

**Mike Kennedy responds to TalkJoc question re: baseball deal between city of Coeur d'Alene and American Legion Baseball – 7.18.12**

**TalkJoc:** Would the Ramsey Field be used until the proposed Cherry Hill field is complete? Any updates on that plan?

**MikeK:** TALKJOC - Some thoughts on your question: Ramsey would be a permanent 90' baseball diamond that is additive and doesn't use any of the existing fields. Legion would use that as their permanent "home" (as they do at McEuen now). But Legion is more than just one team, of course, so the future addition of the field on 15th (the "Field of Dreams" as it's been called) means there will be games played there as well. Additionally, the high schools that have used the McEuen would be able to use Ramsey in conjunction with Legion's schedule. We hope to continue the Joint Use agreement with the school district for their fields that has served the taxpayers so well over the years - they have school teams on city fields, city parks and rec (and Legion) have had access to school fields. We want that to continue.

There is SO much more to the complexity of the many different sports teams that go into this. But here's the bottom line that's driven me for baseball (my first sporting love):

- 1) We need more 90' baseball fields in Coeur d'Alene
- 2) Legion needs a permanent "home" where they can have schedule priority and other amenities like they do on McEuen
- 3) 15th Street will be a fantastic addition
- 4) We still need more 90' baseball fields and so even with Ramsey and 15th baseball fields up and running, there will be a need to keep at it and there are options for future projects beyond these if we keep focused on the kids and the facilities and the uses.

So I'm focused on increasing the number of fields to support the current and hopeful future growth in the sport. Soccer, Softball, Jr. Tackle, etc. can all be accommodated in this overall approach through the fields and complexes that the Parks and Recreation Departments have developed over the years.

Lights, scheduling, bleachers, press boxes, concessions, parking, neighborhood considerations, tournaments, school schedules, travel teams... there are a myriad of angles on youth sports that all have ardent defenders, some opponents, and interest in the best facilities possible for their kids.

I'm pretty confident that the Press has it right here and that we are on a constructive path so that all groups will not only be accommodated but supported and able to grow.