

Burrillville Planning Board rejects synthetic turf proposal after legal pushback from Desautel Browning Law

NEWPORT, RI, UNITED STATES, May 8, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a major victory for local residents and environmental advocates, the Burrillville Planning Board has unanimously denied a controversial proposal to install a synthetic turf athletic field at the town's middle school—a decision influenced by legal representation provided by [Desautel Browning Law](#) on behalf of abutting property owners.



Kerin Browning and Marisa Desautel

The proposed project faced intense scrutiny from neighbors and environmental stakeholders due to its potential impacts on the surrounding watershed and the apparent lack of alignment with Burrillville's Comprehensive Plan. The legal team at Desautel Browning raised concerns regarding procedural compliance, environmental risks, and the project's inconsistency with local zoning requirements.

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*Kerin Browning, partner at
Desautel Browning Law*

“Municipalities are not exempt from the planning and zoning process,” said Kerin Browning, partner at Desautel Browning Law. “Within that process is a required finding that a project must be consistent with the community Comprehensive Plan, the zoning ordinance and it cannot cause substantial harm to the environment. For these

reasons, we are glad the Burrillville Planning Board denied the project. We thank the Board for hearing our client's side.”

Desautel Browning's legal argument focused on ensuring that all developments—even those initiated by public entities—must adhere to the same legal standards required of private developers. The firm submitted detailed findings that the project failed to meet key criteria

outlined in Rhode Island's Land Development and Subdivision Review Enabling Act.

The ruling sends a strong message about accountability, transparency, and environmental due diligence, particularly when it comes to land use decisions that affect sensitive ecological areas and nearby communities.

This case also demonstrates the important role that legal counsel plays in ensuring that community voices are heard and respected in local planning processes.



Desautel Browning Law will be releasing a recorded interview to further explain the legal framework behind the board's decision and the broader implications for municipalities and residents across the state.

Find the full ruling here:

[https://www.burrillville.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf2886/f/uploads/lacey v. town of burrillville et al. pc-2024-05161 and pc-2024-04858.pdf](https://www.burrillville.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf2886/f/uploads/lacey_v._town_of_burrillville_et_al._pc-2024-05161_and_pc-2024-04858.pdf).

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