

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **MYS Announces Initiative to Provide Quality Fields for All of Its Players**

McLean, VA – December 15, 2006 – McLean Youth Soccer is embarking on an unprecedented field development initiative by converting 10 – 12 natural grass fields to synthetic turf over the next three or four years. At the end of the initiative, every MYS player will have the opportunity to learn and play soccer on a quality surface.

MYS has a national reputation for adopting innovative programs in youth soccer. Over the past 10 years, it has made significant improvements in the quality of training and enjoyment of soccer experienced by its players. During this period, however, the condition of its fields has steadily deteriorated due to droughts, soil compaction, over usage, and inappropriate play after rain storms. There is a lack of athletic field space in McLean to effectively maintain quality grass surfaces at the current level of demand or to set aside fields that are deteriorating. As a result, most of the fields are in very poor condition. In soccer, the quality of the playing surface has a direct bearing on the player's enjoyment of the game and ability to develop skills.

In 2007, MYS is targeting to convert the first 4 fields in Phase 1: Spring Hill Park Fields #2 & #3, Linway Terrace Field, and Police Field. Exactly which fields will be converted in the future is unknown at this time. MYS is in discussions with the Fairfax County Park Authority and other County entities about prospective additional fields, and the prospects will be announced once the locations have been determined.

Police Field, which adjoins the McLean Governmental Center on Balls Hill Road, is owned by the Board of Supervisors and is the only field where MYS proposes to put lights in Phase 1. The Fairfax County Park Authority owns Spring Hill Park Fields #2 & #3 and Linway Terrace Field.

MYS intends to involve the community in its plans. On December 7, 2006, MYS's Field Development Initiative Committee (FDIC) met with the neighbors of Police Field at an open event hosted by the Dranesville District Supervisor's Office. Included at the meeting were representatives from the Dranesville District Supervisor's Office, The Langley School, the McLean Citizens Association, the Lewinsville Coalition, and the West Lewinsville Heights Citizens Association. In addition to a second meeting with the neighbors of the Police Field, the FDIC plans to meet with the neighbors of Spring Hill Park Fields #2 & #3 and Linway Terrace Field. Furthermore, the proposal to install lights at Police Field will require a formal public hearing once a Sports Illumination Plan has been completed.

The response from the community has been very positive. Supervisor Joan DuBois (Dranesville) says, "I am delighted that the first meeting on the Police Field with MYS and the community was constructive and productive. I appreciate the efforts that MYS is making to ensure that residents are informed and involved in these projects and will do what I can to continue this outreach. These turf fields will be a tremendous asset to our community and will help alleviate the current shortage of rectangular fields in the Dranesville District."

MYS provides programs tailored to the needs of its 4,000 players from ages 4 to 18. It is a leader in youth soccer, offering programs for children of all abilities and levels of interest, from a TOPSoccer program for children with disabilities to McLean Premier Soccer (MPS) for players seeking the very highest level of competition. It has initiated this field conversion initiative for the benefit of all of its players.

The total cost of the initiative is approximately \$7,000,000. MYS will be seeking funds from many sources including contributions from its members, the community, and local businesses, as well as a number of County sources. With each field that is converted to synthetic turf, the money the club spends on maintenance will decline, resulting in significant annual savings and helping to fund future conversions.

For more information about the reasons for the field initiative and its benefits, please visit [www.mcleansoccer.org/newfields](http://www.mcleansoccer.org/newfields).