

Softball Field Dugout Improvements

Leisure Services and Public Works have been coordinating a number of enhancements to existing softball fields at both Norfeldt Field and Sterling Fields.

West Hartford Girls Softball League organizes team play for approximately 200 girls aged 6 to 14, and have requested upgrades to existing dugouts at two sites for safety, improved maintenance and practical reasons:

- Norfeldt Field at 1515 Boulevard has one softball field with two dugouts;
- Sterling Sports Complex at 425 Oakwood Avenue supports four softball fields with eight dugouts.

At both sites, the existing dugouts lack protective fencing and covers. The lack of fencing potentially allows players to leave the dugout areas without warning, and potentially allows errant balls to strike players. The benches are set into natural ground, which creates bare spots and depressions under the benches. These depressions lead to puddling and muddy conditions after rain.

At the Sterling complex, the softball league shares the site with the youth football league, who uses the fields in the fall. New dugouts would not interfere with field use by other sports.

The attached plans include a concrete pad along with fenced-in spaces and covered seating for dugouts at all five fields. These bench areas will include sufficient space for persons with disabilities. They will also create a safer designated area for all players.

Adding dugouts at these five softball fields will help with overall maintenance, provide safer conditions and enhance the player experience.