

**Responses Submitted to ANC 3/4G Regarding
DC Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) Case #20643
ECC Field and Maret School BZA Application**

**LETTERS OF OPPOSITION OR CONCERN
(A second file of letters of support is also on the ANC3G website)**

<As of February 4, 2022>

OF NOTE: The following have been received by ANC 3/4G. Note that the BZA is also in receipt of a number of letters in this case. A form letter from at least 30 residents in opposition has been received by ANC 3/4G and one copy of that letter is enclosed here. Responses are shown by date followed by message. Transposition to a single document format may have altered paragraphing. There have been no changes in content. Additional responses will be posted.

January 20, 2022

Jill MacNeice <jmacneice@gmail.com>

TO Higgins, John (SMD 3G02)

Dear BZA, ANC 3/4G Chairman, Mr. Randy Speck; Commissioner John Higgins; Commissioner Michael Zeldin and DC Councilmember Lewis George:

I am writing this letter because I have serious concern about the multi-sports complex the Maret School is proposing to build on the grounds of the Episcopal Center for Children in my neighborhood. I live on Nebraska Ave NW, about 300 feet south of the ECC property. I consider myself an immediate neighbor and as such I believe my concerns carry great weight with my ANC — indeed greater than those who live further from the site or even outside the neighborhood.

Here are my concerns.

Stormwater runoff:

My first and greatest concern is removing 40 trees, ripping up topsoil, and replacing it with hardscaping plus a 3.7 acre carpet of plastic turf for the playing field. This means that nearly 5 acres of land that is now grassy, wooded, and most importantly permeable would be made impermeable. The topsoil microbiome would be killed. Water that was once absorbed on site by the trees and grass would be flushed into the city's storm sewer system through pipes and surface runoff. Environmentalists consider stormwater runoff to be the #1 pollution problem in the country. We need to take it seriously.

A planned rain garden would mitigate a small percentage of the total runoff, caused by a parking lot for about 50 cars. But overall, the site's reduced capability for absorbing stormwater will increase the load on the city's storm sewer system, which is incapable of handling the current storm water load. It absolutely cannot handle the predicted increase in intense weather events. Don't be fooled by claims that the plastic turf system is pervious. It does not allow water to seep into, and be absorbed by, the earth below. It is engineered to channel rain and stormwater from the surface into plastic pipes below the surface that collect the water and dump it directly into

the city's storm sewers. There is no local absorption of this water. Local absorption is how we keep the city's storm sewer system from becoming overwhelmed during weather events. Local homeowners will experience the effects of stormwater runoff from the field most acutely. Will Maret indemnify local homeowners from water damage due to runoff from the field?

Note that the city's requirements for managing stormwater runoff on athletic fields are minimal. During this time of increased awareness of climate change, merely following city regulations that are out of synch with the current and near-future climate conditions is not enough. Maret must commit to doing more.

Other health and eco issues:

The field will require 3.7 acres of plastic turf — roughly 40,000 lbs — which needs to be replaced every 8-10 years. Plastic turf can't be recycled and goes to landfills. Why are we encouraging more plastic in our city's landfill?

We should not allow ourselves to naively accept industry claims that plastic turf and infill are harmless to people and the environment and an improvement over natural grass. The manufacture of plastic turf requires PFAS and other toxic, cancer-causing forever chemicals. Human exposures to PFAS are associated with cancer, birth defects, and other impairments. In addition, roughly 400,000 lbs of infill material is used on the typical field. Even so-called eco-friendly infills have not been declared safe by any US government agency, and may give rise to lung irritating dust. Likewise, silica, which is used to keep the infill from clumping, is a known carcinogen. That's why workers who install it are required to wear respirators. Those who live nearby will have 24/7 exposure to these toxins. The parents of the children who use these fields may have signed a liability waiver, but those who would have the most exposure are without option.

The infill and silica will wash off the field during rain events, and will also end up in our storm sewers, streets, and will ultimately wash into Rock Creek Park, the Potomac, and the Chesapeake Bay along with the excess stormwater. This stuff does not go away. It spreads throughout the watershed, bringing pollution with it.

Then there is the heat island effect of having 3.7 acres of plastic grass, which absorbs heat during the day and releases it at night into the surrounding environment. Once again, the houses and families that border the field will bear the burden of the this additional heat.

Traffic and safety

Traffic and pedestrian/biker safety is another area of concern. The pickup and drop-off of children using the field for practice and games, the subleasing of the fields when Maret is not using it, ECC's after school program, and summer camp, would overwhelm the local streets with cars and buses, particularly when drop off and pickup times overlap with morning and afternoon rush-hours. These would occur alongside Nebraska Ave commuter traffic, adding to stress on the streets that were never designed for that volume. The nearby residents will be most impacted from the increased traffic as they walk to and from their homes and the Lafayette public school.

Importantly, the immediate neighborhood streets - on my block too - will be overwhelmed with parked cars of the field users, particularly on game days. Maret has already told us that we can expect 200-300 spectators when the school has major games at the field. Where will all these cars park? Onsite parking is for about 50 cars. Again, the nearby residents will bear the brunt of the increase traffic and parking.

Sound

The constant noise associated with the intensive use of the field is another concern for those who live nearby. The maximum allowable sound in an R-1-B zone is 60 dB. Sports activities regularly exceed that limit. The hard surface of high walls planned at the field perimeter will only intensify the sound, creating an echo effect. What relief from constant noise will be available to the 58 houses that border the field, and other nearby residences? Again, the people who live near the field would bear the greatest burden.

Summary

The proposed multi-sport field at ECC is in a location that is wholly inappropriate for this use. The field is surrounded by 58 houses. Nowhere in the city is a sports field of this size usage wedged into a residential area that is immediately adjacent to so many houses. The people who live nearby would bear the brunt of the negative effects of the field — stormwater runoff during major weather events, health effects from exposure to air and water pollution from plastic toxins and infill materials, heat from 3.7 acres of plastic carpet baking in the summer sun, pedestrian safety concerns from heavy traffic and parking on streets never designed to handle that level of usage, disruptive noise during field use and games.

Those who live near the field, including myself, will have have exposure to all the negative aspects of this proposed development without any of the supposed benefits.

To date we've identified 140 public and private playing fields in the city, a significant percentage of them in Northwest DC. The problem is not a lack of playing fields, it's a lack of good management of existing fields. Creating a new field for Maret will NOT solve this problem; it will kick the problem down the road.

We live in a time of climate change. We have the opportunity now to make decisions that can make DC a more livable city and contribute to a more sustainable future for us all. Indeed, Montgomery county has taken a leadership role in encouraging natural grass on sports fields. And the Sustainable DC plan resolves to make the city healthy, green and livable by preserving trees, green spaces, and managing stormwater runoff. The city recently installed permeable pavers in the alleys and a rain garden on the street directly adjacent to the ECC field. Why are we rushing to allow a plastic-packed sports field that will make things worse? Maret's plan for the ECC field moves us backward, not forward. Surely we can do better.

I object to Maret's proposal to disrupt our neighborhood. Furthermore, I do not want this to set a precedent for future development in our city.

Respectfully,
Jill MacNeice
5723 Nebraska Ave NW
Washington DC 20015

January 20, 2022

Thierry Rosenheck <terosenheck@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear BZA, ANC 3/4G Chairman, Mr. Randy Speck; Commissioner John Higgins; Commissioner Michael Zeldin and DC Councilmember Lewis George:

I am writing to indicate my serious concerns regarding the imposition of the Maret School sports complex proposed for my neighborhood.

My name is Thierry Rosenheck – My home on Nebraska Avenue looks out on the Episcopal Center for Children (ECC). I have lived here since 1991 and am planning to age here as well. I am still trying to find out more about the sports complex the Maret School is planning to build on the property they will be leasing from the ECC. What I've learned so far concerns me.

TRAFFIC

Currently, we anticipate Beach Drive to be closed to future commuter traffic. Oregon Avenue is still closed for construction. While we no longer have a Covid lockdown, traffic to offices has been radically altered and we cannot reliably predict when it will return to pre-pandemic levels. Additionally, I believe the pandemic has altered commuter traffic behaviors – I have observed more people are walking and riding their bikes on Nebraska Ave during rush hours. All these factors are bound to skew a traffic study that would capture the existing and future conditions of a traffic study Maret would submit to the BZA. The BZA application speaks of Maret leasing their fields to sports organizations, summer camp, Maret Games and Maret Rivalry Games. The application is vague about the number of players, coaches, parents, and spectators that will be coming to the sports fields by private vehicles. The number of Rivalry Games is either 5/year and/or 5% of Maret's total hours of use. We are uncertain whether the 5% could allow as much as 7 games a year instead of 5, as Maret presented. Based on what I see taking place at St. John's College High School, half a mile away, I believe the Maret Sports Complex will greatly impact traffic on Nebraska and Utah Avenues. St John's has huge parking lots to absorb and keep off public streets, the private vehicles from parents and spectators and buses transitioning between games. Furthermore, at the curb cut to the proposed market parking lot, the topography creates a blind spot to east-bound traffic from Connecticut Avenue. I believe this presents a safety concern that I am not sure will be considered in the traffic study. I also understand ECC will re-open and add its traffic with a potential along with a future day-care center it is planning. These would create additional drop-offs to the traffic. I'm concerned whether a valid traffic flow analysis will be conducted to simultaneously model various traffic, frequencies, and in the adequate time frames; including inbound and outbound peak hours with car and bus drop-off, and parking by residents, contractors.

ENVIRONMENT

I am concerned that the best information on this will only come at the Permit stage, after possible approval of the project. In the meantime, we will not know about the environmental impact of the development - as it contrasts to the natural field that is there now. The Maret Sports Complex is set on converting nearly 5 acres of natural grass land into an impervious surface of synthetic turf plus hardscaping. I understand Montgomery County has opted out of this. Much research shows that synthetic turf is associated with safety concerns for players, polluted run-off and heat islands in the surrounding neighborhoods. DC's Climate Ready study is clear on the need to be concerned with a radical INCREASE in the frequency of future floods occurring from 25 and 50-year floods. Maret design is simple - move surface run-off into DC's storm system that's been designed to past climate. This will likely impact an already overburdened and polluted Rock Creek. Stormwater management on the current grass field

could be improved, but the proposed installation of artificial turf and hardscaping seems to be going counter to DC's goals as expressed in their Climate Ready DC study.

BUFFERS

What we have learned by looking at the vast sports complex at St John's is that buffers make a difference. St. John's, less than a mile away, is buffered by Rock Creek Park across two streets on two sides. As well Utah Ave and a substantial school building and parking lot provides a buffer to residents on Utah Ave. In the North, only two residents abut St John's – one is owned by the school and the other has a first right of refusal agreement to be bought by the school. In addition, that side of the school includes a wide buffer of trees and landscaping. Yet, even with all the buffers surrounding St John's, our neighborhood is privy to the sound from their games. By contrast, the proposed Maret sports field is wedged into an R-1-B neighborhood with incompatible and inadequate buffers. The development being proposed will be jarring visually and acoustically.

NEBRASKA AVENUE FACADE

- a. The site has a drop of 35ft. The design creates a level field by introducing a series of retaining walls. Instead of looking at a pastoral view; residents on the West will look at retaining walls, topped with a fence plus tall netting. These will dwarf the scale of surrounding homes.
- b. From Nebraska Avenue, passersby now look at a rolling field with many trees. As proposed, the 'facade' of the complex will be a parking lot with a dumpster, a concrete bio-retaining pool with a huge flat synthetic turf field surrounded by retaining walls, fences and netting. The lot is so tight for the multiple sports field being envisioned, that it simply does not allow a proper front/back consideration.

SOUND AMPLIFICATION

The retaining walls, shaped to contour the West side of the field will amplify and direct the sound of the games to neighbors East and South of the field. That said, sounds from games can be fun and refreshing and a positive feature of those attending games. However, there is a difference between listening to sounds when choosing to, and hearing these sounds 7 days a week and nearly 365 days a year.

COMMERCIAL OVERRIDING EDUCATIONAL USE

This sports field is only partially intended for Maret players. Maret intends to create a commercial enterprise, leasing the field on a 7-days a week and nearly 365 days a year basis. This development is a commercial venture being inserted into a residential community - its design should be more respectful of its context.

CRITICAL PATH AND NEIGHBORHOOD INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

As with many other residents, I did not become aware of this proposed sports field until we were personally invited by other neighbors to join backyard meetings where Maret presented its design in November. It is then that we learned Maret submitted its BZA application; and later, that we learned Maret has been working on this project for one or more years. This is a complex project with complicated issues. What it ISN'T is a request for neighbors to consider allowing a back porch to protrude into a setback. The impact of this project goes well beyond the 200 ft surrounding the property. This should not be treated as a typical R-1-B zoning issue. Maret has moved forward on a timeline to get approval on THEIR critical path. This time-line is out of character with allowing residents to become aware of, and properly evaluate issues they will have to live with. Maret can modify their design until their final BZA application is submitted. The timeline of this process is tilted to advantage Maret and does not provide adequate time for the community to do proper due diligence, and understand the consequences of their proposal.

SUMMARY

I object to Maret's proposal that I believe will negatively disrupt the community. The process of developing this property was presented to the neighborhood as a completed design without the ability of immediate neighbors – those most directly affected – to participate in how to develop this field with a more compatible design. I believe approving this plan is a mistake and will set a wrong precedence for our city.

Respectfully,

Thierry Rosenheck
5723 Nebraska Ave NW
Washington DC, 20015
terosenheck@gmail.com

January 17, 2022

Jaclyn Kilroy <jtripken@yahoo.com

ANC 3/4G Chairman Mr. Randy Speck; Commissioner John Higgins; Commissioner Michael Zeldin:

As home owners adjacent to the property being considered in Board of Zoning Adjustment Case #20643: Maret School, we are writing to list some of our concerns regarding the plans and a number of the uncertainties associated with the size of the proposal for the Maret School sports complex. Principally, the proposal seeks too much lot coverage and too much development and activity on a site with too little in the way of visual and sound buffers. The request for zoning relief to allow this activity in an R-1-B zoning district runs counter to zoning principles intended to protect and stabilize quiet residential areas suitable for family life. The request for a special exception to allow parking for 50 cars in the "front yard" facing Nebraska Avenue would be completely out of keeping with the single-family character of this neighborhood. Additionally, we believe it would be environmentally insensitive to remove forty well-established trees, and acres of topsoil and replace them with 3.7 acres of artificial turf, with additional hardscape for parking and sidewalks.

We are concerned about the size of events that will be hosted on such a large development, and the congestion that will come with the use of the site when Maret leases the site to others. While we appreciate the explanations of the size and expected use of Maret events, we have received no such explanations of the size and use of events when Maret leases use of the field to other vendors. It is clear from the January 6, 2022 meeting with Councilmember Lewis George, that a number of potential renters (and parents of children in the area) are eager to maximize use of this space, as evidenced by the testimony of DC Soccer Club's Executive Director, others who advocated for use of the fields for baseball clubs like Capitol City Little League, and multiple parents who advocated for use of the Maret fields for shorter commutes than what they are currently doing to get to and from Jelleff Rec Center, etc.

As neighbors who live off of the Rittenhouse alley, the uncertainty of the height and setbacks of retaining walls required to level the 35-foot elevation change across the site continues to be unsettling. While we appreciate that Maret has changed its plans over time, we have no clear understanding at this point of what materials will be used or what our visuals will be, and therefore, are concerned about the impact this could have to our property values.

In addition, the city of DC has invested resources and greatly improved the Rittenhouse alley recently with the permeable pavers that reduced neighborhood flooding and ultimately improve the Rock Creek watershed. The alley has been a safe space for neighborhood children, and neighbors like myself who live off of the alley, and we have expressed to Maret that protecting the new surface, and protecting our children and property from car and pedestrian traffic that will come from this project is a priority. We appreciate that Maret representatives have acknowledged hearing our concerns in meetings, however, remain unclear on how Maret will abate them given that the latest plans online only include nondescript tree illustrations and lines for chain link fences and traffic guardrails of uncertain heights, at undetermined setbacks, along the alley.

While we understand that the ECC is looking for revenue, we don't believe that it has to come at the price of losing so much green space, pushed so close to the property lines, in a way that may adversely impact the residential area that we are all currently zoned as. We object to Maret's current proposal for the reasons above and hope that the ANC takes these concerns into account when considering the zoning adjustment as proposed.

Respectfully,

Jaclyn and Tim Kilroy
2916 Rittenhouse St NW
jtripken@yahoo.com

January 16, 2022

Dear ANC 3/4G Chairman Speck, Commissioner Higgins, and Councilmember George,

I am writing to indicate my serious concerns regarding the imposition of the Maret School sports complex proposed for my neighborhood. I live 2 blocks from the Episcopal Educational Center. My wife, Dr. Kate Schecter, gardened on the EEC site as part of a small Community Garden Project initiated by EEC 3 years ago. That garden was razed 18 months ago. More recently, we are upset to have been blind-sided in learning only belatedly about the radical re-purposing of the playfield and garden for Maret School's benefit.

We understand that the EEC is hurting financially and needs a new income source to survive. But there are many ways to fund a private, special needs school that serves 20-25 students annually without permanently scarring the environment and altering the most bucolic aspect of our neighborhood. The proposed artificial, plastic turf and asphalt parking slots, aggressive tree clearing and ground flattening are indeed scars on the terrain, the environment, and on our neighborhood.

The scaling, netting, and concrete impositions are indicative of over-zealous development of a beautifully sloping playfield, radically transforming it into a preppy, pre-professional sports facility. Why harm nature as opposed to working with it? Forget flattening the field and uprooting trees. Make do with what nature has given us. The Maret proposal is an aesthetic offense against nature and tranquility. It feels both brazen and impudent in the face of our neighborhood's expression of protest against the over-assertive, hyper-ambitious design.

Further specific points:

1. It is environmentally insensitive to remove forty well-established trees and topsoil and replace them with 3.7 acres of artificial turf, with additional hardscape for parking and sidewalks. This will essentially destroy the contribution that natural vegetation and topsoil make to the environment. Artificial turf's contribution to the heat island effect is well-documented. Off-gassing, particulate distribution and other effects will remain in the environment long after the games are finished. When we see the effects of climate change, why would we contribute to it, and especially to this extent?

2. This proposal will create a safety problem for a neighborhood known for supporting and protecting its children (more than 50 of whom live next to the proposed complex). Everyday pick-up and drop-off for the sports complex will occur at the same time as heavy commuter traffic, and traffic generated by the Episcopal Center for Children when it reopens. The ECC plans to operate both a school and an after-school day care program. With Oregon Ave. returning to service after years of extensive renovation, and with Bingham Drive also expected to reopen, commuter traffic would increase considerably.

3. Maret and others' use of the site will overwhelm our neighborhood streets with traffic and parked cars nearly every day. Game days will bring congestion and noise akin to what we experience from other nearby fields, most notably St. John's College High School less than a mile away. The two sports facilities might frequently have concurrent "game days," compounding the problem.

4. The proposal seeks too much lot coverage and too much development and activity on a small site with too little in the way of visual and sound buffers. The huge footprint would overwhelm the scale of the neighborhood; the intensity of land use would be unprecedented in our city. The request for zoning relief to allow this activity in an R-1-B zoning district runs counter to zoning principles and the fabric of our neighborhood. This zoning designation is intended to protect and stabilize quiet residential areas suitable for family life. The request for a special exception to allow parking 50 cars in the "front yard" facing Nebraska Avenue would be completely out of keeping with the single-family character of this neighborhood.

5. High retaining walls required to level the 35-foot elevation change across the site would dwarf the scale of our homes.

6. Noise is also a primary concern. The maximum allowable sound level in this zoning district is 60 dB, and sports activities regularly exceed that limit.

7. Maret's intention to use the site for its own teams, and to sub-lease the facility to other sports teams and leagues will have neighbors facing the issues raised above nearly every day of the year with no relief.

I object to Maret's proposal to disrupt our neighborhood - for the above stated reasons. In addition, I do not want this to set a precedent for future development in our city.

Respectfully,

Ari Roth
5928 31st Place, NW

January 15, 2022

Re: Board of Zoning Adjustment Case #20643: Maret School Date:

Dear ANC 3/4G Chairman, Mr. Randy Speck: Commissioner John Higgins

We are writing to express our serious objections to the Maret School multi-sport commercial complex proposed for our residential neighborhood.

1. Use of the sports complex by Maret and the other organizations that it expects to rent it to would result in seven days a week disruption of noise and traffic, safety problems, noise and air pollution, and significant destruction of trees and natural vegetation.
2. The proposal would greatly contribute to the existing safety problems of speeding traffic on Nebraska Ave. and Rittenhouse Street, by making them seven days a week.
3. The proposal requests a 50-car parking lot facing Nebraska Ave. This is totally inappropriate in the middle of single-family houses. - On school game days, there would be buses coming and going as well as the cars of players and spectators. - On weekends, when the fields are rented out, there would be games scheduled all day long with a constant churn of 40-50 cars coming and going every hour as games start and end for 12 or more hours of daylight
4. Environmental problems are many – including too much lot coverage, too much hard surface, too intense use, inadequate visual and sound buffers, traffic related pollution, too high retaining walls.
5. We strongly object to this proposal for a commercial sports facility that would operate seven days a week and create significant negative social and environmental impacts as described, in part, above. While it happens to be proposed by a school, it is nonetheless a commercial venture that does not belong in an R1B neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rennie Sherman and William Willis
2729 Rittenhouse Street, NW Washington DC 20015
Rh.sherman@verizon.net

January 12, 2022

jmmcg51@gmail.com wrote:

My wife and I live at 2907 Rittenhouse St. NW. I am a former ANC 3G commissioner. We are writing to express our serious concerns regarding the proposal of the Maret School sports complex in our neighborhood. We fully support the efforts of the Friends of the Field to educate the City's decision makers on the negative impact this proposal would have on our neighborhood. The Friends have outlined several specific concerns our neighborhood has with this proposal. We urge you to address each of these concerns.

Sincerely,

Joe McGuire
Mary Zitello

January 10, 2022

Maydak <rmaydak@gmail.com>

Speck, Randy (SMD 3G03); Zeldin, Michael (SMD 3G04); Higgins, John (SMD 3G02)

I am opposed to the Maret proposal for the use of the ECC fields.

If you research Maret's use of the Jelleff fields, you will find a very upset community around the fields with little to no recourse for the community to remedy the issues. Fifty years is a long time without an avenue for the community to modify something. There will not be anything but the "goodwill" of Maret towards the community, which, I am sorry, I do not feel they will care once they obtain what they want.

Maret's first interest (understandably so) is to the Maret community, not the community around the ECC. That is in itself, is a conflict of what is best for the community.

In the experience of the ANC, although projects voted on by the ANC attempted to protect and save heritage trees, the trees did not survive (5333 Connecticut and Lafayette) despite promises and assurances by Urban Forestry/Arborists. That will happen as a result of this project also.

In my opinion, there will be great incentive for Maret to turn this into a money making proposition by renting out the fields. That incentive has a very strong potential to be a driving force to "throw the community under the bus". I live directly across the street from the ECC.

Rebecca Maydak

January 10, 2022

To: Zeldin, Michael (SMD 3G04); Higgins, John (SMD 3G02)

I am opposed to the Maret proposal for the use of the ECC fields.

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I live directly across the street from the ECC.

Rebecca Maydak

January 10, 2022

Prof. Georg Zellmer Professor in Earth & Planetary Sciences Massey University Palmerston North, New Zealand

Re: Proposed Sports Fields on Utah and Nebraska Avenues Board of Zoning Adjustment Case #20643: Maret School

Dear Mr. Speck and Mr. Higgins,

It has come to my attention that Maret School is planning to construct a large sports complex besides the Episcopal Center for Children, corner Utah and Nebraska Avenue NW. The plan appears to remove several trees and to excavate and regrade a circa five-acre area to make space for a baseball diamond and a multipurpose field covered by artificial turf, plus a parking lot for about 50 vehicles. As a former visiting scientist at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, who lived in the area, and as Professor in Earth and Planetary Sciences, I am writing to voice my serious concerns regarding the environmental and health impacts of this proposal.

The removal of 40+ trees and replanting several healthy heritage trees would be bad enough, as green spaces and wooded landscapes are particularly important in cities to reduce summer heat and provide oxygen, but also for the physical and mental wellbeing the people in the neighborhood. Yet this is just the beginning. The current elevation difference of the area is about 10 meters, and regrading this to provide a flat surface for the facilities would result in tall retaining walls at both cut and fill sides. The planned covering of the area by artificial turf and concrete would not allow for adequate rainwater seepage and would likely lead to flooding of adjacent areas during heavy rain, which will become more frequent with progressing climate change over the next 20-30 years. This will cause immense problems.

Extensive stormwater management would be required, and it is unclear how this will be done and how effective this would be given that the increase in flash flooding is not accurately predicable. Either way, rapid stormwater runoff into Rock Creek will have detrimental environmental effects on a much larger area, which are typically not apparent prior to starting this work. Apparently, tall perimeter fencing and netting are proposed for the entire site, i.e., at or near several property lines. The visual impact of this complex on the quality of life in the neighborhood will have detrimental effects on the value of these properties, as will the noise from increased traffic to and from the area. Besides, 50 parking spaces are not likely going to be sufficient for such a large complex, causing additional problems to the neighborhood through cars parked on the roadside. If deemed sufficient, the question will be why this sports complex is at all required to be at this location?

In summary, my assessment of this project is that it will be detrimental to the environment as well as to the health and livelihood of the community living in this area. Further, there are several externalities (costs not accounted for and to be borne by others). As such, I would strongly advise against granting permission for this project to go forward.

Sincerely yours,

Georg Zellmer Professor in Earth and Planetary Sciences

November 3, 2021

From: Paul Fisher <paul@snapfisher.net>

To: Lewis-George, Janeese (Council) <jlewisgeorge@DCCOUNCIL.US>

Cc: Perkins, Will (Council) <WPerkins@DCCOUNCIL.US>; Blotner, Joanna (Council) <JBlotner@DCCOUNCIL.US>; Edwards, Lenace (Council) <LEdwards@DCCOUNCIL.US>

Subject: RE: Maret and the Episcopal Children's Center

Hi,

The litany is long, but from my point of view, they filed a zoning application on Monday that stated that in addition to their usage, they want to rent out the field ~9-6 every weekend and all summer – basically any time they are not using it. This is completely inappropriate. My backyard is across the alley from the field, and I will essentially have noise every waking hour. Maret usage for Maret, while a concern, is less so.

They are also turning one of the Center Buildings into essentially a public bathroom. There is a BZA document from 20 years ago, which I have been told implies that the initial approval was only allowed because “the building would have no negative effects on the community”.

Folks on the other side are very concerned about drainage and the pond they are putting on the property. I do not know much about that, but I could put you or your office in touch with some other community members who are much more knowledgeable about it (who live on that side). They are also removing all of the grass. They are also removing a lot of the trees.

There was a community meeting last night, the 2nd of 4 this week. I was not at the first, but of the ~25 people in attendance, no one was in favor of the plan.

Thanks a lot!!

Paul Fisher

November 1, 2021

Dear Randy, John and Michael:

As we approach the backyard and alley Maret meetings, we are grateful for your presence and your attention to taking note of the concerns and the responses to the project. These informal gatherings are a good follow-up to the first step of the project introduction on the ANC zoom of September 27. We assume the ANC will provide written minutes of these neighborhood meetings to be distributed to the community so that the next meeting of further familiarization can be meaningful. We have made some observations. They follow:

Limited Audience: In many discussions particularly at the Oliver Street Block Party, always held in October, it was discovered that very few neighbors on Oliver Street had been informed of either of the Maret meetings; the introductory meeting held on September 27th or the subsequent next step meetings this week. We have also yet to discover any residents who live on the feeder streets west of Utah who had any knowledge of the proposal. It cannot be said that they will not be impacted by the noise, the parking and the traffic for starters. What was the extent of reach required for Maret notification?

Limited Knowledge: It is difficult to imagine that meaningful discussions can take place without an understanding of the project. The initial letter of questions dated October 21 was signed in 24 hours by concerned residents. That same letter now has more than 100 signatures. Obviously, residents are very hungry for information. And as you know, knowledge is an iterative process often building on new information. This takes some time. Without an adequate understanding of the project, the backyard and alley meetings can be constructive in only a very limited way. In order to begin to approach the above issues, we request that this be a substantial agenda item for the next ANC meeting as part of the process of notification and understanding. In order to make that next meeting worthwhile and informative, we request the following: Notification of all homes at least within a 2-3 block radius beyond the ECC grounds as these residents will be easily affected by noise, traffic and parking. Answers to the questions posed in the October 21 letter, as a point of departure, as well as the meeting minutes of questions raised during the backyard and alley Maret meetings. It is important for these to be provided a week before the meeting for adequate review by the citizens.

Adequate 3D model representation of the project so citizens can truly understand the nature of the proposal. Answers to the process questions in the October 21 letter as we, the citizens, are eager to understand how we can truly make our voices heard. We also ask for some assurance that Maret, ECC and ANC will be responsive to our questions and concerns. This is a very interested and intelligent community. Please do not sell our interest and concerns short. We deserve more information than a postcard size plan. We need to be included in the process. It is only fair as the quality of our lives and the value of our homes are in question and likely will be compromised. We live here. Maret does not.

Kind Regards,

Your Neighbor, Claudia Russell

November 1, 2021

From: "Bulger, Diana (WDC)" <Diana.Bulger@fairmont.com>

To: "Edwards, Lenace (Council)" <LEdwards@dccouncil.us>

Cc: "THOMAS J. BULGER" <tbulger825@aol.com>, dpatton@hayfoot.net

Subject: Episcopal Center/Maret School Football Stadium

Dear Ms. Edwards,

My Husband and I live in Ward 4. We have lived in our current home on Nebraska Avenue for over 20 years.

Over the years, we have gotten to know our councilmembers well, starting with Adrian Fenty, Muriel Bowser and Brandon Todd. We have never met or have received any information from our current council person Janesse Lewis George.

Our concern, along with our neighbors, is the pending football stadium the Maret School is trying to place in the Episcopal Center on the corner of Nebraska and Utah Avenue, NW. It would be very much appreciated if Council Member George could reach out to us concerning matter, as her earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Diana & Tom Bulger
6000 Nebraska Avenue,. NW.

October 21, 2021

Dear Commissioners:

This letter is presented by neighbors who would be affected by Maret School's (Maret) proposal to develop multi-sport, multi-season fields at the Episcopal Center for Children (ECC). During several recent discussions myriad questions surfaced regarding Maret's intentions and the process they plan to employ to implement those intentions. In this letter, therefore, we have attempted to compile commonly held concerns at this point for your consideration, and to raise specific questions for Maret, ECC, and the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) to address. Neighbors from Rittenhouse Street, Nebraska Avenue, Utah Avenue, and 28th Street are, at this writing, continuing to meet to review what Maret's proposal, if implemented, would mean for the overall quality of life for the neighborhood.

You realize, we are certain, that those most impacted by this lease agreement and proposed development would be the neighbors surrounding the field. Yet, we were not notified of ECC's and Maret's intentions until the plan began to unfold at the ANC meeting less than a month ago. You realize, as well, that should this proposal be realized, it would have an immediate, and likely negative, impact on property values, a vital reason to be transparent in all considerations for field use going forward. We ask most respectfully for answers to the following questions before any further consideration is given or more concrete action is taken toward a change in the use of the ECC fields.

SUMMARY OF TOPICS: 1 History 2 The use 3 Proposed change in use 4 Frequency of use 5 Constraints on use a. Noise b. Traffic c. Parking d. Intensity of activity e. Historic designation f. Ancillary services g. Outbuildings Response to Maret proposal from ECC neighbors, 21 October 2021 2 6 Stormwater management 7 Grading and walls 8 Fencing, netting, setbacks and buffers 9 Locker rooms and restrooms 10 Scoreboards, goal posts, shot clocks, etc. 11 Artificial turf 12 Lighting 13 Security / neighborhood access 14 Management 15 Assurances 16 Controls on construction, if approved 17 Process a. Unified timeline b. Comprehensive impact assessment c. 3-D presentation d. Role of the ANC

1. History. We would all appreciate a better understanding of the thinking of the ECC Board as to why a change in use such as the one proposed by Maret is necessary. Why must ECC lease the property to any entity, especially when it is still exploring the possibility of reintroducing educational programs on its campus? Is the charter that has underpinned the ECC mission for

over one hundred years available to the public? If so, where? Does the Maret/ECC lease agreement comply with that charter? We understand that the mission as stated in the charter is to be child-based and that no commercial enterprise is to be allowed use of the buildings or grounds. Is that correct? Some neighbors are under the impression that the Maret proposal is part of an “either/or” scenario. In this view, if the Maret proposal is not allowed to proceed, then the alternative would be “worse.” What alternatives have been proposed?

2. The use. Neighbors were first introduced to the scope of Maret’s proposal at the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3/4G’s (ANC) September 27, 2021 virtual Zoom meeting. (For meeting recording see: ANC 3/4G Public Zoom Meeting Sept 27, 2021 - YouTube) Response to Maret proposal from ECC neighbors, 21 October 2021 3 The presentation at the ANC showed a stadium for baseball and one for football, soccer, and lacrosse, with associated bleachers, scoreboards, shot clocks, goal posts, fencing/netting, and auxiliary and associated facilities. We learned at that time that it would not only be for Maret but also for multiple others.

3. Proposed change in use. The proposed development would require significant re-zoning and exceptions. Any rezoning from current R-1-B residential status would be required to “be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the zoning regulations and zoning maps and [...] not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring properties.” The proposed rental of playing fields (by Maret, to others) would be a particular example of change in use. It would introduce non-conforming commercial revenue generating activity at odds with residential zoning.

4. Frequency of use. The ANC presentation made clear that the intention is to lease or offer the facilities to others when not being used by Maret. During what seasons, hours and with what frequency would facilities be used? What controls would be used to select and limit the number of these groups? Would there be a cap on the frequency and duration of use in a residential neighborhood? Who would control the requirements for entry and use and how would they be enforced?

5. Constraints on use.

a. Noise. The maximum allowable sound level in this neighborhood is 60 dB. Sports activities regularly exceed this limit. A recent pickup soccer game of 15 young players registered sound levels over 90 dB on a NIOSH / CDC meter. What limits or controls on noise are proposed? Would there be a PA system? Would music be allowed? If so, how would these be reconciled with the maximum allowable sound level in this neighborhood?

b. Traffic. There is concern that this change in use would increase traffic on the side streets and alleys. There are currently 20 children under the age of seven who play in the Rittenhouse alley. The short block of 28th Street between Rittenhouse and Nebraska has seven children all under the age of 8. Rush hour traffic on Nebraska Avenue is already significant. What kind of traffic study will Response to Maret proposal from ECC neighbors, 21 October 2021 4 Maret and ECC perform once major construction on Oregon Avenue is completed? Only then are pre-pandemic traffic volumes likely to return.

c. Parking. A visit to St. John's for a Saturday football game to judge parking pressure revealed a ratio of about one car for every two spectators. To avoid flooding our quiet neighborhood there would need to be prohibitions. Many of our neighbors, including those who are elderly or who have young children rely on street parking. What parking controls are proposed? Would there be requirements for users (and spectators) of the proposed fields to park on-site?

Acknowledging that ECC anticipates restarting programs in their buildings, and that their staff frequently park along Nebraska Avenue, how will the overall number of cars be controlled or restricted?

d. Intensity of activity. What is the expected maximum number of spectators allowed? How many bleacher seats are proposed, in total? How would the capacity of the fields be controlled? How would crowd size and behavior be controlled? Some youth soccer clubs subdivide full-size fields to accommodate two or three smaller fields for young players. Would this be allowed? Multiple concurrent games would dramatically increase parking and traffic impacts.

e. Historic designation. The historic main buildings of ECC have recently been recommended for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. ECC's application for that recognition did not include the playing fields and wooded grounds. Would the development of the fields as a modern, multi-sport, multiseason artificial turf facility, with the removal of many or most of the existing trees, be compatible with the historic designation of the original design of the buildings and the site/setting?

f. Ancillary services. Would food trucks be allowed? What would be the maximum number of buses allowed? How would a no idling rule be enforced? Where would trash bins and dumpsters be located specifically? How far would these be from residences? How often would they be serviced, and what access route would be used for servicing? What access route would delivery vehicles use? How would clean-up be managed, including spillover activity on the public streets?

g. Outbuildings. How many auxiliary buildings are proposed? What is the proposed size and height of these, of what materials would they be constructed, and what setbacks from neighboring properties would apply? How would these be accessed?

6. Stormwater management. This aspect of the Maret proposal was particularly and disturbingly undeveloped. Stormwater management is key considering the proposed replacement of natural, wooded surfaces with acres of new, artificial turf and hard surfaces; the removal of many old and established trees; and the overall leveling of the site to accommodate artificial playing fields. Much more detail is needed on this aspect of the proposal. The District's Stormwater Management Guidelines and Regulations control this activity. All discussion of stormwater management, and any possible contaminants that would follow conversion of natural surfaces to artificial turf and hard surfaces, must be put in context. The ECC fields are located within the Oregon Avenue watershed, where the District has spent years and millions of dollars to control runoff. The ECC field is immediately upstream of Rock Creek and Rock Creek Park. How does Maret propose to manage, detain, or retain stormwater runoff? What is the backup plan in the event of overflow? The only sketch presented so far appears to suggest above-grade open bio-retention areas adjacent to residences. Is this the design intent? As you know, any bio-retention facility must be located far from residences. A preferable alternative might be a below-grade sand filter detention system. At the scale of excavation, grading, and construction proposed, installing such tanks should be done as part of site preparation. Neighbors understand that the District requires designing stormwater management to a 15-year storm threshold. This limit is extremely short-sighted given the increasing frequency of high-intensity rainstorms. Given that Maret would build their project to a 50-year lease horizon, any stormwater design and implementation must be pro-active in building to a worse-case scenario. (See: Climate Ready DC

https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/service_content/attachments/CRDCReport-FINAL-Web.pdf Please note page 3 and projected rainfall events.)

7. Grading and walls. The Maret proposal would require massive cut, fill, and grading to achieve level, flat playing surfaces for artificial turf. The current field has more than a 30-foot elevation difference within the area proposed for artificial turf. Presenters at the ANC meeting were vague about how much cut and fill excavation would be required, and what wall heights would be required to level and retain the soil. Clarifying this is essential for a Response to Maret proposal from ECC neighbors, 21 October 2021, 6 better understanding of the scale of the proposal. Where would retaining walls be located and what heights and what construction materials are being proposed for them? How would the impact on neighboring properties be gauged? What setbacks from property lines would be required re: wall location and height? How close would leveling extend to the Rittenhouse alley and to homes abutting ECC land on the east side of the site?

8. Fencing, netting, setbacks and buffers. What fences and nets are proposed, in detail? How high, where, and of what materials would they be made? What setbacks from property lines would be required? What is proposed as a green buffer? What plant materials or artificial materials are being proposed? If plants, how many plants, of what species, and how densely planted, and with what seasonal aspects are being proposed? What landscape maintenance schedule is being proposed? What is the anticipated height and density of all buffers on all sides of the site? What setbacks from residential properties would be required?

9. Locker rooms and restrooms. Please describe how the locker rooms and restrooms will be used by Maret and by third parties. What steps will be taken to reduce congestion and noise in this vicinity? How frequently will the facilities be cleaned, how frequently will trash be removed, and will the facilities be locked when not in use?

10. Scoreboards, goal posts, shot clocks, etc. What would be the location, heights and sizes as well as setbacks from property lines of these proposed elements? As you no doubt realize, because of the sloping site, and the amount of excavation planned, the visible heights need to be understood and would need to be negotiated with neighbors, for no one wants the back of a scoreboard to dominate their view.

11. Artificial turf. What type of product (brand name) is being proposed? What would be the design goal for water retention of the artificial turf and its gravel bed? What is the composition of the base, substrate, and artificial grass fibers? What potential impacts will there be on the air and the watershed? This is of particular concern for the nearest Response to Maret proposal from ECC neighbors, 21 October 2021 7 neighbors, who would be exposed to particulates and possible VOCs. The heat island effect, as we understand it, is significant. How will this be curbed and dealt with by Maret? (See Turf War: <https://bethesdamagazine.com/bethesda-magazine/health/turfwar/>)

12. Lighting. Why is security lighting necessary? If deemed so, what would be the intensity, location, and height? During what hours would it be lit? Is any other lighting proposed for the project? What assurances would prevent the later addition of increasingly intrusive night lighting? Would temporary lights be prohibited?

13. Security / neighborhood access. Neighbors' understanding from the ANC Zoom call is that there would be a locked gate. Where would this be located? Is more than one locked gate proposed? We also understood that pets would not be allowed on the artificial turf. When could neighbors use the facility and under what conditions? Would they have to be part of a team renting the fields? If active security is planned (e.g., cameras), would this require additional

poles, lighting, etc.? Would security personnel be hired to monitor the property when it is in use by third parties?

14. Management. How would Maret and ECC monitor and enforce limitations, restrictions, and guidelines for use at all times? What process or mechanism for enforcement and for mediating grievances would exist? What is proposed as a method of dispute resolution?

15. Assurances. What assurances are codified in the lease that disallow Maret and/or ECC unilaterally changing any of the safeguards, limits, and agreements without consent of neighbors directly impacted? What role will the ANC and District assume in oversight? Should the proposal go forward to completion, what assurances would there be against intensified future use and development? How is public trust to be protected? In 2019, the Washington Post reported on a contentious discussion around Maret's renovation, use, and extended control of the Jelleff Recreation Center. (Maret School's access to Jelleff Field fuels heated D.C. Response to Maret proposal from ECC neighbors, 21 October 2021 8 Council hearing - The Washington Post) This article gives us pause. Who will assure that Maret will be a good neighbor?

16. Controls and constraints on construction, if approved. What limits would be placed on the parking and idling of trucks and construction equipment? What limits would control working hours and noise levels? How would safeguards against water damage and erosion be applied and enforced? How would controls on dust generation be applied and enforced? How would the alleys be protected against heavy equipment use and ultimate damage? Not only are the alleys designed for light residential use, they also serve as safe play space for children, and are critical to stormwater management. (The Rittenhouse and Utah alleys were recently completely reconstructed by the District as stormwater management facilities. Some neighbors estimate the cost of that work at \$2 Million.)

17. Process.

a. Unified timeline. A clear and unified timeline of the project review process and an explanation of the role of all parties is needed. This would include: Maret meetings with neighbors, public review dates and permitting deadlines; response timelines for documentation; the role of the ANC, its meetings, its reviews and input; all other city agency requirements, deadlines, and reviews; and the role of ECC as the owner of the property and holder of the contract. Most importantly, at which points can affected neighbors and other citizens participate in the evaluation process?

b. Comprehensive impact assessment. Will a comprehensive impact assessment of the sports facilities on the neighborhood be provided? Will that assessment include case studies of comparable facilities across the city?

c. 3-D presentation. A 3-D study model and 3-D presentation materials of the proposed development are needed to allow all participants to understand the magnitude of the proposed project. As you know, small, static, low-resolution graphics are not adequate for this purpose. For meaningful discussion, much clearer and more detailed presentation materials are critical, anchored by a 3-D model. 9

d. Role of the ANC. How will the ANC lead, monitor and record the meetings with Maret and various neighborhood groups to ensure that the process is public, understood, and fair? We are grateful for this opportunity to explore and better understand our shared interests through

community engagement. We look forward to the ANC leading this process, representing us, its constituents, in working with Maret and the ECC.

Response of Neighbors Group

October 7, 2021

Higgins, John (SMD 3G02);

Thank you, Commissioners, for your well-crafted, civil, and immensely informative meeting last week. I so appreciate the time and interest you are giving to this proposal for it has rather large effects on our neighborhood, as you have readily acknowledged.

Jon Axelrod and I have lived at 2832 Rittenhouse for nearly 50 years. We have watched this neighborhood "turn over" at least three times in that half century. What has remained constant is "the field." Its size has encouraged many wildlife species to call it home and its relative protection from traffic of all kinds, thanks to "no trespassing" signs and fences, has made it ideal as a playground for some of our most vulnerable school children. We have considered it a privilege to watch over it.

That said, if change is inevitable here are two major concerns I am adding to the list of those addressed last week:

A couple years ago, after many years of reporting damage and requesting repaving to the alley bordering the field because it was in such terrible shape, our neighborhood got its wish! As you know, the District is taking water abatement seriously. Our alley was chosen as an experimental site for catchment and storage and slow release. I have stood at the bottom of it in rain storms recently and can attest to the abatement's effectiveness.

I would like to see a specific line in the agreement between Maret and ECC that prohibits ANY and ALL construction vehicles (including pickup trucks and porta-potty flatbeds) from accessing the field via the alley paralleling Rittenhouse St. Please. Could one of you see to that? Fifty years of waiting. Finally we have a usable, safe alley--an alley that is now filled with kids, dog walkers, visiting neighbors, laughter, shared meals, pick-up games. This is an alley that is helping us build our new community--one that has experienced well over a 50% turnover in the last 5 years, even during the pandemic! People are investing in making this community work. One week of heavy truck-loads stressing our water catchment/alley and we could lose this space for which we've waited so long.

I know the buck can be passed here--to DDOT, DOEE, or any number of other DC government permitting offices--until it is too late and the pavers and catchments and community begin to break and sink. So I appeal to you to prod the appropriate permitting offices of the District government to add a "no construction access" clause as a condition of its giving its approval to this project. The clause would need to include enough "teeth" in it to act as a real deterrent to contractors and their subs.

My second issue is embarrassingly personal, I admit, but regardless, I would like a serious conversation, soon, about the placement of the proposed scoreboard, if in fact this project is permitted to continue with its current plan. When one of our neighbors questioned its placement

Monday night I felt that Maret was dismissive. If you review the film of the meeting I think you will see what I mean.

All of us who invested in homes on the north side of the ECC property did so with the knowledge that what we were paying for included the view of the field. Not one of us ever imagined it would turn into a black rectangle. If Maret is as concerned about building and keeping good community relations as they so frequently and fervently professed to be in the meeting last Monday, then please ask them to return to the table proffering additional options for scoreboard placement. Not only are our property values and our views affected by its current proposed site but at this point it will quickly set up internecine conflicts among all the neighbors to its north. Unless we address this soon, neighbors will be pushing their NIMBY arguments. That one issue will do more to fray our newly growing neighborhood cohesiveness than probably anything else.

Please acknowledge the damage this packs, and help us do something to avoid it. There are several options for scoreboard(s) placement, including a retraction mechanism, which would not interfere with any neighbor's view, from any direction. The current option is patently unkind. That said, I hope that none of you are accepting as a fait au complet the current placement, that you recognize the potential damage from a careless decision about where to put a big, black board, and that you are willing to help facilitate another conversation where this issue is discussed with the seriousness it deserves.

Thank you.

Carol Zachary

October 6, 2021

Crystal Wright <crystal@bakerwright.com>

Date: Wed, Oct 6, 2021 at 8:22 AM

Subject: Maret/ECC Field Development Concerns-Nebraska Ave, NW Resident

To: <mtalbott@maret.org>

Cc: <sdavidson@maret.org>

As a resident of 5853 Nebraska Ave, NW, my home sits directly across from the proposed Maret/Episcopal Center for Children (ECC) field development. ECC has been a great neighbor in the community for decades. I was happy to hear that ECC's 80 year mission to serve children continues with the Maret partnership; however, I have some serious concerns.

While I was unable to attend the September 27th virtual meeting, I along with other Nebraska Ave neighbors, whose properties face the field and will be greatly impacted by the proposed changes, would like to schedule a time to meet with the contact person at Maret spearheading the project.

My neighbors, who attended the zoom meeting, indicated that Maret is amenable to meeting with neighbors. Could you provide me with the appropriate contact? I'm happy to offer my home for a meeting with a few of us.

I have some concerns.

Parking--Maret's primary campus is located in a residential neighborhood of Cleveland Park, set back in a wooded area not encroaching on neighbors with the aesthetic of a 50 space parking lot. Why would Maret think that it is a good idea to build a 50 space parking lot directly across from MY HOME and others, REALLY? Why can't you redevelop the field without adding a 50 space parking lot and let people park on the street, which is unzoned? Our section of Nebraska already experiences lots of commuter traffic from Maryland in the morning and evening. This will only be exacerbated when work on Oregon Ave, NW is completed and Maret's proposed field development occurs. If Maret persists with its parking lot concept, why does Maret need to add another parking entrance on Nebraska Ave, NW to the field? Why can't you use the existing entrance near the corner of Nebraska and Utah and widen the alley entrance on the other side of the ECC? Moreover, we will have people parking in front of our homes Monday-Saturday, siphoning off parking from residents for our guests, workers (plumbers, construction, babysitters, etc.).

Maret proposes that "Parking will be provided on-site, and parking on Nebraska Avenue will be available adjacent to the ECC property. We are exploring bike share, bike racks, and other solutions to enhance site-wide mobility." We don't need bike lanes or bulky bike racks on this RESIDENTIAL stretch of Nebraska Ave, NW that rarely sees bike traffic before or during the pandemic. Residents didn't pay an arm and leg to own homes in Chevy Chase, DC for a downtown, congested, and violence ridden experience. As a single, black female homeowner, I worked extremely hard to buy a home in this quiet, residential community and am frustrated by the potential disruption to my property value this plan could cause without some refinements made to the development.

Landscaping--In addition to tall trees and landscaping to hide the parking lot, it would be good if Maret could also build a concrete or brick wall in front of the parking lot that faces Nebraska Ave.

Nighttime/Security--The fields do not include lights for nighttime play and will not be used after dark. Low-wattage perimeter security lights will be provided. Where will these low-wattage lights be positioned? With the rise in the homeless population and citywide, particularly nearby Rock Creek park and Connecticut Ave, and the increase in violent crime in DC, what other security measures does ECC and Maret propose?

Hours of operation-What will be the approximate hours of operation for the turf fields for Maret athletic practices and games? What other District-based youth athletic organizations will be invited to use the field space?

Just as the parents and students of Maret will enjoy this new field complex, they also enjoy returning to their nice, quiet, and safe homes. As a resident of Nebraska Ave, I too want to continue enjoying living in my home and not have my peace, safety, and property value become a casualty of this project while Maret's students and ECC reap the benefits.

I look forward to inviting a few neighbors directly impacted by the project to meet with the appropriate person at Maret to share our thoughts in creating a "field of dreams" that everyone can enjoy.

Kind regards,--

Crystal Wright
Public Relations Strategist
Baker Wright Group, LLC

Washington, DC
202/549-8072
www.bakerwright.com

Sept 27, 2021

From: Carol Zachary and Jon Axelrod
carolindc1@gmail.com

Mr. Higgins,

Here are the questions we have thought about that concern our good neighbor, the ECC. Per your suggestion we are forwarding them to you to pass on to our ANC and also to Maret to address before and during this evening's meeting. If you have questions of us, or wish clarification of our concerns, we can easily be reached at 202-686-0363.

Did we miss the public announcement of Maret's lease with ECC which, according to a recent, local, real estate disclosure statement, was evidently completed in February 2019? Why was the lease not made public when it was signed, or even before it was signed, to gauge public opinion and promote public comment? In other words, why was it kept secret? When was the ANC—particularly you-- alerted to its existence?

If ECC is ever sold before Maret's lease runs out, what happens to the lease?

Does Maret plan to assign a groundskeeper or watch(person) to 24/7/365 duty who would respond, as ECC does, if misuse of the field is reported? If so, will the neighbors surrounding the property (those most likely to see misbehavior or vandalism taking place on the grounds) be given that information?

The trees on that piece of property support a vast amount of wildlife. Exactly which ones does Maret intend to fell and what plans are in place to protect the others? Must the city arborist be consulted first?

What recourse does the public have to prevent any unplanned and/or un-reviewed future denuding of the property before it is too late and Maret is "asking for forgiveness rather than permission?"

What exactly does "providing an additional site in the city for other youth-based athletic programs" mean? We do not oppose this but we are hoping arrangements with less fortunate schools are formalized. Will they be?

What control will ECC maintain over its property?

Is the lease of this property part of the city's Public Records? If so, where is it filed?
Lights and noise: what guarantees will the neighborhood have that all activity (organized and spontaneous) ceases at a specific hour and that no lights, flood or any other kind, will be used to extend activity beyond the field's curfew? In other words, who will be in charge of clearing the field? Will signs be erected to inform the public about the hours and use of the field?

What guarantees, if any, have been written into the lease to prevent access by people, pets, and vehicles via the alley which fronts the north and west sides of the field?

Thanks for your consideration and answers to these questions.

September 25, 2021

Thanks Randy! We are behind the field on the alley and know many of our families are planning to attend.

From: Jessica Hanson Cohen jess.r.hanson@gmail.com

Hi John,

Nice to e-meet you! Carol suggested I send along any questions we have to you ahead of tonight's meeting so I've gathered a few from some of the neighboring houses that abuts the Episcopal Center for Children via the alley connecting Rittenhouse and 28th NW. Overall, we are excited and pleased to hear about Maret School's interest and investment in the fields at the Episcopal Center for Children. We are especially pleased to hear about the school's commitment to preserving the green space and saving as many of the trees as possible. There are just a few specifics we'd like to understand better:

- 1.) Over 20 young children live along and enjoy playing in this alley. It is a safe area with little to no car traffic. We support the development of the ECC fields, but would like assurances that our alley will not/cannot be used as a pickup or dropoff location or as a throughway for students/families coming to practice or games. This is of utmost importance to us.
- 2.) What are the plans for construction staging? Will the alley be used for the staging or will it all be done on-site/off Nebraska (on-site is obviously preferred).
- 3.) We have heard there will be community access. What are the specifics around that concept? What are plans for allowing neighbors to access the space? Can the public access the space during off hours/when not in use?
- 4.) How will access to the fields be controlled? Will there be "after dark" public access and if so, until what time? and will it be weeknights and weekends?
- 5.) Will the fencing and perimeter landscaping be maintained?
- 6.) Will there be a PA system or sound for live event announcements? Are noise controls in place?
- 7.) What are the specific plans for setbacks to keep privacy for the community that lives alongside the fields?
- 8.) Will you be leaving the old, beautiful trees along the fencing? If not, how do you plan to build privacy?
- 9.) We would like to consider alternate locations for the scoreboard, where else can it be moved so as to distance it from abutting properties?

Thanks in advance!

Collection of families along the 28th block of Rittenhouse Street NW

September 17, 2021

Kathy.abbruzzetti@gmail.com
202.430.3669

Hi Mr. Higgins,

I am one of your neighbors at 5939 Utah Ave NW. Our house backs up to the Episcopal Center for Children park and we have been blessed to have enjoyed the natural park and wildlife for the past 15 years. I have watched numerous wildlife take advantage of the park – including a Turkey Vulture, 6 Black Vultures, an owl, numerous hawks, baby fawns, foxes and racoons!! We are excited to see the park put to good use with the Maret 50 year lease but also have some questions and concerns we would like raised at the ANC meeting. I am unable to attend the meeting on Sep 27th as I will be on the west coast attending a business dinner/meeting. Is there a way to have these questions/concerns submitted for consideration?

Turf Field Concerns: Please consider grass fields instead of turf – both for the health of our children as well as the environment. There is a major concern with the tiny rubber tire pellets spreading into the nearby environment – especially Rock Creek Park.

Health Risks: Researchers have examined numerous potential dangers of synthetic turf, from increased concussion risk to overheating in the summer to spikes in ACL tears and staph infections. But the concern that has garnered the most attention is the unproven but nevertheless alarming link between crumb-rubber infill—the granular used-tire material that serves as cushioning on synthetic turf—and cancer. <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/10/the-school-synthetic-turf-wars/542721/>

Environmental Risk: There are several environmental concerns associated with artificial turf including loss of wildlife habitat, contaminated runoff, and migration of synthetic materials. Contaminants that are harmful to aquatic life, such as zinc, have been found in storm water runoff from artificial turf. The rubber pellets created from recycled tires can contain a wide variety of chemicals including metals, such as lead and zinc, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and others. Some chemicals found in recycled tires are known or suspected carcinogens, or are associated with other health effects. Both infill particles and broken synthetic grass fibers can migrate away from yards or playing fields, contributing to microplastic pollution. Increased temperatures on turf fields is also a concern since crumb-rubber turf absorbs and retains heat.

Border Netting Concerns:

There are a lot of Avian wildlife that frequent the park (Turkey and black vultures, Hawks, Owls, Woodpeckers etc) as well as deer. How do we ensure their safety with the netting? Could the wall/defense boundary be addressed with more trees instead of netting? https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1VDKB_enUS971US971&source=univ&tbm=isch&q=animals+caught+in+sports+netting&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjziOaK0YTzAhWWF1kFHW0CAQQjJkEegQIAxAC&biw=1280&bih=577&dpr=1.5

If netting is going to be used – can it be between the trees and the fields to keep it out of sight from the residential homes that back up to the park?

Tree removal and relocation – again there are a lot of birds/squirrels that have nests in the tree's (I believe there might be an owl or hawk nest in one of the trees). Will there be consideration taken as you look to remove/relocate the tree's to not harm the wildlife?

What will be the hours for the park? Will it be open for neighbors and the community to walk through and enjoy? Would you consider including walking pathway's and natural park/sitting areas?

Existing metal fencing – will this be replaced, and will you remove all of the vine growth (and poison ivy) on the existing dilapidated fence?

Alley use – will the use of the alley entrance be limited, or will it be used for access to the field house? We have quite a few neighborhood kids that play in the alley. Will you commit to NEVER putting up field lights for nighttime use?

Thanks for your consideration!!

Kathy Abbruzzetti

FORM LETTER -- At least 30 residents have simultaneously submitted this form letter for the Board of Zoning also to the ANC.

Re: Board of Zoning Adjustment Case #20643: Maret School Date: _____
Dear ANC 3/4G Chairman, Mr. Randy Speck; Commissioner John Higgins; Commissioner Michael Zeldin:

I am writing to indicate my serious concerns regarding the imposition of the Maret School sports complex proposed for my neighborhood.

1. It would be environmentally insensitive to remove forty well-established trees and topsoil and replace them with 3.7 acres of artificial turf, with additional hardscape for parking and sidewalks. This would essentially destroy the contribution that natural vegetation and topsoil make to the environment. Artificial turf's contribution to the heat island effect is well-documented. Off-gassing, particulate distribution and other effects would remain in the environment long after the games are finished. When we see the effects of climate change, why would we contribute to it, and especially to this extent?

2. This proposal would create a safety problem for a neighborhood known for supporting and protecting its children (more than 50 of whom live next to the proposed complex). Everyday pick-up and drop-off for the sports complex would occur at the same time as heavy commuter traffic, and traffic generated by the Episcopal Center for Children when it reopens. The ECC plans to operate both a school and an after-school day care program. With Oregon Ave. returning to service after years of extensive renovation, and with Bingham Drive also expected to reopen, commuter traffic would increase considerably.

3. As you are aware, Maret and others' use of the site would likely overwhelm our neighborhood streets with traffic and parked cars nearly every day. Game days would bring congestion and noise akin to what we experience from other nearby fields, most notably St. John's College High School less than a mile away. The two sports facilities might frequently have concurrent "game days," compounding the problem.

4. The proposal seeks too much lot coverage and too much development and activity on a small site with too little in the way of visual and sound buffers. The huge footprint would overwhelm the scale of the neighborhood; the intensity of land use would be unprecedented in our city. The request for zoning relief to allow this activity in an R-1-B zoning district runs counter to zoning principles and the fabric of our neighborhood. This zoning designation is intended to protect and stabilize quiet residential areas suitable for family life. The request for a special exception to allow parking 50 cars in the “front yard” facing Nebraska Avenue would be completely out of keeping with the single-family character of this neighborhood.

5. High retaining walls required to level the 35-foot elevation change across the site would dwarf the scale of our homes. Jan 3, 2022 2 Maret Proposal Objection 12.30.2021

6. Noise would be a constant concern. The maximum allowable sound level in this zoning district is 60 dB, and sports activities regularly exceed that limit.

7. Maret’s intention to use the site for its own teams, and to sub-lease the facility to other sports teams and leagues would have neighbors facing the issues raised above nearly every day of the year with no relief. I object to Maret’s proposal to disrupt our neighborhood - for the above stated reasons. In addition, I do not want this to set a precedent for future development in our city.

Add a personal comment:

Respectfully,

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Email ANC 3/4G Commissioners: ANC 3/4G Chair Randy Speck: Randy.Speck@anc.dc.gov
Commissioner John Higgins: 3G02@anc.dc.gov Commissioner Michael Zeldin:
3G04@anc.dc.gov

Snail Mail Commissioners: ANC 3/4G Northwest Station P.O. Box 6252 Washington, DC 20015

Email Board of Zoning Adjustment: dcoz@dc.gov

Snail Mail Board of Zoning Adjustment: District of Columbia Office of Zoning 441 4th Street, NW, Suite 200-S Washington, DC 20001

Please cc: friendsofthefield20015@gmail.com