

The Acton-Boxborough Richard E. Dow Track Renovation Project

6-6-13
SC Meeting
Handout from
John Raggin

Summary:

The track and field facilities at Acton-Boxborough, dedicated to the memory of Richard E. Dow, are in need of your help. The facilities are 20 years old and need a complete replacement. This track has been in need of a replacement for many years, but for various reasons, the project has been squeezed out of every budget. Now the track and field facilities are in a seriously dilapidated state and are a safety hazard for the athletes. The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$650,000 to \$750,000.

Details & History:

Acton-Boxborough has a tradition of sports among high schools in Massachusetts. Over the years, there have been many Dual County League, Eastern Mass, and even State championships across virtually every single sport and gender. Because of this tradition, every spot on any AB team roster is heavily contested and very few kids make the varsity teams. What is unfortunate about this is that different kids mature at different rates, and just because someone isn't athletic as a freshman, doesn't mean they won't be athletic as a senior. These late bloomers are unfortunately cut out in the AB sports system.

Track & field and cross country running are the one shining light within the AB system in this regard. They are the only two programs at Acton-Boxborough that are "no cut" sports. They are sports that many kids can participate in. It keeps kids motivated and active, with a focus of improving every year. Because of this, there are many stories about kids who couldn't run, jump, or throw fast/far when they were a freshman, but were given the chance with track and placed in the conference meet when they were a senior. Not to mention the confidence, teamwork, and training discipline that every track athlete gains that can be applied the rest of their lives.

Thanks to the tireless work by the coaches and the positive atmosphere they have created, participation in the track & field and cross country programs have grown over 400% at AB in the Junior High School and High School over the last 8 years. Below are the current numbers:

Athletes participating in Acton-Boxborough Track & Field and Cross Country Programs in 2013

School / Season	# of Athletes
Junior High Cross Country	100
Junior High Track & Field	290
High School Cross Country	70
High School Indoor Track & Field	180
High School Outdoor Track & Field	200

In addition, many people in the community walk or run on the track. This includes 800+ junior high school students that run on the track multiple times a week as part of gym class.

The Acton-Boxborough Richard E. Dow Track Renovation Project

The Dilapidated State of the Track & Field facilities:

The track and field facility at Acton-Boxborough was originally a 440 yard track. The last version of this 440 yard track was put in place approximately 40 years ago. About 20 years ago, a thin asphalt surface of 400 meters was put on top of the 440 yard track. 8 years ago, the track was sparsely patched and repainted as part of the Leary Field turf project.

"The track should have been done as part of the Leary Field project 8 years ago. But unfortunately, there wasn't enough money for it, so it got only some patching and paint."

Acton-Boxborough School Official

"I can't have my athletes compete on any of the runways [long jump, triple jump, pole vault]. I forfeit the points they would have scored. I am really concerned about injuring my athletes."

Dual County League Track Head Coach

"The track is the number 1 priority of the capital projects. Unfortunately the way the budget works, there is not specific money set aside for these capital projects."

Acton-Boxborough School Official

"We won't compete at the Acton-Boxborough track. You have to come to our track. Your track is a hazard and I don't want any injuries."

Dual County League Track Head Coach

The Project:

The project that is being proposed will replace the current dilapidated track and runways with a new track and runways. The total cost of the project is \$650,000 to \$750,000.

The track and runways will be torn out and replaced with a base layer. The base layer will ensure all surfaces are level, allow proper drainage, and provide long life. The surfaces will be polyurethane, which is the most frequently used track surface for high schools in our area. Polyurethane is a relatively inexpensive a track surface, yet provides superior durability for long life, cushion to prevent injuries, and is hypoallergenic (latex is the only less expensive surface). The project fixes drainage issues, expands the 6 lanes to 8 lanes for the finishing straight, and fixes the alignment issues with the turf field.

The goal is to raise half the money (~\$375,000) for the project from private donors from personal donors and corporations, with the other half coming from public funds from the schools and town.

The timeline desired for the project is to raise the funds by July 31, 2013. The project would follow all Acton-Boxborough school and town guidelines and be led by JD Head, director of facilities. There would then be a bid process for the track construction company to do the work, with project commencement in early November 2013. The project would stop for the winter, with the final phase being adding the polyurethane top coat of the track and painting in March of 2014. The track & facility would be ready for the spring season of April 2014.

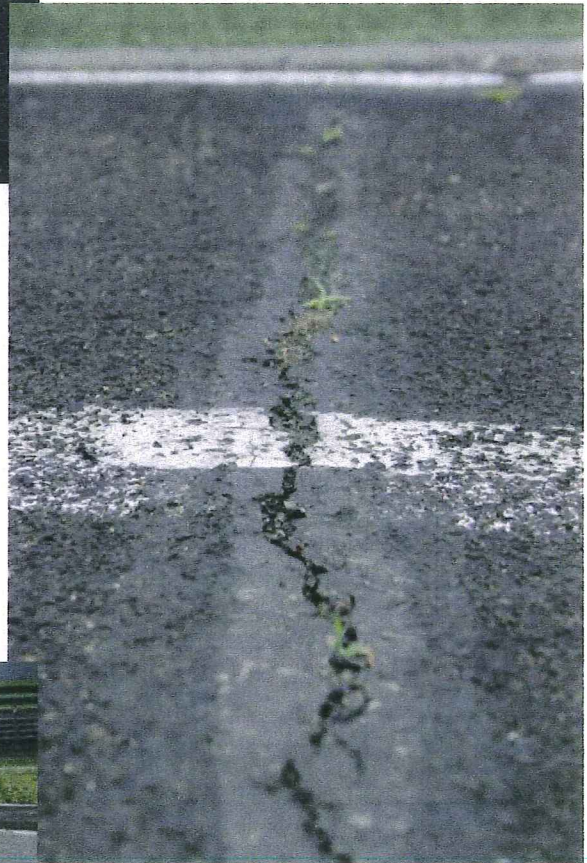
The Acton-Boxborough Richard E. Dow Track Renovation Project

Pictures of the current state of the Richard E Dow Track & Field Facilities:



This is the high jump facility with huge holes where the jump surface is coming up. That water bottle shows the size of the holes.

This photo shows major cracks in the track, deep enough for weeds to actually grow through. These cracks appear all over the track, mostly in Lane 1 where most of the use occurs.



The long jump and triple jump runways showing the warping undulation from the 40 year old base, including chunks of the runway being left from athlete spikes pulling up parts of the track.

The Acton-Boxborough Richard E. Dow Track Renovation Project



Major decay in the pole vault runway

The track where the 20 year old 400 m track is decaying into the 40 year old 440 yard track.



Parts of the track where the surface is coming up leaving divots. This is months away from becoming a large hole.

The Acton-Boxborough Richard E. Dow Track Renovation Project

A large hole on the pole vault runway. That is a pencil so you can get the scale of the hole. It covers almost $\frac{1}{2}$ the runway.



The water drainage of the track is failing, leaving puddles on the track even on a sunny day with no rain in the past 15 hours.

The long jump runway, showing the undulation from years of sinking and decay, as well as weeds growing through the surface

