

FRIENDS ^{OF} THE FIELD

Position on the Proposed Development by Maret School of a Sports Complex at the Episcopal Center for Children

We, Friends of the Field (FoF), are a local ANC 3G organization of 230 (and growing) residents who care deeply about the integrity of our neighborhood, including the five-acre open field on the property of the Episcopal Center for Children (ECC). We formed in the fall of 2021 to pursue appropriate discovery and action in response to the proposal by Maret School to develop a sports complex on ECC grounds.

We support the missions of ECC, Maret, and many sports groups seeking greater access to playing fields. Our issue is not about them. It's about whether the scope and scale of the Maret proposal is appropriate for this piece of land in our Chevy Chase community.

We regret that we, the most-affected neighbors, were not brought into consultation before the Maret proposal was completed – indeed, as ECC, Maret, and the ANC were first discussing options and then plans for the property. We are direct stakeholders in the future of this community and, as such, believe we merit such engagement. As opposed to a largely non-negotiable deal, handed to us as a *fait accompli*, we would have welcomed a seat at the table to brainstorm solutions to shared problems. We believe, in a progressive city like Washington, inclusive governance should be the norm not an exception, a right not a privilege.

We now are keen to fulfill our stakeholder role as the Maret proposal moves through ANC and Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) review. This depends on our having accurate and complete details on what the proposed development is and would mean for our neighborhood. Accordingly, we need and request: (1) full disclosure of all current and verified facts on all aspects of the proposal; (2) thorough analysis of the anticipated impacts; (3) independent expert assessment of the data and analysis (as available given ANC budget limitations); (4) interactive, measurable 3D modeling to allow user-generated views of the proposed development from any angle that also includes the surrounding homes for scalable reference; and (5) open communication of all information, assessment, and findings to the ANC community.

In addition, we respectfully ask that the ANC in its review: (1) prioritize the views and needs of residents in our ANC, in particular those immediately adjacent to the ECC property; (2) represent those views and needs fairly and vigorously; (3) pursue all necessary due diligence until the proposed development and its impacts are fully understood; (4) reserve judgment and refrain from issuing a recommendation on the Maret proposal pending completion of the due diligence; and (5) mandate that all involved parties declare any actions or associations present or past that could reasonably be construed as instances of bias or preference with respect to the Maret proposal.

We believe it serves all parties' interests to adhere to these requirements. We have and will continue to assist the ANC in obtaining necessary information from Maret to ensure a comprehensive and even-handed review and to allow the ANC to make an informed recommendation to the BZA. Consistent with our Party Status, we reserve the right, through our testimony and documentation, to communicate to BZA at the scheduled March 9 rezoning hearing any deficiencies in the process that impede this outcome.