

Dear Editor:

I had the privilege of serving the Village of Glen Ellyn as Trustee (1991-1995) and President (1997-2001) and have admired the steps taken through the years to preserve and enhance the character of our Village. Like many Glen Ellyn residents, I do not want to see development or change that serves to severely impact the uniqueness of this community. It is the special quality of the historic neighborhoods, civic buildings and downtown that makes this such a wonderful place to live and that has helped to maintain the relatively high market value of homes in the area.

Last fall, at the urging of a group of parents, Glenbard West High School installed an artificial turf field along Crescent Boulevard at the cost of 1.4 million. While some funds were raised through the Park District and private donors, the school still has over \$1.1 million in debt from this project. Now, the administration wants to spend close to 1 million more to install 8-story tall stadium lighting, loudspeakers, stadium seating and other "enhancements. One can not make the claim that this is for the high school curriculum nor will these lights benefit a majority of the student body. In fact, the plan is to lease the field to outside teams with lights on until 10:00 p.m. three seasons a year.

As our Village begins the improvements to our Central Business District, as approved in the Downtown Strategic Plan, the lighting from the 80 foot towers, noise, traffic, etc. from Memorial Field, two blocks away, will severely impact the success of this important revitalization effort, which will be a long and costly undertaking.

The landmark architecture of Glenbard West and the surrounding picturesque neighborhoods are an asset to the community and inappropriate development in such a small, central area will harm the character of the entire town. A number of residents from all over our village have started to speak out against this ill-conceived idea and a petition is being circulated online (go to: <http://www.gopetition.com/petition/42517.html>)

The next meeting of the District 87 School Board is February 22 at 7:00 p.m. at the high school. I urge Glen Ellyn citizens to help protect the character and uniqueness of our beautiful Village by telling our school board that we do not want stadium lighting at Memorial Park.

Joe E. Wark