



Government of the District of Columbia
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3/4G

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COMMISSIONERS

3/4G-01 - Lisa R. Gore, Chair 3/4G-02 - Bruce Sherman, Secretary, 3/4G-03 - James Nash, 3/4G-04 -
Michael Zeldin 3/4G-05 - Peter Lynch 3/4G-06 - Peter Gosselin, Vice Chair 3/4G-07 - Zachary Ferguson,
Treasurer

Resolution:
Advocating for Natural Grass Playing Fields
and a PFAS-safe Environment
September 9, 2024

WHEREAS:

- Chevy Chase seeks to safeguard the community and the environment, including ensuring reliably playable yet safe athletic playing fields.
- Within our ANC, artificial turf fields have been in use at St. John's College High School and Blessed Sacrament School for many years. Maret School is now constructing athletic fields on leased property owned by the Episcopal Center for Children (ECC) and intends to install artificial turf.
- Emerging scientific evidence has raised new questions about toxic chemical contaminants (including PFAS, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, a group of synthetic chemicals used in diverse consumer products and industrial processes) as well as microplastic pollutants associated with artificial turf and the risks they pose to players, the community, and the surrounding environment.
- More than 1200 neighbors having signed petitions in support of natural grass for renovation of the ball field at Lafayette Elementary School and Maret's fields at ECC.
- ANC 3/4G has passed three resolutions this year advocating for natural grass at Lafayette, contributing to legislation enacted by the Council to this effect.
- ANC 3/4G and Maret have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to guide construction of the fields at ECC. The DC Office of the Attorney General has issued an opinion that the MOU has no legal

effect and thus does not allow the ANC to direct Maret to use grass instead of artificial turf or to use a specific type of artificial turf. Separately, the DC Court of Appeals has upheld the 2023 order issued by the Board of Zoning Adjustment for Maret's ECC development, including the conclusion that artificial turf does not present an "objectionable condition."

- Maret has informed the community that its artificial turf vendor, Shaw Sports Turf, "has affirmed, using third party testing, that the turf products we will be using are manufactured without PFAs." The claims, however, have not been independently verified.
- ANC 3/4G recognizes that citizen concerns regarding artificial turf are not limited to our Commission area but are District-wide and must ultimately be addressed by relevant DC agencies and regulatory bodies.
- ANC 3/4G also expresses our concern about PFAS more broadly in the environment and in other commercial products.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- ANC 3/4G encourages all operators of athletic fields citywide, public and private, to consider the use of natural grass over artificial turf wherever possible as they build new or replace current fields. To this end, the Commission asks that Maret lead by example and use natural grass instead of artificial turf at ECC.
- ANC 3/4G will explore options to secure independent testing of the artificial turf products Maret intends to use at ECC.
- ANC 3/4G calls upon the DC Council to hold roundtable discussions, conduct hearings/take testimony on the state of scientific evidence related to the safety of artificial turf, including PFAS chemicals and microplastic pollutants.
- Ward Four Councilmember Janeese Lewis-George and Ward Three Councilmember Matt Frumin have committed to initiate a review of PFAS in artificial turf and other products. The ANC stands ready to assist the Councilmembers, as requested, building on the Commission's consultations with artificial turf industry representatives, independent scientists, environmentalists, and professional groundskeepers.
- ANC 3/4G advises the Council to review and consider amending the Safe Fields and Playgrounds Act of 2018: (a) to incorporate and apply the Act's relevant provisions to private as well as public playing fields to safeguard all District children; and (b) to include mandatory testing of all existing D.C. artificial turf fields for PFAS chemicals.
- ANC 3/4G recommends that the Department of Parks and Recreation develop more precise guidelines for play on District artificial turf fields during hot weather, including setting temperature and heat index levels and prescribed pauses or restrictions in activity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

ANC 3/4G designates Commissioners Sherman, Gore, and Gosselin to represent the Commission in all matters related to this resolution.

APPROVED at a regular public meeting notice of which was properly given and at which a quorum of seven members was present on September 9, 2024 by a vote of 7 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.

Lisa Gore, Chair



Bruce Sherman, Secretary


