

A couple of days ago, Ashley asked me “Why do we have to replace the outdoor courts? Can’t we just continue to patch them?”

Well, of course, that’s a great question and if he is asking I’m guessing others might be also.

The answer, fundamentally, comes down to asking what kind of club do we want to be? I believe we are fundamentally a tennis club and our tennis courts should be world class. This is an important distinction. We are not a country club or resort that just happens to have a few tennis courts. These facilities can allow their courts to become dated or perhaps “second rate” because tennis is not their primary mission. But our situation is different – we are a tennis club, pure and simple, and members have an expectation that our courts will be of the very highest quality.

Now, all of us know what poorly constructed or maintained tennis courts look like. We have all played at other clubs (I won’t mention names) or at public parks. These courts have deteriorating asphalt, water puddles, uneven surfaces and lines that you can barely see. This happens for a variety of reasons but mostly because the underlying surface (either concrete or asphalt) has worn out. This is exactly what happens to our roads and driveways. And, yes, the asphalt and concrete can be patched but, just like our roads, patching only gets you so far. You end up with a surface full of uneven and unsightly patches. It

becomes a maintenance nightmare and certainly would not result in “world class” tennis courts.

Our outdoor courts are 50 years old! They have served us well. But, the underlying asphalt is old and is now literally coming apart. This is called raveling. Raveling results in cracks, puddles and uneven surfaces. The water under the courts comes up through these cracks and then blisters the acrylic paint surface. Our maintenance staff has been doing a great job patching the courts but this is only a temporary solution. The patching will increase in frequency and it does not solve the fundamental problem - the courts are just old and need to be replaced.

I don't want to be preachy, but we all have had the benefit of playing on beautiful courts because someone 50 years ago had an idea and willingness to build some excellent quality courts. And they have served us well. I believe that we owe it to the younger tennis players coming up behind us to make sure we continue to have a tennis club with world class courts for the next 50 years.

Be sure and review the Q & A document. The court replacement project has several other fun features including water on the courts, new landscaping, sidewalks, seating, cabanas, etc.