts. Thank you in advance for distributing our correspondence to the Concord Recreation Commission, Rideout Subcommittee, Community Preservation Committee, and any other relevant groups or committees.

With gratitude,

Lily and Jonathan Sonis

38 Maple Street

Concord, MA

To: Recreation Commission

From: Jonathan Sonis

Sent: Friday, November 14, 2025 10:38 AM

Subject: Rideout Park Correspondence

We appreciated the opportunity to attend last evening's meeting and listen to the thoughtful discussion amongst Commission members on this topic. Hearing the description of Concord's reported surplus of tennis courts with 11 in Concord Center (high school and Emerson) and 3 in West Concord raised an additional question for us that I wish to share with the Rideout Courts Subcommittee and Recreation Commission.

In the interest of level-loading recreational resources across the town, why would there not be a broader discussion around repurposing a subset of the Emerson courts for pickleball, allowing for West Concord to retain its relatively-speaking low number of mixed-use (tennis or pickleball) courts? I have heard from several around town that it is because "the neighbors at Emerson would complain" — I hope that is merely a rumor and not an actual consideration for the Commission's decision-making.

As mentioned in our previous correspondence, we are not anti-pickleball. We have never complained to the town about anything since moving here in 2020. But it is disappointing to believe that perhaps our overall neighborliness and current acceptance of the mixed use of the Rideout courts for pickleball — despite their lack of sound mitigation and direct adjacency to our home — would be used as leverage to pursue potential partial or full conversion in West Concord as opposed to at a site with more than three times as many tennis courts within a close radius. While it was made clear last evening that the "preferably not at Rideout Park" language in the Strategic Plan referred to new court construction, it is striking that Rideout was specifically called out as an inappropriate location for pickleball expansion — presumably due to the close proximity to homes and potential adverse impacts of additional pickleball activity at Rideout.

Thank you,

Lily and Jonathan Sonis

38 Maple Street

To: Recreation Commission

From: Harry Bartlett

Sent: Friday, November 14, 2025 10:34 AM

Subject: Rideout Court Resurfacing Project

I was unable to attend the meeting last night at Hunt Gym about resurfacing the tennis courts at Rideout Park last night. I've lived next to Rideout for over 25 years and raised 3 children in Concord. We frequently play tennis on those courts and feel strongly that the courts remain dual usage i.e. both tennis courts and pickle ball courts.

All three of my sons grew up playing tennis at Rideout and two played tennis on the CCHS tennis team, one of which went on to win the state championship.

If you are still receiving community input please put my name down as a supporter of keeping the tennis courts.

Many thanks,

Harry Bartlett

95 Conant Street, Concord

To: Recreation Commission

From: Joe Beyer

Sent: Sunday, November 16, 2025 7:19 PM

Subject: Rideout pickleball court options

I'm writing to express my strong support for Concord installing permanent pickleball courts with dedicated nets. The town is far behind surrounding communities-and much of the country-in providing proper pickleball facilities. The sport has already surpassed tennis in participation, and every trend shows it will outpace tennis by a wide margin before the decade ends.

Residents who play regularly know what nearby towns offer: smooth, well-maintained courts with permanent nets. By comparison, Concord is clearly lacking. Emerson Field and possibly the High School should eventually be updated as well, though my understanding is that those sites aren't being considered right now.

Therefore, I would like to formally express support for the installation of **option 3. six pickleball courts and one tennis court.**

Thank you,

Joe Beyer

Main St., Concord, MA

To: Recreation Commission

From: Vivian Bien

Sent: Friday, November 14, 2025 6:16 PM

Subject: Pickleball courts

I am a long time (42 years) Concord resident, and I have been playing Pickleball in Rideout since 2017. Pickleball is a fun game for all ages, and it's very easy to learn. That's why Pickleball becomes so popular. When I first started playing pickleball, there were only about forty players, now the list of players has grown to hundreds and keeps growing. Therefore, I strongly recommend and support to build all dedicated pickleball courts in Rideout.

My Address: 41 Saw Mill Road

Concord MA

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Vivian Bien

To: Recreation Commission

From: Nate Kemp

Sent: Friday, November 14, 2025 8:44 PM

Subject: Rideout courts

To whom it may concern,

I would like to voice my support for keeping the Rideout courts multi-purpose and maintaining options for both tennis and pickleball.

Thank you for your consideration,

Nate Kemp

59 Mallard Dr

To: Recreation Commission

From: Kate Brooks

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 12:18 PM

Subject: Retain tennis courts at Rideout

Hello,

I'm writing to voice my support for retaining dedicated tennis courts at Rideout. I have two sons, 5 and 8, who recently started tennis lessons. One of the reasons we chose tennis was because we could walk or ride our bikes to Rideout and all play together as a family. We imagined as our sons grew, they could ride their bikes together and with friends to play tennis at the Rideout courts. This would be a loss for our neighborhood and community.

We love living in West Concord. Throughout the 9 years we've lived here, it seems the town makes decisions to "protect" Concord center over West Concord. A parent who grew up in town recently told me of the chant kids used to say about the elementary schools: "Alcott is old money, Willard is new money, and Thoreau is no money." Please protect these tennis resources at Rideout for the kids of West Concord.

Sincerely,

Kate Brooks

To: Recreation Commission

From: Barbara O'Malley Cannon

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 12:18 PM

Subject: Rideout basketball and tennis courts

Hello,

I am writing to express my concern regarding current plans to make all the courts into pickle ball courts at Rideout playground. Reducing the options for basketball and tennis in West Concord does not seem sensible or equitable. Further, the noise from additional pickle ball courts seems inconsiderate to neighbors.

I am hoping you will reconsider.

Barbara O'Malley Cannon

1980 Main St.

To: Recreation Commission

From: Sarah Sample

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 1:02 PM

Subject: Rideout tennis courts

I'm writing to express my support for maintaining mixed-use courts at Rideout rather than converting all of them to dedicated pickleball courts. While pickleball is growing quickly and absolutely deserves space, fully removing multi-use options would limit access for many families and community members who rely on those courts for a range of activities.

Mixed-use courts allow for:

- Balanced noise levels — Maintaining a blend of uses helps prevent concentrated noise issues that can occur when too many courts are dedicated solely to pickleball in one area.
- Equitable access — Multi-use courts serve a broad population, not just participants of a single sport. They help ensure that limited park space is shared fairly across the community.
- Cost-effective use of space — Preserving existing lines and layout avoids expensive full conversions while still supporting pickleball through shared courts or designated time blocks.
- Encouraging active play — Open, flexible courts remain one of the most accessible and inviting recreation spaces for kids and teens, promoting healthy, unstructured outdoor activity.

I fully support finding ways to accommodate pickleball—such as shared-line courts, scheduled use windows, or phased additions—while still preserving mixed-use options that reflect the needs of all park visitors.

Thank you for considering a balanced approach that keeps this space welcoming and useful for the entire community. I appreciate your time and your ongoing efforts to support recreation for residents of all ages.

Best,

Sarah Sample

Concord Resident

To: Recreation Commission

From: Kathy Gasperine

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 1:28 PM

Subject: Rideout – multiuse courts

Hello-

We live at 1461 Main Street Concord, MA 01742. I am writing in support a multi- use courts at Rideout park.

We have used the courts for tennis with our family extensively during the summer and fall. These sports facilities are accessible by sidewalks and available for kids of all ages are a great addition to the park. Easy access to Rideout was one of the reasons we wanted to live in this neighborhood.

If anything, the tennis courts on Emerson Field are generally under utilized. On several occasions when Rideout was full of people playing pickle ball, we would drive over to Emerson field, and all of the courts would be available during the summer. There is some unused resources there to expand Pickleball capacity.

Thank you for your work on preserving recreation space for kids of all ages in West Concord.

Kathy Gasperine

To: Recreation Commission

From: Mary Little

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 1:50 PM

Subject: Keep tennis an option at Rideout

Hi,

I'm writing to oppose the conversion of all tennis courts to pickle ball courts at Rideout. The courts can and should be kept for both sports. Marking the courts for both tennis and pickleball is easily and widely done; there is no reason to take away tennis capacity in town.

Thank you,

Mary Little

24 Brown Street

To: Recreation Commission

From: Lauren Osepchuk

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 1:56 PM

Subject: Beware of pickle ball courts near homes

Hi,

I'm a local tennis player and have not been happy about lack of upkeep of some of the public tennis courts. Why are there gaping cracks at Willard School and little ones starting at Emerson?

Moreover, Concord should be wary of putting pickle ball courts near residential areas like at Rideout. I teach in a town where they put some Pickleball courts in a downtown park and later had to install major soundproofing because of the awful plastic loud noise the game makes. Meanwhile, the regional high school where I teach - similar to CCHS - did put in some pickle ball courts and a basket ball court while sparing the tennis courts. No noise issue.

I think that any New pickle ball courts would have to be in a big open field away from houses and away from forest where animals try to thrive.

Thank you for listening

Lauren O.

To: Recreation Commission

From: Chuck Slagen

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 2:19 PM

Subject: Rideout Pickleball courts

I am a Concord resident and wanted to just send a note requesting the Concord rec create some permanent pickle ball courts at Rideout field. Pickleball is clearly a game that is growing and here to stay. Currently there are no dedicated Pickleball courts in the town of Concord, with tennis courts at Rideout, Emerson Field, and the high school. I believe the increasing number of Pickleball players warrants at least one area with some dedicated Pickleball fields.

I understand that Concord Rec does not want to discuss Pickleball fields at Emerson Park at this time. That however, increases my skepticism that the rec department will even consider putting any permanent courts in at Emerson when that topic comes up next year. Having courts with two sets of lines of lines is confusing for everyone. As one of the Pickleball leaders responsible to set up and take down nets I implore you to please give us at least several Pickleball dedicated courts at Rideout Park.

Thank you,

Chuck Slagen

21 Old Mill Rd.

Concord, MA 01742

To: Recreation Commission

From: Rachel Bandi

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 2:28 PM

Subject: Rideout tennis court

To whom it may concern,

I support keeping the Rideout courts dual-use. Pickleball can be played on a tennis court, but tennis cannot be played on a pickleball court.

Thank you,

Rachel Bandi

50 Quail Run Dr

To: Recreation Commission

From: Shannon Sweeney

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 2:53 PM

Subject: Mixed Use Courts at Rideout

Hi Recreation Commission,

I am writing to express my strong support for maintaining our existing multi-use tennis courts rather than converting them exclusively into pickleball courts. While I appreciate the growing popularity of pickleball and the desire to expand recreational options in our community, I believe that preserving the courts in their current multi-use form best serves both present and future needs.

At the heart of this decision is optionality—the ability to offer a flexible, adaptable recreational space that accommodates a wide range of users. Multi-use courts already support tennis, youth programs, casual recreation, and, with portable nets or shared-line layouts, pickleball as well. This versatility allows the space to evolve as community interests shift over time without locking us into a single-purpose facility.

Fully converting the courts to pickleball would narrow their value and limit who can use the space. Tennis players, high-school athletes, families, and broader community programming would lose access. We live walking distance from Rideout and have gone to play tennis with our kids several times over the summer. At times we would find all the courts used while many of the Emerson courts at the same time would then be vacant, therefore, there may be additional capacity at Emerson if a single use pickle facility is truly deemed necessary. However, multi-use courts ensure that everyone—current pickleball players included—retains access to a high-quality recreational resource.

In addition, maintaining multi-use courts protects the community from the risks of short-term trend cycles. Pickleball is experiencing enormous growth, but recreation patterns change. A flexible facility gives us the ability to adjust lines, schedules, and equipment as needed, without the expense of reconversion. Preserving the courts as multi-use also offers practical benefits: reduced noise concerns, fewer conflicts with neighbors, and a more balanced distribution of recreational opportunities across age groups and interests.

In short, keeping the courts multi-purpose honors the core principles of good community planning—inclusivity, adaptability, and responsible stewardship of shared space. I urge the recreation department to support a solution that allows for pickleball access without

eliminating the flexibility and community value that multi-use courts provide for those interested in tennis, even if the demand for pickleball in this current moment is high.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your commitment to recreational spaces that serve the entire community.

Sincerely,

Shannon Sweeney & Tyson Seely, 1443 Main Street

To: Recreation Commission

From: Emily Stark

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 3:08 PM

Subject: Pickleball Courts at Rideout

Hope this message finds you well! I am a member of the pickleball community at Rideout and am aware that the Recreation Department is considering resurfacing the courts and providing dedicated pickleball courts.

I am a Concord resident and a strong supporter of lining 6 dedicated pickleball courts while leaving one tennis court at Rideout. There is a strong community of pickleball players in the town who are not only numerous but also consistent users of the courts. In my year there, we have used the courts at Rideout more consistently than any other sport, in this case tennis. Dedicated pickleball courts would not only allow us to play undisturbed and according to the norms of other towns but would also cater to a different population of the town that regularly uses them, thereby diversifying the recreational offerings the town has to offer.

There is ample space in the town for tennis already with Emerson field and giving a dedicated space to pickleball would align with the growing popularity of the sport and changing desires of the community. Undoubtedly, dedicated courts would attract more players and allow the sport to grow. The town could use them to generate revenue if need be by charging fees for playtime. There is really no reason for the town not to finally recognize pickleball as it does tennis and provide dedicated courts. I am happy to elaborate further or answer any questions for you.

I hope you'll note my support for the proposal of the pickleball community and eventually provide dedicated courts.

Sincerely,

Emily Stark

To: Recreation Commission

From: Randy Brown

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 4:30 PM

Subject: Rideout resurfacing options

I think either resurfacing option is a great improvement but I'd lean toward "8 pickleball only" courts rather than 1 tennis court and 6 pickleball courts. I have played both sports recreationally and competitively for many years and at 75 years old find pickleball to be more beneficial both physically and mentally. I understand the "noise" factor to abutters, but the extra noise from 8 pickleball vs 6 pickleball with 1 tennis session should not be a serious consideration.

I imagine all tennis nets can be left up. The 3 between the 6 pickleball courts would help limit the stray balls from one court to another. Folks can even hit tennis balls over the nets when pickleballers are not waiting. It doesn't have to be "either/ or " all the time.

Many thanks for allowing input to the decision process.

Randy Brown

778 East Street

Carlisle, MA

To: Recreation Commission

From: Aiyana Currie

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 4:51 PM

Subject: Rideout

Dear Concord Recreation Commissioners:

I write to express my support for keeping all existing Rideout courts multi-purpose and maintaining options for both tennis and pickleball in the West Concord community.

With gratitude,

Mike & Aiyana Currie

47 Lowell Road

Concord, MA

To: Recreation Commission

From: Carolyn Staudt

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 7:07 PM

Subject: planned courts at Rideout Park

Thank you for the opportunity to attend your Recreation and Parks Commission meeting on November 13. It was very enlightening and also sparked some additional questions. As a signer of the petition to stop the conversion of all of the courts (if any) at Rideout Park to pickleball courts, I have concerns. Although the chair tried to address the petition and how the new plans met the strategic scope of the Recreation Department's long-term goals, the following concerns were not addressed. It was apparent that the early October public meeting was not attended by many that signed the petition. I unfortunately was out of the country on that date.

Over the years, many attempts to add features such as permanent fencing for baseball fields, lights and cell towers at Rideout Park that are not acceptable at Emerson Park have been attempted. Pickleball is not allowed to be played at Emerson Park. According to the website, outside pickleball is only allowed at Rideout Park. Who gave permission for pickleball to be played at Rideout (and not Emerson)? Driving across Route 2 to Emerson Park is not acceptable to West Concord owners which include families with children and elderly who cannot drive and deliberately purchased their homes within walking distance of the tennis courts and park.

The noise from the pickleball paddle hitting the ball is particularly annoying because it's an abrupt sound and its high frequency is near the range where human hearing is most sensitive. When the Recreation commission was asked if they had investigated the harms of the sound effects, they clearly had not and have no plans to do so before the pickleball courts are installed. In addition, no mitigation of the noise has been planned for, such as quieter paddles and balls, installing acoustic barriers, and limiting playing hours. In fact, the proposal includes lighting which would only increase playing hours and noise.

With no town sponsored sign-up for pickleball and tennis court use, no public data is available for the overall usage by Concord citizens. How many players are from Concord or

from visiting communities that do not allow outdoor pickleball courts? Since this decision is impacting those tax payers living directly around Rideout Park there needs to be additional, open discussion to focus on the extreme impact that the existing pickleball courts have on the local homeowners and the proposed courts for their health and property values.

Carolyn Staudt

70 Laws Brook Road

Concord, MA 01742

To: Recreation Commission

From: Doris Kelly

Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 7:52 PM

Subject: Rideout Court Layout - Pickleball Please!

I am writing in support of putting in dedicated pickleball courts at Rideout. The more the better.

I am retired and play at Rideout many times a week. During the week, especially in the summer, we frequently have 4 - 5 courts going. During weekends it is even more and all courts are full (that's 24 people playing and usually a few people waiting in the round robin). We play year round at Rideout - people shovel snow and clear ice so we can play even in the winter.

It has been my experience that there is very little demand for tennis. I play at Rideout 4-5 times a week and almost never see anyone playing tennis.

I prefer the most PB courts possible and would really prefer dedicated courts. We spend a lot of time setting up the nets and then taking them down after play. The nets are in poor shape probably from so much handling.

Thanks for your consideration.

Doris Kelly

1674 Monument St, Concord

To: Recreation Commission

From: Andrew Cornforth

Sent: Sunday, November 16, 2025 8:24 AM

Subject: Pickleball courts

Greetings!

As a regular user of the Rideout pickleball courts, I would like express my vote for 6 courts and one tennis court. Even at this late time of year the pickleball courts are frequently in use and permanent courts would be a great benefit to the community at large. The fact that pickleball is the fastest growing sport in America and that there are few options in area mean that people will travel to use the courts which will bring in money to local businesses.

Thanks for your support,

Andrew Cornforth

Carlisle, Massachusetts

To: Recreation Commission

From: Robert Hennessy

Sent: Sunday, November 16, 2025 9:22 AM

Subject: Rideout Playground Pickleball

We are writing to express our support for dedicated pickleball courts at Rideout Playground. In our opinion, pickleball will continue to grow in popularity and we believe that our community needs to provide a facility to accommodate this growth.

Of the options being discussed, eight dedicated pickleball courts would most appropriately fulfill this need.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sandie and Bob Hennessy

20 - 3 Concord Greene

To: Recreation Commission

From: Deborah Clendaniel

Sent: Sunday, November 16, 2025 11:09 AM

Subject: Rideout Tennis/Pickleball courts

I was unable to attend the meeting regarding the Rideout tennis courts so I would like to submit my vote for option 3 (1 tennis, 6 permanent Pickleball courts) here. I'd also be Ok with option 2 but understand the need for one tennis court.

As a West Concord resident, senior citizen, former avid tennis player and now a pickleball player, I feel the town needs permanent pickleball courts just as we have permanent tennis courts. I not only play pickleball at Rideout but I frequently walk my dog at Rideout and observe the use of the courts at many different times of the day. This isn't an exhaustive survey of course, but if the courts are being used at all, I rarely see more than one tennis court being used at a time. Sometimes the tennis set up is being used by pickleball players who don't have access to the pickleball nets between organized play and settle for playing over the tennis net.

Given the number of pickleball players using the courts throughout the year, it seems we are entitled to the opportunity to play anytime. Pickleball players also play all winter in Rideout, shoveling the snow out of the way.

So as a senior citizen it would be nice to have my tax dollars contribute to an activity I can take advantage of and one way or another we need permanent pickleball courts in our town like many of the adjacent towns enjoy.

Thank you

Deborah Clendaniel

21 Sweet Birch Lane, Concord

To: Recreation Commission

From: Pam Slatcher

Sent: Sunday, November 16, 2025 11:09 AM

Subject: Concord Resident- Vote Option 1

Hi

Pam Slatcher here.

Pickleball has become an excellent outlet for me as an empty-nester. I personally would love the Rideout court format/resurfacing to remain as they are. meaning 6 courts lined for both tennis and Pickleball . happy to continue to use our own nets.

Pam Slatcher

75 Blueberry lane

To: Recreation Commission

From: Laurie Foster

Sent: Sunday, November 16, 2025 2:11 PM

Subject: Rideout Courts

I am writing in support of making dedicated pickleball courts at Rideout. There are many of us who play at Rideout frequently and it would be a great benefit to us to have dedicated courts. As you know, there are no other public pickleball courts in Concord. I would like to note there are public tennis courts at Emerson for tennis players to use. Pickleball has become a very popular sport in recent years and there are many older Concordians for whom pickleball has become a passion and not all of us can afford to pay to play at private clubs. Having public dedicated pickleball courts would help to facilitate people of all ages engaging with this sport.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

(Judith) Laurie Foster

41 Orchard Rd., Concord, MA

To: Recreation Commission

From: Nigel Belton

Sent: Sunday, November 16, 2025 2:42 PM

Subject: PB courts at Rideout

Hi there

As a Concord resident I will be happy with 6 PB courts and one tennis court.

Thank you

To: Recreation Commission

From: Priscilla Miller

Sent: Sunday, November 16, 2025 7:32 PM

Subject: Rideout Park

I write to you and for you to share with others involved with the Rideout Park tennis/pickleball court issue.

Rideout neighbors endure, yes endure, unreasonable and disrupting sounds with the pickleball courts for many long hours.

While not a participant, I walk dogs in the park and the sound is loud and for the very nearby neighbors a valid noise complaint.

There are recommendations for distance minimums from pickleball courts to residences and Rideout courts are far from meeting these.

A solution is in order. Perhaps courts at the Starmet cleanup site on outer Main Street would best meet the guidelines.

Resurfacing of the courts will be appreciated.

Thank you,

Priscilla Miller

To: Recreation Commission

From: Meg Gaudet

Sent: Sunday, November 16, 2025 8:25 PM

Subject: Rideout Playground

My name is Meg Gaudet, I live at 62 Maple St. and have for the last 38 years.

I understand there are tentative plans to change the tennis courts from multi use to more in line with pickle ball instead of tennis and pickle ball combination.

I'm writing to tell you that I think the current court configuration which allows both games, is the best way and most fair way to accommodate people who like to play those sports. Changing the current layout is most likely shortsighted.

I encourage the recreation committee and recreation department to consider the residents who have lived near ride out playground to have input in any new changes.

If you have any questions, feel free to email me back.

Thank you so much for your time and dedication to our town.

Sincerely

Meg Gaudet

To: Recreation Commission

From: Anthony Steers

Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2025 8:31 AM

Subject: Rideout pickleball

I am in favor of re configuring the tennis courts to one dedicated tennis (marked tor pickleball) and the others to dedicated pickleball. The use of “team reach” for sign ups is a huge help and should be encouraged for tennis players.

There are many private tennis clubs and now pickle clubs in the area, but few public. I understand that The Rec would stay as dedicated tennis.

Other locations, like the new ones at Concord Country Club have included a permanently installed sound barrier that was not too expensive.

As you realize, the pickle community is a dedicated and organized, active, ad hoc community. It has quite a high median age. It has responsible group leaders. It has huge turnouts on weekends easily filling all courts.

Anthony Steers

474 Monument

To: Recreation Commission

From: Dan Stapleton

Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2025 10:23 AM

Subject: Rideout tennis court restoration

Dan Stapleton

20 Conant Street

This email follows up public comment at the last rec committee meeting regarding the process used in evaluation of court options including pickleball. My understanding is that an acoustic analysis or consideration of noise was not performed.

Specifically, why did the evaluation process performed by the Town and their consultant not include any consideration of noise when this is such a well known issue and point of contention? It seems (see links below to examples of acoustic tests, the Town of Wellesley process for evaluating pickleball options and the Town of Wellesley pickleball noise guidelines) that this would be the current standard of care in considering both the current use of the courts for pickleball and for any proposed changes. The first link summarizes the comprehensive process used by Wellesley including public survey, noise analysis, siting evaluation and public outreach and communication. A process similar to that used by Wellseley would likely address concerns of Concord residents, be equitable, avoid potential litigation and support the future of both pickleball and tennis. Thankyou for your consideration.

[Pickleball Feasibility & Design Study | Wellesley, MA](#)

[Appendix-A--Wellesley-Pickleball-Noise-Guidelines-Report](#)

[2023-Manchester-Pickleball-Sound-Mitigation-Study](#)

To: Recreation Commission

From: Debbie Power

Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2025 4:42 PM

Subject: Rideout Pickleball Courts

I support 8 dedicated pickleball courts at Rideout.

- Pickleball is the predominant activity at the Rideout courts.
- There are many other options for tennis in town.

Thanks,

Debbie Power

Carlisle, MA

To: Recreation Commission

From: Mark Benvenuto

Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2025 7:56 PM

Subject: Rideout multi use courts

Dear Concord Recreation Commissioners:

I write to express my support for keeping all existing Rideout courts multi-purpose and maintaining options for both tennis and pickleball in the West Concord community.

With gratitude,

Mark and Meredith Benvenuto

43 Gifford Lane

To: Recreation Commission

From: Yasmin Chalisa

Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2025 8:51 PM

Subject: Request to keep the Basketball courts at Rideout!

I saw a post on next door neighbors that there is a proposal to convert the basketball courts at Rideout park in west concord to Tennis/pickleball courts. I would kindly request against converting the basketball courts at Rideout as its the only place i know in the neighborhood for kids and adults to play the sport. I am a resident of concord and often go there to play with my teenage girls. Pls let me know if there is anything i can do to vote against it.

best

yasmin

To: Recreation Commission

From: Betsey Eltonhead

Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2025 10:08 AM

Subject: public comment

Hello,

My husband and I have lived at 33 Conant St, Concord, MA 01742 since 1991. We strongly urge no changes to the current tennis and basketball courts configuration (except to resurface when needed). The tennis courts can easily be converted to pickleball courts as players do now. Neighbors strongly object to additional noise if the pickle ball courts would be expanded. We would like tennis and basketball to be available as they are now. If you are looking for more pickleball courts, we urge you to look elsewhere in Concord. thank you

Betsey Eltonhead

To: Recreation Commission

From: Joseph Koontz

Sent: November 19, 2025 at 8:02:56 PM

Subject: Rideout Park project proposal

Dear Concord Recreation Commission and Rideout Subcommittee,

By way of introduction, we are Joseph and Pamela Koontz, and are 25 year residents of Maple Street in West Concord.

We were present at the Concord Recreation Commission meeting last Thursday, November 13th at the Hunt Recreation Center, and appreciated the opportunity to hear exciting updates about the many communication enhancements that are being made by your dedicated team, and projects that are on the horizon to be completed. We also appreciated the ability to provide and listen to commentary at the end of your meeting.

Recreation plays such an important and pivotal role in our beautiful community... providing and maintaining wonderful programming for all ages and abilities. Our children, now grown, truly benefitted from both structured offerings through Concord Recreation, as well as and probably more importantly, the ability to take advantage of "free play" and unlimited activities at the beautiful place which has served as our "community back yard" all of these years: Rideout Park.

We are writing to express our concerns about the movement to make our tennis courts dedicated pickleball courts as you prepare to resurface them, and to urge you to keep the courts "multipurpose" - as they have been and should remain.

Tennis has certainly stood the test of time, a classic sport with timeless appeal, that so many in our immediate neighborhood enjoy having access to. Pickleball, a much younger sport, has certainly risen in popularity, and is here to stay. It has certainly proven itself to be a valuable recreational outlet and a great way to provide activity and socialization for many in its growing fan base - And how fortuitous it is that these courts can provide BOTH players with ample opportunities for exercise and social interaction - truly the foundation of any solid and well-rounded recreational program.

We have many concerns regarding this proposal for dedicated pickleball courts at Rideout - the noise impacts, which will especially impact our neighbors across the street, parking

and traffic challenges, and finally and most importantly equity and accessibility. The balance would be disrupted between tennis and pickleball players - and to close, we would like to remind all of us of the universal "dilemma of supply and demand" - there is always going to be a tension of sorts between what we want, and the scarcity of that resource and ability

to provide enough to meet demand. When our goal is to try to make diverse recreational opportunities accessible (and walkable) for all - young and old - the solution is to maintain the current arrangement, and to seek alternate pickleball locations throughout our beautiful town - to try and meet and balance this current and elusive "supply and demand" dilemma...

Concord residents deserve to maintain the identity and utility of ALL of our public spaces - for the enjoyment and benefit of ALL residents.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Joseph and Pamela Koontz

41 Maple Street

Concord, MA 01742

To: Recreation Commission

From: Leslie Michelle Touw

Sent: Thursday, November 20, 2025 11:24 AM

Subject: Rideout resurfacing

This letter is to you and the Concord Recreation Commission. Please provide a copy to them (Phil Griffith, Chair, Matt Boger, Pete Funkhouser, Daniel Rodriguez and Laura Stearns)

I am a 70 year old Concordian who still plays weekly competitive tennis as well as social tennis. For the latter, the courts at Rideout serve as an important venue. Unfortunately, due to a funeral abroad, I was unable to attend the meeting on October 21st. I AM thankful the Nov. 13th meeting allowed for public comments from me and many of the other citizens at the meeting. Although I was not able to make any points on Oct. 21st and only 1 on Nov. 13th, I have expressed them all here. May they be taken into account through this letter by the Recreation Department and the Concord Recreation Commission.

It is possible for me, and others in West Concord Village, to walk or bike to these courts for both tennis and pickleball. Not only is it healthier for us, it also contributes to lowering Concord's carbon footprint, promotes stronger localized community interactions and activities and these are all in line with the Envision Concord plan as well.

Not only do I play tennis there, I've tried playing pickleball there too. But I found that it would ruin my tennis strokes. And there is mounting evidence of it causing more frequent and more severe injuries, especially to the knees and Achilles tendons. So, it may be a passing sport, like Jai Alai. Tennis is a sport having passed the test of time, albeit waning but then, *always*, waxing, for over 100 years. In any case, it is very important that the public courts at Rideout serve the needs of both sports.

However, it has become EXTREMELY difficult to find a free court ever since pickleball lines were introduced. (So, I found the comment at the Nov. 13th meeting of the Recreation Commission, that changing all courts to pickleball, is supported by their 'data' showing that

“tennis use is very little now”. Of course it is! Tennis players CAN’T get a court at times we want to play! And when was data collected? During heat waves? Over how many days? Weekend days?) The point is Option One (recreating the current setup) is what West Concord needs to retain use of it's 3 tennis courts.

The Recreation Commission apparently started this planning in January 2025. Yet the public was not brought into the process until October, with a presentation *clearly supporting* the elimination of the ONLY public tennis courts in West Concord, replacing them with ALL the pickleball courts to serve the entire town. (Just note how this 3rd Option was the ONLY one pictured on the meeting notice for Nov. 13th!) This is contrary to the June 2024 Concord Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan which recommended any additional pickleball courts be constructed elsewhere than Rideout Park.

Because of the Recreation Commission not eliciting public input until late into planning, much time has been wasted and more money will be spent with consultants and planners addressing issues raised by the public on and since Oct. 21st; a penny wise and pound foolish process.

An example is the issue of noise ‘pollution’ affecting the quality of life for those abutters to the courts. It’s been pointed out that players on 8 pickleball courts can generate sound levels exceeding 70 dB within 100 feet. Louder for the West Concord families living only 40-60 feet from the current courts. ANY permanent courts with pickleball use at Rideout will need, at an additional cost, 10 foot high fencing with sound absorbing surface. And yet nothing like this is being included in the cost estimates.

In fact, I believe that ALL public courts throughout Concord, serve both sports and thus provide all the benefits mentioned above. So please resurface the Rideout courts with a mixture of both. And do the same for the Emerson courts when resurfaced next year, placing pickleball courts on the east end.

The unfairness of this push for Option 3- only pickleball courts - eliminating ALL public tennis courts in West Concord, and NONE in Concord Center, which has ELEVEN public

courts (and many more private ones) and NO pickleball courts, is striking! But, sadly, I'm not surprised.

I've lived here for 40 years. And safeguarding what makes West Concord so great has required hours and hours of defending it, every few years now. From fighting plans to annex parts of Rideout for a semi private baseball organization TWICE, in the 1980s/90s and again only a couple of years ago, to working with the WC Task Force on their public input questionnaire (DONE 1st *then* researching solutions), to raising public awareness of threats to the retention of Nashoba Brook Bakery, to poorly 'advertised' huge construction projects (EX: unanimous vote ,in April, by the Zoning Board of Appeals to approve a 237-unit housing development in West Concord) to now, in 2025, to save the WC tennis courts and fight efforts to install an ENORMOUS cell phone pole and a 15 foot diameter fence at Rideout. (The coverage is needed NOT at Rideout but by the WC Plaza, and a location closer to it would be more appropriate.) I am TIRED of fighting to keep the Town from using West Concord as a 'dumping ground' for projects not wanted in Concord center.

For the Rideout courts specifically, I prefer Option 1, repainting lines for both on 2 of the 3 tennis courts.

Sincerely yours,

L. Michelle Touw

111 Laws Brook Road

To: Recreation Commission

From: Jean Easterday

Sent: Thursday, November 20, 2025 5:13 PM

Subject: Rideout Pickleball Proposal Concerns

To the Concord Recreation Commission, Rideout Subcommittee and Community Preservation Commission:

We write as homeowners who directly abut Rideout Playground to respectfully urge the Recreation Commission to reconsider the proposal to convert any of the existing tennis courts at Rideout into dedicated pickleball courts as part of the repaving project. **We also ask the CPC NOT to allocate any funding for a proposal that includes dedicated pickleball courts at Rideout or lighting conduits as part of the repaving project.** While no one individual can or should speak for all abutters, we speak from 30 years of living beside the park and from the concerns shared by more than 40 park abutting street neighbors who signed a petition submitted on November 5, 2025, requesting a full town-wide assessment before any permanent changes to the Rideout courts are considered.

Daily Experience as Immediate Abutters

As immediate neighbors, we experience park activity continuously. We are the ones who speak with early-morning pickleball players using loud leaf blowers before park hours, address loud music during afternoon matches, remind dog walkers about leashing and cleanup, and interact with teens gathering in the evenings. Our proximity gives us a clear, firsthand understanding of the park's daily use and the cumulative impact of noise and activity.

Misinterpretation of Neighbor Cooperation

Unfortunately, our past willingness to address pickleball-related issues informally appears to have been misinterpreted by the Recreation Director—and perhaps the Commission—as passive support for replacing the tennis courts with six to eight dedicated pickleball courts, which would create steady, intrusive noise throughout the day. We believe the final solution would end up being eight dedicated pickleball courts (vs 6) because tennis players have

made clear that retaining only a single tennis court is not viable; reasonable access requires at least two.

Neighbors now joke that, because we do not complain about unleashed dogs at the park, Rideout might next be sanctioned as a dedicated dog park because the town needs more dog parks. Do we need to regularly file formal complaints about everything to protect ourselves from new special interest proposals? It would appear this is how the Recreation Commission makes decisions today—not based on analysis outreach or study, but on rewarding the loudest voices, penalizing those who take a softer approach.

Noise and Lighting Concerns

Currently, there are three tennis courts at Rideout that can be converted into pickleball courts, allowing for up to six pickleball courts (two per tennis court). The pickleball community, which includes many who do not live in Concord, is well-organized and schedules games at set times during the week. While a town-wide reservation system is certainly needed to better understand court demand, usage patterns, and the balance of Concord vs. non-Concord player activity, the fact is that tennis players and the pickleball association have, for now, found a workable way to coordinate their play. Tennis players tend to come in the early morning or later in the day at this time of year.

The mix of quieter tennis play with the intermittent “ping-ping” of pickleball creates a tolerable sound balance for us as abutting neighbors. However, if dedicated pickleball courts were built, we anticipate that more local players and those from surrounding communities would flock to them, resulting in continuous play throughout the day—and potentially into the night. Some of our pickleball-playing friends have told us that players are excited about the possibility of dedicated outdoor courts in the area and have asked the town if they could schedule future events there.

The statement has been made that Rideout is “pickleball country” today. Not true but since it is the only park in Concord where the Recreation Commission has allowed the tennis courts to be striped for pickleball, it is obviously the only outdoor public pickleball area in Concord where people play. There is nothing special about Rideout as it relates to pickleball. If the decision was made to also stripe Emerson courts for pickleball, that could be done easily and people would play there. If you build it, they will come.

We are also deeply concerned about the proposal to install conduit for future lighting at the Rideout courts. Our home sits less than 80 feet from the courts, and lighting would

effectively extend pickleball noise from 8:00 AM to as late as 10:00 PM. The sharp, repetitive sound of pickleball is well documented and would significantly affect our family's—and our neighbors'—ability to enjoy our homes and yards.

Given the limited transparency to date for this project, we have little confidence that future lighting decisions at Rideout would be handled in an inclusive manner, especially if the conduit already exists. Rebuilding trust between the Recreation Commission, the Recreation Department, and West Concord residents is essential before asking neighbors to rely on assurances.

Concerns About Process and Transparency

As longtime Concord residents, we value a transparent and accountable public process. On Maple Street alone, numerous residents have served on Town boards and committees—including the Planning Board, School Master Plan Committee, Thoreau and Alcott School Building Committees, Natural Resources Commission, School Committee, Community Preservation Committee, Public Ceremonies Committee, and West Concord Advisory Committee. For such a small street, this level of civic involvement is notable.

It is therefore surprising to the neighbors, and concerning, that so little outreach occurred regarding a proposal with such significant neighborhood impacts. Other towns, such as Wellesley, have undertaken town-wide efforts to determine appropriate placement for pickleball facilities. Concord should consider adopting similar best practices.

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Encouraging On-Site Observation

We strongly encourage the Recreation Director and any Commissioner who has not visited Rideout recently to do so before voting—especially on a Saturday around 10:00 AM—when even a small number of active pickleball courts generate substantial noise, particularly in colder months. It is difficult to appreciate the full noise profile without being on-site and observing its effects on nearby homes, playground users, tennis players, and basketball players.

Equity and Community Impact (for both Tennis and Basketball)

We also urge the Commission to consider the importance of these tennis courts to West Concord residents, including young athletes who practice regularly. To paraphrase one Hawthorne Street neighbor who spoke at the October 21 meeting: *“The park is for children too... Removing accessible public tennis courts from children (who may be pursuing future tennis scholarships) in West Concord is cruel.”* Eliminating these courts without providing equivalent alternatives raises serious equity concerns.

Many residents have questioned why Emerson Playground has not been considered for pickleball—or for other facilities, such as cell towers—that the Town is trying to shoehorn into Rideout in West Concord.

Additionally, the Commission’s plan to replace Rideout’s BASKETBALL courts with pickleball courts—despite a documented town-wide need for **more** basketball courts—suggests a troubling misalignment between Recreation Commission priorities and community needs. If the thought was to consider existing tennis and basketball courts for conversion into dedicated pickleball courts via a town funded study, why were Emerson tennis and basketball courts not included in scope for discussion? Please review the plans and meeting discussion below:

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At the October 21, 2025 public meeting, I (Jean Easterday) asked the Activitas consultant whether he had conducted a noise impact assessment or included cost estimates for sound mitigation in his dedicated pickleball proposal. His answer was **no**—yet he had been instructed to include a plan for lighting conduits. This suggests the consultant was directed by the Recreation Commission to focus primarily on meeting pickleball users’ requests for optimal play at Rideout, with no meaningful consideration of obvious potential future neighborhood impacts.

Lessons from Other Communities

To the best of our understanding, surrounding community towns (e.g., Acton, Maynard, & Stow) do not have dedicated outdoor, public pickleball courts or lighting. They are hybrid tennis/pickleball courts just like Rideout. Why the rush for Concord?

We urge the Commission to learn from the experience of other communities. Both nationally and locally—including at Newbury Court and Concord Country Club—pickleball noise has generated significant conflict, expense, lawsuits, and, in some cases, the reversal of installations. A summary of examples of cases from other MA communities is provided in Attachment A.

Request

Given the substantial impacts and the lack of a broad planning framework, we respectfully request that the Commission **halt this proposal** and undertake a **town-wide study** of Concord’s current and future court needs—across both tennis and pickleball—before making any permanent changes at Rideout. A project of this scale cannot responsibly proceed without understanding how many courts the Town needs, where they should be located, and which sites can support them without disproportionately burdening a single neighborhood. Concord deserves a transparent, inclusive, and data-driven process—not isolated decisions made without a full picture of the Town’s recreational landscape.

Thank you for your service to the Town and for your thoughtful consideration of our concerns.

Jean and Alexander Easterday

48 Maple St, Concord MA



Rideout Letter of
Concern 11202025 .f

APPENDIX A

Acoustic Considerations

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- In practical terms, if one court measures 65 dB at 100 feet, eight courts could reach ~74 dB at the same distance — before factoring in reflections or crowd noise.
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Acoustical consultants in Massachusetts recommend 500–800 feet of separation from residences, sound-attenuating fencing (10 feet high), and vegetated berms for noise control. Many Massachusetts communities have faced similar challenges, and their experiences show that thoughtful planning, professional acoustical review, and careful site selection are essential. Concord should learn from these examples and conduct a formal study before making permanent changes at Rideout Park.

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48 Maple St, Concord MA

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To: Recreation Commission

From: Ann Sgarzi

Sent: Friday, November 21, 2025 12:17 PM

Subject: Tennis and Pickleball at Rideout

To the Concord Recreation Commission and Rideout Park Subcommittee members,

I write to you today regarding the Rideout Park court resurfacing project. I ask you to vote to NOT approve any of the current options put forth, and to instead move to conduct a Town-wide study to assess where pickleball courts can be placed in Concord without detrimental impact to residents.

Tennis Court Inventory in Concord

At a recent Recreation Commission meeting we heard that Concord has a “surplus” of tennis courts. There are 11 dedicated (tennis-only) public courts in Concord Center. The three courts at Rideout are the only free public tennis courts in West Concord; those courts are already shared with pickleball.

Reducing the number of tennis courts at Rideout to 0 or even 1 is the least inclusive decision the Recreation Commission could make, out of line with the Recreation Department’s core values.

Tennis IS played at Rideout

The Recreation Commission Chair has stated in public meetings that Rideout is “pickleball country” and that there is little to no tennis played there. This is not true. There is a lot of pickleball played there; there is also a lot of tennis played there.

True rigor in this process would include a community-wide survey and utilization study, but no data has been gathered. Even casual observation disproves this statement.

The weather the last few days and weeks certainly might not be considered tennis weather, yet the courts have seen frequent tennis games played. See attached photos.

Complete Lack of Town-wide Assessment

At the October 9 Recreation Commission meeting, in a conversation about siting a cell tower in West Concord, the Chair advised that the impacts and tradeoffs across various potential sites in town for a cell tower be identified up front before recommending a

particular site, “because those are the questions that abutters and users of Rideout Park will ask.”

Why isn’t this same rigor and compassion being applied to the decision to reduce or eliminate tennis at Rideout, and inflict non-stop pickleball noise on the neighbors?

No Site Criteria

Please see this article by the engineering firm that did a site evaluation study for the town of Wellesley, MA to understand the factors that should be taken into account prior to selecting where to safely place pickleball

courts <https://www.westonandsampson.com/news/conducting-a-sound-pickleball-siting-study>

None of this evaluation work has been done in Concord, and yet a \$900,000+ plan has been put forth.

Could Pickleball Be Sited in Concord without Adverse Impacts on Neighbors?

At Rideout Park there are Maple Street neighbors whose properties are 40-60 feet away from the courts. Other towns in Massachusetts have established that courts need to be 700 feet or more away from abutters due to noise impacts.

There are multiple sites in Concord that could and should be considered for pickleball, including Peabody—as is noted on page 97 of the Recreation Commission’s own June 2024 *Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan*.

Do any other possible sites have neighbors living so close?

Court Lighting?!?!

The inclusion of lighting conduit in the project budget is extremely concerning. Has a lighting study been done to understand the impact on Maple Street bedroom windows 150 feet away? Has the impact that lengthening the court-playing day would have on neighbors been considered?

Lighting the courts would greatly exacerbating the impact on neighbors; it’s somewhat shocking that Concord would spend any taxpayer dollars on something that could so negatively impact some of its citizens.

No Sound Impact or Mitigation Research

Pickleball sounds can reach 70 to 100 decibels at 100 feet away; an acceptable level is closer to 30 decibels. One sound consultant nicknamed the “pop” of the pickleball racquet

hitting the ball, “gunshot’s little brother.” With multiple courts, tens of thousands of hits can be heard in a day.

Incredibly, although the proposed dedicated pickleball courts would be 40-60 feet from neighbors’ yards, the remit given to consultant Activitas did not include any sort of noise study or remediation options, nor is there any funding for noise mitigation in the project budget. How can this be?

Yet, there is budgeted money for a lighting conduit! Neighbors’ bedrooms are 150 feet away. Court lighting could extend utilization to 12 or more hours per day.

These facts taken together show a complete lack of consideration for the Maple Street neighbors.

Dual-use VS Dedicated Courts

Some have said that there are already 6 dual-use pickleball courts at Rideout—how big a difference would dedicated courts be? It would be a BIG difference! Right now, when the courts are full of tennis players, there are no pickleball sounds. There is relief from the much more penetrating and annoying noise of pickleball. And even when both games are being played on the courts, the tennis noise mixes with the pickleball noise to soften it. But all pickleball, all the time? That is a psychological nightmare. Every day. No relief in sight, ever.

The Vote

As decision makers in this process, I ask you to ask yourself:

- Why would we reduce or eliminate the ONLY free public tennis courts in West Concord, taking away a healthy and popular option for recreation? Is that not antithetical to the mission of the Recreation Department?
- Why would we put permanent pickleball courts near to families who live and work and raise their kids so incredibly close by?
- Would I want to hear pickleball noise in my yard, on my street, and inside my own home on a daily basis?
- Would I be concerned about my property value if pickleball courts were installed right near my back yard?
- Should I vote to approve dedicated pickleball at Rideout without understanding the opportunities and tradeoffs of other sites in town, such as Peabody, Emerson, the MCI property?

- Should I vote for a project that includes neither research on nor funding for sound mitigation, when I know that neighbors live so close? Is that a responsible—or considerate—approach?
- Given the many problems towns around the country have had after installing pickleball courts close to homes (info is a quick Google search away)—including significant added costs, lawsuits, cutting back allowed hours for court utilization, and court removal—why would we potentially subject the Town to those types of problems? And again, without an understanding of other possible sites?

I appreciate that the pickleball community wants dedicated courts—of course! But the nuisance to pickleball players of setting up temporary nets is nowhere near the level of life disruption that permanent courts would cause Rideout neighbors on a daily basis, year after year.

Dedicated pickleball courts in Concord would be great! They absolutely do not belong in Rideout Park. It's time to go back to the drawing board and give Concord the thorough, Town-wide, community-inclusive, data-driven process we all deserve.

For more information

{free, gift link, requires creation of a username and password—but it's worth it!}

Washington Post, November 2, 2025, “We set out to find the real reason pickleball noise is so annoying,” <https://wapo.st/3JOB1jh>

{free} Chronicle, September 6, 2024, “Pickleball Wars Escalating,”

https://www.reddit.com/r/massachusetts/comments/1fa3t0n/pickleball_wars_escalating/

{free} CBS News Boston, July 6, 2024, “Braintree neighborhood says nearby pickleball courts cause constant stress,”

<https://www.cbsnews.com/boston/news/pickleball-courts-boston-braintree/>

{free} NBC 10 Boston, “‘Not enough!’ Neighbors still frustrated with pickleball noise despite soundproofing effort,”

<https://www.nbcboston.com/video/on-air/as-seen-on/not-enough-residents-still-frustrated-with-pickleball-noise-after-soundproofing/3423223/>

{with Globe subscription} Boston Globe, March 14, 2024, “Braintree invested nearly half a million dollars in pickleball courts. Now it's paying the cost of angry neighbors.”

https://www.bostonglobe.com/2024/03/14/metro/braintree-pickleball-neighbors-noise-complaints-acoustic-panels/?s_campaign=sharetool_copypaste_view

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important topic, and for your service to our town.

Sincerely,

Ann Sgarzi
33 Maple Street
Concord



To Concord Rec
Comm and Rideout







November 20, 2025

To the Concord Recreation Commission and Rideout Park Subcommittee members,

I write to you today regarding the Rideout Park court resurfacing project. I ask you to vote to NOT approve any of the current options put forth, and to instead move to conduct a Town-wide study to assess where pickleball courts can be placed in Concord without detrimental impact to residents.

Tennis Court Inventory in Concord

At a recent Recreation Commission meeting we heard that Concord has a “surplus” of tennis courts. There are 11 dedicated (tennis-only) public courts in Concord Center. The three courts at Rideout are the only free public tennis courts in West Concord; those courts are already shared with pickleball.

Reducing the number of tennis courts at Rideout to 0 or even 1 is the least inclusive decision the Recreation Commission could make, out of line with the Recreation Department’s core values.

Tennis IS played at Rideout

The Recreation Commission Chair has stated in public meetings that Rideout is “pickleball country” and that there is little to no tennis played there. This is not true. There is a lot of pickleball played there; there is also a lot of tennis played there.

True rigor in this process would include a community-wide survey and utilization study, but no data has been gathered. Even casual observation disproves this statement.

The weather the last few days and weeks certainly might not be considered tennis weather, yet the courts have seen frequent tennis games played. See attached photos.

Complete Lack of Town-wide Assessment

At the October 9 Recreation Commission meeting, in a conversation about siting a cell tower in West Concord, the Chair advised that the impacts and tradeoffs across various potential sites in town for a cell tower be identified up front before recommending a particular site, “because those are the questions that abutters and users of Rideout Park will ask.”

Why isn’t this same rigor and compassion being applied to the decision to reduce or eliminate tennis at Rideout, and inflict non-stop pickleball noise on the neighbors?

No Site Criteria

Please see this article by the engineering firm that did a site evaluation study for the town of Wellesley, MA to understand the factors that should be taken into account prior to selecting where to safely place pickleball courts

<https://www.westonandsampson.com/news/conducting-a-sound-pickleball-siting-study>

None of this evaluation work has been done in Concord, and yet a \$900,000+ plan has been put forth.

Could Pickleball Be Sited in Concord without Adverse Impacts on Neighbors?

At Rideout Park there are Maple Street neighbors whose properties are 40-60 feet away from the courts. Other towns in Massachusetts have established that courts need to be 700 feet or more away from abutters due to noise impacts.

There are multiple sites in Concord that could and should be considered for pickleball, including Peabody—as is noted on page 97 of the Recreation Commission’s own June 2024 *Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan*.

Do any other possible sites have neighbors living so close?

Court Lighting?!?!

The inclusion of lighting conduit in the project budget is extremely concerning. Has a lighting study been done to understand the impact on Maple Street bedroom windows 150 feet away? Has the impact that lengthening the court-playing day would have on neighbors been considered?

Lighting the courts would greatly exacerbating the impact on neighbors; it’s somewhat shocking that Concord would spend any taxpayer dollars on something that could so negatively impact some of its citizens.

No Sound Impact or Mitigation Research

Pickleball sounds can reach 70 to 100 decibels at 100 feet away; an acceptable level is closer to 30 decibels. One sound consultant nicknamed the “pop” of the pickleball racquet hitting the ball, “gunshot’s little brother.” With multiple courts, tens of thousands of hits can be heard in a day.

Incredibly, although the proposed dedicated pickleball courts would be 40-60 feet from neighbors’ yards, the remit given to consultant Activitas did not include any sort of noise study or remediation options, nor is there any funding for noise mitigation in the project budget. How can this be?

Yet, there is budgeted money for a lighting conduit! Neighbors' bedrooms are 150 feet away. Court lighting could extend utilization to 12 or more hours per day.

These facts taken together show a complete lack of consideration for the Maple Street neighbors.

Dual-use VS Dedicated Courts

Some have said that there are already 6 dual-use pickleball courts at Rideout—how big a difference would dedicated courts be? It would be a BIG difference! Right now, when the courts are full of tennis players, there are no pickleball sounds. There is relief from the much more penetrating and annoying noise of pickleball. And even when both games are being played on the courts, the tennis noise mixes with the pickleball noise to soften it. But all pickleball, all the time? That is a psychological nightmare. Every day. No relief in sight, ever.

The Vote

As decision makers in this process, I ask you to ask yourself:

- Why would we reduce or eliminate the ONLY free public tennis courts in West Concord, taking away a healthy and popular option for recreation? Is that not antithetical to the mission of the Recreation Department?
- Why would we put permanent pickleball courts near to families who live and work and raise their kids so incredibly close by?
- Would I want to hear pickleball noise in my yard, on my street, and inside my own home on a daily basis?
- Would I be concerned about my property value if pickleball courts were installed right near my back yard?
- Should I vote to approve dedicated pickleball at Rideout without understanding the opportunities and tradeoffs of other sites in town, such as Peabody, Emerson, the MCI property?
- Should I vote for a project that includes neither research on nor funding for sound mitigation, when I know that neighbors live so close? Is that a responsible—or considerate—approach?
- Given the many problems towns around the country have had after installing pickleball courts close to homes (info is a quick Google search away)—including significant added costs, lawsuits, cutting back allowed hours for court utilization, and court removal—why would we potentially subject the Town to those types of problems? And again, without an understanding of other possible sites?

I appreciate that the pickleball community wants dedicated courts—of course! But the nuisance to pickleball players of setting up temporary nets is nowhere near the level of life disruption that permanent courts would cause Rideout neighbors on a daily basis, year after year.

Dedicated pickleball courts in Concord would be great! They absolutely do not belong in Rideout Park. It's time to go back to the drawing board and give Concord the thorough, Town-wide, community-inclusive, data-driven process we all deserve.

For more information

{free, gift link, requires creation of a username and password—but it's worth it!}
Washington Post, November 2, 2025, “We set out to find the real reason pickleball noise is so annoying,” <https://wapo.st/3JOB1jh>

{free} Chronicle, September 6, 2024, “Pickleball Wars Escalating,”
https://www.reddit.com/r/massachusetts/comments/1fa3t0n/pickleball_wars_escalating/

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Thank you for your time and consideration on this important topic, and for your service to our town.

Sincerely,

Ann Sgarzi
33 Maple Street
Concord

Photo attachments:

Tennis at Rideout, just over the past couple days...also see how close the courts are.

To: Recreation Commission

From: Enid Hart Boasberg

Sent: Friday, November 21, 2025 9:28 AM

Subject: Rideout Park and pickle ball courts

Dear Members of the Recreation Commission,

I am glad to know that the Commission is dedicated to resurfacing the pickle ball and tennis courts at Rideout Park but I am also concerned about what is apparently a plan to convert the mixed use tennis and pickle ball courts into 8 dedicated pickle ball courts. Perhaps you are unaware of how close neighbors' backyards are to the courts and how loud pickle ball playing is. I live across the street and I can hear them loud and clear.

Certainly, the equitable solution is to keep the Rideout courts as is but to add pickle ball courts to Emerson field. No houses abut Emerson Field and it only seems fair for each side of town to have both pickle ball and tennis courts.

Finally, please do not consider eliminating the basketball courts at Rideout Park. They are very popular and would missed by many residents.

Sincerely,

Enid Hart Boasberg

48 Laws Brook Road

To: Recreation Commission

From: Adam Movitz

Sent: Friday, November 21, 2025 12:15 PM

Subject: Rideout Park – Mixed Use Courts

I'm a neighbor of Rideout Park and use it regularly.

I'm writing today to voice my support of keeping the Tennis Courts as mixed use and not as Pickleball only.

I play tennis with my daughter at Rideout a good amount and it would be a shame if we weren't able to continue doing so.

I appreciate you taking the time to read this and thank you.

Sincerely,

Adam Movitz

401 Laws Brook Rd

To: Recreation Commission

From: Stephanie Bustillos

Sent: Friday, November 21, 2025 2:06 PM

Subject: Rideout tennis courts

My name is Stephanie Bustillos, my family and I moved to 28 maple street (directly behind the tennis courts at Rideout) this last February.

While searching for my home the one thing the realtor mentioned was to keep in mind the quiet relief of winter wouldn't continue through the summer as pickleballers usually gravitated to the tennis courts and the sound was something to keep in mind.

Summer came and although the pickleball sound at times was annoying, the sight of children and young people using the courts and other park amenities was a welcomed sight.

After spending some time in concord, getting to know some of my neighbors I came to the saddened realization some immigrant families were afraid to use other parks and their facilities because of immigration raids. They shared with me they felt so much comfort in knowing they had access to a park close to their homes and a few of their children took advantage of the free tennis courts and picked up the sport.

Come October and I find out a public meeting for the plan to resurface the tennis courts had come and gone. In this meeting they discussed the possibly to convert the tennis courts to completely dedicated pickleball courts without much input from the abutters or without any specific plans for sound mitigation.

It's a general rule that pickleball courts should have 500 feet of distance to mitigate sound, when this isn't possible, other towns/cities have proposed 200 feet with sound mitigation. The direct abutters are less than 150 feet away from tennis courts- which are now potentially going to turn into pickleball courts and the proposed plan doesn't include sound mitigation. It is one thing to ask current abutters how they feel about pickleball noise when the courts are mixed used (thus not pickleball at all times) and the configuration only allows for 6 pickleball courts at one time. It is a completely different story to agree to the cumbersome sound of 8 dedicated pickleball courts (that is the number required for tournaments- someone in the June meeting even proposed finding seating for spectators)- again no sound mitigation or sound analysis has been performed.

I was disheartened and quite honestly upset when I listened to the meetings in June and October (through the YouTube recordings) to find out the idea of creating a reservation system that could be monetized was discussed.

I am appalled the subcommittee chair was in charge of distributing the meeting flyers and that he has a very direct leaning to full pickleball conversion- I would expect someone in these positions (which is already problematic since he is in both the subcommittee and recreation committee) to have absolute neutrality when it comes to these decisions.

I expressed my frustration at the dismissal of vulnerable communities - immigrants, families with economic restraints, individuals with IDD/autism or other disabilities which cannot independently travel across town and let's not forget- children- who would be burdened with finding ways to commute to Emerson or CCHS for access to free tennis courts.

Concord has 11 tennis courts at their disposal, and yet West Concord has been zeroed in as the place to lose multi-functional courts for the will and whim of people who already have access to these courts. In one of the meetings it was discussed Emerson wouldn't be an ideal sight because neighbors have complained in the past. Should residents of West Concord be penalized for being good neighbors and sharing their multi-use courts with different populations?

There are multiple other sites where dedicated pickleball courts, which could be monetized, make the most sense- former Peabody, or even MCI. The noise concern would be nonexistent and it feels like neutral ground for all of Concord and its surrounding communities.

Thank you,

Stephanie Bustillos

To: Recreation Commission

From: Michael Carey

Sent: Friday, November 21, 2025 5:06 PM

Subject: Rideout

At the recent meeting of the Recreation Commission, the Chairman asked me to write to you with an update of the data on attendance of pickleball players at Rideout.

I can inform you that, based on an analysis of sign ups in our TeamReach application, there was an average of 23 players per day during the three week period from October 1 through October 21. During the following much colder and windy three week period from October 22 through November 13 (the day of the Recreation Commission meeting), there was an average of 16 players per day. I think this data clearly demonstrates the popularity of pickleball at Rideout even as the weather becomes much less attractive to many players.

I would also like to express my personal preference in option 3 for Rideout, being one dedicated tennis court and six dedicated pickleball courts. My opinion is influenced by the objections to the option of eight pickleball courts expressed by some tennis players and by some abutters to Rideout. It seems to me that option 3 would provide a compromise that would eliminate shared courts, still allow a tennis court in West Concord, significantly improve conditions for pickleball, and not increase the noise level for abutters beyond current levels.

My thanks to you and the Chairman for providing such a comprehensive degree of public input to this important topic.

Yours, Mike Carey

To: Recreation Commission

From: Christa Collins

Sent: Saturday, November 22, 2025 10:05 AM

Subject: Rideout courts

I just wanted to add my two cents to the pickleball vs. tennis debate at Rideout. I'd like to see both accommodated - at Emerson, as well.

Thanks!

Christa Collins

55 Highland Street

To: Recreation Commission

From: Doris Kelly

Sent: Sunday, November 23, 2025 4:57 PM

Subject: Re: Rideout Court Layout - Pickleball Please!

Can I make one additional comment for the subcommittee? There was recently a letter in the Bridge that listed concerns about the layout of the pickleball courts at Rideout where the writer brought up issues related to parking and noise. This is a false argument. Today there are 6 PB courts and all the proposals would still have 6. There would be no change in noise, parking, or any other measures. The only decision is on whether they are laid out as tennis courts and/or some are dedicated to pickleball. And just to stress how popular the game is, for two hours this morning at Rideout, even though it was in the 20s and pretty chilly, we had over 20 people playing pickleball on 5 courts.

Thanks,

Doris

To: Recreation Commission

From: Sue LaChance

Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 10:21 AM

Subject: Rideout Court Resurfacing

Dear Ms. Jackson,

This letter is to you and the Concord Recreation Commission. Please provide a copy to them (Phil Griffith, Chair, Matt Boger, Pete Funkhouser, Daniel Rodriguez and Laura Stearns)

I live in the neighborhood surrounding Rideout, and have been following the decision making process for resurfacing the courts somewhat closely. While I am neither a tennis player or a pickle ball player, the approach to this decision has been concerning...especially the meeting being held today at 1:30 in the afternoon when many, if not most of the concerned residents are unable to attend. I have read all the editorials in the Bridge, attended your last meeting via Zoom and am still perplexed as to how the town seems to be moving strongly ahead with a resurfacing decision that is neither logical nor fair to the residents of West Concord or Concord.

You have heard enough about all the concerns from abutters so I don't need to repeat them here. I simply want to add my voice that it is hard to follow any logic that calls for anything but to resurface and repaint the courts as multi-purpose courts [Option 1] - just as they are now - and then do the same for the courts at Emerson next year when those are resurfaced. It is the just and equitable thing to do.

I implore the Rec Commission to take the high road today and make the decision that's just and fair for all -

Sue LaChance

18 Studley Ct.

To: Recreation Commission

From: James McCloy

Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 8:05 PM

Subject: Rideout Pickle Ball

I feel the court layout should stay the same.

There should be some sort of pickleball net system that doesn't rely on a Team Leader to access the nets. At least as an experiment, nets on wheels so the tennis players can roll them out of the way.

Posted hours so the neighbors don't have to listen to the pop pop all day and into the evening.

No lights.

Investigate some sort of sound shield that could be integrated into the existing fence.

On a separate note, get the town to plow the sidewalks after a storm. Over the winter they become a real hazard for those that want to cross the field.

Thank you. Jim McCloy

To: Recreation Commission

From: Caroline McCloy

Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 5:04 PM

Subject: Rideout Field tennis courts

I am quite shocked by what I read in the Concord Bridge this week regarding the resurfacing plans at Rideout Field. Lights??? Have you asked the neighbors about this? Wow, I do not like that idea at all and I am not even an abutter. I walk my dogs around town everyday and I hear the pickleball games all the time. Give these people a rest when it is dark, at the very least. I often play pickleball at Rideout. I believe there should be pickleball in Concord center as well. Why are they special? I haven't heard about lights at Emerson Field, why not? What about the tennis courts at the high school? Why not stripe them for pickleball? We need tennis courts on this side of town and Rideout is the only place. Keep the courts striped for both. Stripe the courts at Emerson Field for pickleball or do it at the high school. Fair is fair.

Caroline McCloy

146 Prairie Street