

“LIGHT THE DIAMONDS” PROPOSAL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Over the past two years, the Welles Park Parents Association (WPPA) has been working with the Chicago Park District (CPD) to explore the possibility of adding lights to the Welles Park Baseball and Softball Diamonds. One of the CPD’s missions is to “create a customer-focused and responsive park system that prioritizes the needs of children and families.” This sheet explains how the Light the Diamonds Project will fulfill that mission.

WHAT IS THE WPPA?

The WPPA is the volunteer-run, non-profit that annually provides baseball and softball programs for 2,000 players aged 5-19. 85% of those players are from the Chicago neighborhoods near Welles Park, but anyone in the city is welcome to join.

In the past 24 months, the WPPA has committed to spending more than \$180,000 on field improvement at Welles Park, and annually provides tens of thousands of dollars to the CPD to fund other programming at Welles Park and other area parks.

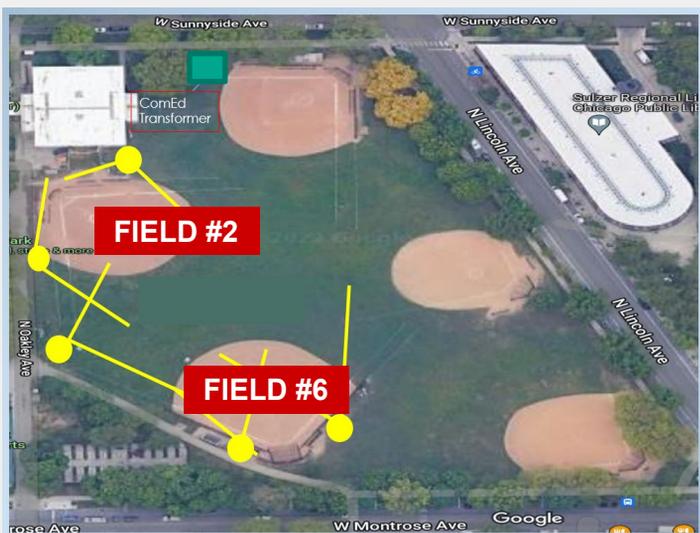
WHY LIGHTS?

The WPPA continues to grow, but we have reached capacity limits based on the fields available to us. Every year we turn away dozens – and in some years up to 100 children – who want to play baseball or softball at their local park. Adding lights will give us the flexibility to reduce or possibly eliminate our waitlist.

Additionally, Welles is one of the only northside parks with baseball and softball diamonds, but no lights.

WHERE WOULD THE LIGHTS GO?

For the past two years, we have engaged with the community, and based on the feedback received, have worked with the CPD to reduce our plan from lighting four diamonds to the two interior diamonds as shown here.





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QUICK FACTS

- 1 5 total poles around park exterior, no more than 60’ in height
- 2 LED lighting
- 3 Meet required safety lighting for infield and outfield
- 4 Automatic or scheduled on/off, with each field independently controlled, and park staff with access to light controls.
- 5 Prior to reducing the plan to just 2 fields, the WPAC survey of 893 respondents showed 66% support or neutral for lighting 4 fields
- 6 WPPA to fully fund installation; WPPA has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to date

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

- WPPA will enforce a 9:30 pm curfew when using the fields
- CPD developing a plan for use of lights for other community groups
- Lit fields will be available to baseball and softball teams
- Committed to work with CPD on adding bike racks at Welles Park
- Encourage families who can to walk or bike rather than drive
- WPPA continues to help keep the park clean and will work with CPD to extend the efforts beyond just the time WPPA is using the space

WHAT WILL THEY LOOK LIKE?



Recently installed light pole at Hiawatha Park

QUESTIONS? Email lights@wppachicago.org