

September 18, 2025
File N-1900

RECEIVED

Hightstown Borough Land Use Board and
Environmental Commission Members
156 Bank Street
Hightstown, NJ 08520

OCT 01 2025

Borough of
Hightstown

**Re: Declaration of Negligible Environmental Impact
Preliminary & Final Site Plan
Peddie School Stadium Renovation
Lot 1.02 in Block 53; South Main Street
Hightstown Borough, Mercer County, New Jersey**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

This project has two goals:

1. Reconfigure the current football field and track to permit the playing field to become an athletic field that can support multiple sports played by both boys and girls including soccer, lacrosse, field hockey and football while maintaining a 400 meter track and associated track and field event locations as well as create a playing surface that has a consistent playing surface of synthetic turf, with all weather capability.
2. Increase the viewing capacity for these sports and the adjacent tennis courts without adding any permanent seating, but by adding the concrete walkway along the Peddie Lake side of the stadium and the installation of athletic field lighting to permit periodic athletics events in the winter season during reduced hours of daylight.

The proposed reconfiguration of the Football Field and Track as depicted on the Site Plan will occur between the edge of the tennis courts and the outside edge of the stadium seating from the edge of the existing drive accessing the maintenance building at the rear of the athletic center to the edge of the children's play area. The renovation project is wholly located within the Peddie School facility.

As part of the renovation:

1. The track will be replaced with a similar type of track.
2. The grass field will be replaced with synthetic turf.

3. A retaining wall will be constructed at the edge of the tennis courts replacing a steeper slope down to the tennis courts to provide the width needed for the athletic fields as well as create a viewing area for the tennis courts and the athletic field.
4. For conservatism in stormwater management design, the synthetic turf will be considered impervious, (it is NOT). The increase of impervious due to this assumption as well as the added concrete walkway is mitigated with an underground detention system.
5. Field lighting will be installed.

The area of the renovation is about 4.69 acres of the 57.09 acre campus in Hightstown Borough. Including the synthetic turf as an impervious surface, the imperviousness cover increases from 1.63 to 4.13 acres.

As the stormwater management report illustrates, the criteria of a major stormwater management project as outlined in NJDEP 7:8 are met.

1. Stormwater Quality – no increase in motor vehicle surface, therefore not required. The synthetic turf field has built-in measures to protect against sediment and rubber crumb passing into the stormwater, see the stormwater report.
2. Stormwater Quantity – The underground cultec systems are designed to meet the peak rates of runoff required reductions for the 2, 10 and 100 year current and future storm events, see stormwater report.
3. Ground water recharge – The soils are mostly “D” hydrologic group (poorly drained) with little to no infiltration with a small area of “A” hydrologic group (well drained) near the existing maintenance building. The proposed project creates a small ground water recharge deficit. The synthetic turf is the best management practice for ground water recharge. The cross is similar to porous pavement and operates in a similar fashion. The top 1.75 inches consists of the turf and a cushion layer which are permeable, similar to porous pavement. The stormwater drains straight down through this layer into a minimum of 6 inches of stone. The stone is underlain by soil except where the underground cultec structures are located. As the calculations indicate, only a very small area of the synthetic turf (155 SF) is required to meet the recharge. Therefore, more stormwater will be recharged than does under existing conditions.
4. Soil Erosion and Sediment Control -Certification from Mercer County SCD is being sought in connection with good soil erosion and sediment control practices.

Green infrastructure is provided as part of the Best Management Practice to ensure proper groundwater recharge.

Since the project area is on the far side of the tennis courts from Peddie Lake, there is no impact to wetlands, wetlands buffers, DRCC stream corridor and flood plains that have been previously delineated and are contained within a conservation easement.

All proposed work is within previously disturbed areas.

The very limited number of trees that need to be removed as part of the construction, may be relocated within the Peddie School Campus. Landscaping is proposed at the edges of the renovation near the Athletic Center.

The field lighting is designed to only be turned on when needed for athletic events. The lighting system would be state-of-the art, and the specifications and design would limit any visual disturbance. Scientific testing would be conducted to measure illuminance outside the field area prior to construction completion.

As summarized above, the environmental aspects of the already developed area of The Peddie School will not be significantly impacted by the proposed development/redevelopment.

There will be transitory and unavoidable impacts to the environment during construction. However, via well-planned construction sequencing (the school will be operational during the construction), good housekeeping and management practices and good soil erosion and sediment control practices, these impacts will be minimized.

It is our opinion that the proposed development will not have a negative impact on the environment.

Sincerely,



Lorali E. Totten, P.E., P.P.
For the Firm

LET:

cc: Sanjeev Puri of The Peddie School