

Sjostedt, Paula

From: Hilary Hosmer <hilaryhosmer300@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2026 10:46 AM
To: Sjostedt, Paula; Wentworth, Emily; Oram, Jennifer
Subject: Re: Advocacy against Pickleball Proposal

Dear Members of the Hingham Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposal for eight outdoor pickleball courts at 25 Bare Cove Park Drive.

When the motion regarding pickleball at Bare Cove Park was originally introduced at the 2025 Town Meeting, it was explicitly emphasized to the community that there would be no noise issues associated with the project. The current proposal for eight courts—operating 13 hours a day, seven days a week—stands in direct contradiction to those initial assurances.

The impulsive and repetitive "pop-pop-pop" sound of pickleball is a documented nuisance that will fundamentally alter the peaceful character of the park and the surrounding neighborhood. Given that the promise of a noise-free project was a key component of its introduction to the Town, I urge the Boards to hold this proposal to that standard and reject it in its current form.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Hilary Hosmer
204 Linden Ponds Way

On Tue, May 12, 2026 at 8:03 PM bare cove <barecovepreservation@gmail.com> wrote:

Hello fellow advocates - we are grateful the Town of Hingham is not moving forward with its senior center on a beautiful forested parcel of land, but we're now moving on to the town's proposal for 8 pickleball courts in the same vicinity.

This coming Monday and Tuesday are 2 key meetings. We need people to email comments to the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals and we have created 4 options for you to consider if you just want to cut and paste (below OR in the 4 attachments). Of course please feel free to revise/add your own language or write your own piece.

PLEASE also attend either/both the meetings if you can and say a few words if you are comfortable, such as "I don't know why as a Town we think its ok to spend all this money for 8 pickleball courts when we have plenty of other courts in Town."

Monday May 18 @ 7pm - Planning Board

<https://zoom.us/join>

Meeting ID: 846 7975 7835 Passcode: 676354 OR

Dial-in number: 929-205-6099

Tues May 19 @ 7pm - Zoning Board of Appeals

<https://zoom.us/join>

Meeting ID: 846 7975 7835 Passcode: 676354 OR

Dial-in number: 929-205-6099

Send email to: sjostedtp@hingham-ma.gov; wentworthe@hingham-ma.gov; oramj@hingham-ma.gov; oramj@hingham-ma.gov

EXAMPLE 1:

Dear Members of the Hingham Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals:

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposal to construct eight outdoor pickleball courts at 25 Bare Cove Park Drive.

Eight courts is simply too large and intense a facility for this location. It is unprecedented in Hingham to build this many courts at any single location. There is no data nor justification for a complex of this size especially as the existing court facilities in Town are not operating at full capacity (i.e., many of the courts are not used). The size of this proposal is not appropriate and is not necessary.

The scale of a development project should match demonstrated demand and the character of the surrounding area. These 8 pickleball courts would demonstrably diminish the character of the area. I encourage each of you to visit the proposed site of these 8 pickleball courts on any weekday morning – it is quiet, serene and peaceful. Many people use the area for walking, reflection, and passive recreation. Nearby residents and park users enjoy this area for its quiet and solitude, all of which will be destroyed by 8 pickleball courts that plan to operate 13 hours a day, 7 days a week. The constant “pop-pop-pop” sound generated by pickleball travels long distances and would fundamentally alter the tranquility of this setting for nearby residents and park users alike.

The applicant has also provided insufficient information regarding any noise mitigation. Without detailed acoustic studies, operational restrictions, and enforceable protections, the burden of the noise nuisance will fall on the surrounding neighborhood and everyone who enjoys the park or lives in the area and that is not fair, especially as Town Meeting adopted a noise bylaw to protect inhabitants from just these sorts of noise nuisances and excessive noises. Our Town’s noise by-law which states “[a]ll town departments, board, and officials having responsibility for the review and approval of new projects or activities, or changes to existing projects that result, or may result, in the production of sound shall, to the extent reasonably feasible under the circumstances, require compliance with the provisions of this by-law [42] **as a condition of approval**” needs to be applied to this project.

I respectfully urge the Planning Board and the Zoning Board to reject this proposal in its current form.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

EXAMPLE 2:

Dear Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals Members,

I am writing because I am against the proposed construction of eight outdoor pickleball courts at 25 Bare Cove Park Drive.

The proposed area is quiet and a tranquil public space in town. Residents and visitors come to the area specifically to enjoy nature, walk peacefully, and escape noise and congestion. Building a large 8 court pickleball complex in this location would permanently change the character of the area in terms of people, noise and traffic.

Unlike tennis or many other recreational activities, pickleball produces a repetitive sharp popping sound that carries widely and continuously. Subjecting nearby residents, park users and Town employees to this noise for potentially 13 hours a day, seven days a week, would create a significant and ongoing excessive noise nuisance.

I am also troubled that there has been little meaningful information provided regarding noise mitigation. Before approving a project of this scale, the Town should require comprehensive sound studies and clear evidence that nearby neighborhoods and passive recreation areas will be protected. It is not fair that any nearby residents, many of whom have invested heavily in their homes and outdoor spaces, should suddenly be told by the Town that they are no longer entitled to enjoy their outdoor spaces as they have for the past 50+ years and must tolerate the excessive noise of continuous pop-pop-pop from pickleball.

Additionally, eight courts is excessive. Hingham does not currently have any court facility of this size, and it is unclear why such a large concentration of courts is necessary when existing facilities are not consistently at capacity.

If the Town moves forward at all, there should at minimum be strict limits on operating hours and court usage to preserve some measure of peace for residents, park visitors and nearby workers.

I respectfully ask the Boards to carefully consider the long-term impacts this proposal would have on the surrounding community, its unique character and the working conditions of Town employees.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

EXAMPLE 3:

Dear Hingham Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals,

I respectfully urge the Board not to approve the proposal for eight outdoor pickleball courts at 25 Bare Cove Park Drive.

The proposal is out of scale for both the location and the surrounding neighborhood. Eight courts would create a high-intensity commercial-type level of facility in an area that is currently quiet, natural, and serene.

The repetitive sound associated with pickleball is well documented and can become extremely disruptive over long periods of time. The prospect of hearing this noise from morning through evening, seven days a week, is very troubling as a resident, both for the impact on our Town employees right next door and for anyone else living or trying to enjoy the area.

The Town has also not adequately addressed how noise impacts would be mitigated. There is insufficient information regarding sound barriers, operational restrictions, enforcement mechanisms, or long-term monitoring. Without those protections, nearby residents, town employees and visitors to the park will bear the consequences. At a minimum, there should be more information presented, and a look-back or review period, to consider and reflect on the appropriateness of the mitigants.

In addition, there has not been a convincing demonstration that eight new courts are needed. Existing courts in town do not appear to be fully utilized, and nowhere else in Hingham has such a large court facility been developed. It is especially troubling that there are not restroom facilities for such a large quantity of courts, and therefore people.

If any courts are ultimately approved, there should be meaningful restrictions on hours of operation and overall court usage to reduce the impact on the surrounding area.

Please protect the quiet character of the Site and reject this proposal as currently presented.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

EXAMPLE 4:

Dear Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals members:

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the 8 proposed pickleball courts for 25 Bare Cove Park Drive. While I understand the importance of providing recreational opportunities to the community, I am deeply concerned about the health and environmental effects, and the reduction in property values associated with excessive noise from pickleball.

Pickleball Noise Pollution

There is growing public recognition and concern about the health effects associated with prolonged exposure to noise pollution caused by pickleball play in residential areas. There is a wealth of research that documents a link between noise pollution and many adverse health effects, including headaches, sleep disturbances, stress, anxiety, malaise, and depression. These harmful effects can, in turn, make unfortunate victims of noise pollution more vulnerable to even more serious harm to their health.

Pickleball noise is very different and more harmful than other noise commonly occurring at public recreational facilities for two major reasons – (1) its impulsive characteristic, and (2) its repetitiveness.

Impulsive pickleball noise results from a solid pickleball paddle striking against a hard plastic ball. This contact generates a noise characteristic that acoustic experts classify as “impulsive”. People, pets, and wildlife are much more sensitive to impulsive sounds than non-

impulsive sounds (even at the same decibel level). That is because impulsive sounds often warn receptors of impending harm, which in turn, generates an involuntary fight or flight stress response.

Pickleball noise is also repetitive. Research has shown that pickleball play can generate about up to 900 noise events per hour per court. So, if six pickleball courts were used constantly from 7 am to 8 pm that would result in 70,000 noise events per day. People living near pickleball courts report that the cumulative effect of those thousands of random impulsive noise events is extremely harmful to their health and wellbeing.

Property Values

Some real estate assessments and reports indicate that nearby pickleball courts can negatively affect property values in surrounding areas by over 20% of their value. Prospective buyers often see nearby pickleball courts as a noisy nuisance and potentially harmful, leading to decreased interest, lower property prices, and in some cases the inability to even sell their home. Protecting our property values is essential for maintaining the financial well-being of our residents and the attractiveness of our neighborhood.

Finding a Workable Solution

Given these concerns, I respectfully request that your board thoroughly review the impacts of the proposed pickleball courts, and whether it complies with Hingham's noise by-law adopted by Town Meeting. In doing so, I urge you to consider the following actions:

1. **Conduct comprehensive noise impact assessments.** Commission independent experts to evaluate the potential health, environmental, insurance, and property value implications of the pickleball courts. The assessment should recognize that because pickleball noise is impulsive, has an unusually high number of noise events, and is a relatively new phenomenon, that most existing noise ordinances are out of date and inadequate to protect the public from being harmed by pickleball noise. Impacts from potential lawsuits and increases in insurance costs or loss of insurance coverage should also be addressed.
2. **Explore alternatives.** Identify and assess alternatives that solve the excessive noise issue. Many localities have found that a solution is to locate pickleball indoors, which will allow for year-round play with no noise impacts to immediate abutters, whether they be Town employees, residents or park users (a win-win rather than a win-lose).
3. **Implement good neighbor standards.** In addition to not locating pickleball courts near noise-sensitive receptors, standards and rules should be developed to ensure that the pickleball courts do not become a neighborhood nuisance. These might include ensuring that adequate parking and bathrooms facilities are available. Also, rules should limit the days and hours of operation and prohibit the playing of music, or use of speakers or requirement to use quiet equipment/balls.

Our community's health, environment and property values are of utmost importance. By taking these factors into account, we can work together to find a solution that balances the need for recreational enjoyment with the well-being and interests of our residents.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your response and am hopeful of a constructive dialogue on this issue.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

If you want to unsubscribe from these emails, please reply with "unsubscribe"