

TESTIMONY OF WM. MARK SCOTT RE FIELD SCHOOL APPLICATION

2406 44TH STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20007

November 7, 2012

My wife and I conditionally support the application of the Field School. Our support is conditioned on the inclusion of each of the conditions outlined in the ANC letter.

Without each and every one of these additional conditions, or something similar in language, we strenuously oppose the application for the following reasons:

- (1) Chiller Noise. When constructed, the Field School placed the cooling and heating equipment, which they sometimes refer to as the "chiller", on the back or east side of their property. Or, in other words, on the 44th Street side of their 3-story gymnasium. As installed, the sound from this chiller was so loud it could be heard several hundred yards away, as far as the intersection of Dexter and 44th Streets. We raised concerns about the noise and, to their credit, the Field School added some doors to their open-top enclosure for the chiller that substantially reduced the noise. Nevertheless, my wife and I, as well as my immediate neighbors, have withstood objectionable noise from this chiller for over 40 years as, even with the addition of these doors to their open-top enclosure, the noise emitting from the chiller still has a distinct negative impact on the use and enjoyment of our 44th Street properties.

The level of noise in our back yard exceeds what can be measured at the Field School. The Field School has measured the noise levels at their property line and believes such noise levels are fine. I believe the cause of this higher level of noise for me, my wife and my immediate neighbors is the placement of the chiller and the use of an open-top enclosure for the chiller. As the noise from the chiller is directed up, it will bounce off the 3-story gymnasium wall and head straight to our property. This is why the noise from the chiller at the edge of the Field School property, which is only about 15 feet from the enclosure, is substantially below what I hear in my back yard. I have over the last 10 years offered multiple opportunities for the Field School to measure the decibel level from my yard, but they have never accepted this offer, perhaps for good reason.

The Field School now intends to both increase the size of their facility, which will demand more use from this equipment, and to increase the actual usage of the existing facility by hosting additional events after normal hours, which will, again, increase the demand on the unit and the accompanying noise. We have therefore raised objections to the increase in this noise level and ask that you approve the Field School application only if it is accompanied by the ANC recommendation that the Field School replace the existing, noisy chiller unit with a quieter one. I understand better, quieter equipment does exist. Without this requirement, we believe the increased enrollment and use of the Field School properties will further diminish the use and enjoyment, and value, of our residences and, therefore, we would oppose such increased use.

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- (2) Storm Sewer Overflow. The Field School property slopes significantly from Foxhall Road down to the back of my property. Notwithstanding this natural grade, prior to the construction of the Field School, we never experienced any runoff or flooding from the Cafritz Estate.

When constructed, the Field School agreed to install a storm drainage system to capture runoff from its property, which would alleviate the additional water runoff that would naturally accompany both their re-contour of their property and the significant increase in amount of paved surfaces. This storm runoff system does not function properly as the storm runoff system substantially relies on a single capture point and the drain cover at that point is easily clogged with leaves. (See picture.) Once clogged, thousands of gallons of water are diverted away from their storm drainage system to the back of my residential lot. This water eventually floods my back yard and patio, and has caused extensive damage to the back side of my residence. About a year ago, after more than 9 years of flooding, the Field School, to their credit, installed a temporary silt fence to disperse the water and capture the silt that typically accompanied this water overflow. This temporary measure has prevented further flooding of and damage to my property. Nonetheless, this temporary fence is, by its nature, a temporary solution.

It is unclear how or whether additional water damage may result either during the construction of the new facilities, the change in use of the existing facilities, or otherwise. It seems only reasonable, in light of the existing storm water drainage problems, which likely do not comport with the conditions originally imposed on the Field School, for the Field School to remedy this situation, on a permanent basis, now, while construction is taking place. My wife and I would be opposed to new Field School construction taking place behind our property if this overflow from the drainage system is not corrected so that the drainage system works as originally envisioned. And we would ask that this condition be remedied as part of the new construction, if not earlier.

- (3) Parking. As mentioned, the Field School re-contoured the land as part of its construction. As a result, a 10 foot high Field School paved surface now borders the rear of my property. On top of this 10 foot high paved surface, the Field School parks multiple blue school buses. As you can imagine, my 6 foot high wood fence does not obstruct the view of these buses to any extent as this fence does not even reach the 10 foot elevation of the Field School paved surface.

As part of their application request, the Field School is seeking authority to expand the number of parking spaces. Most if not all of this additional parking will take place behind my house and on top of this 10 foot high paved surface. As part of its request, the Field School anticipates double parking its unsightly blue buses on this paved surface. The visual impact of these additional vehicles on top of the Field School's 10 foot high parking lot, all within several yards of my property line, will worsen the negative impact of the original construction on the use and enjoyment of my residence, as well as the residences of my immediate neighbors. In this respect, I need to point out that the Field School application is incorrect when it states on page 7 that there exists "extensive

undeveloped green space” on the periphery of the Field School property. This is simply not true--as such green space does not exist between my property and the Field School. (See pictures.) Therefore, we are asking that the Field School alleviate this lack of green space with additional screening. Without this additional screening, we strongly oppose the Field School application as it will further diminish the use and enjoyment, and value, of our residence.

(4) Noise, Traffic and Parking from Use of Field School Facilities and Fields.

- a. Facilities. We are concerned about the rental of the facilities at the Field School to third parties for a number of reasons, including traffic, parking and noise. For instance, the Field School gymnasium sits right behind my house and just on the other side of the aforementioned 10 foot high parking lot. (See pictures.)

If the gymnasium is used late at night, we will hear and see this use, because users will be using not only the gymnasium but the parking lot. And, the users of this parking lot, which sits 10 feet higher than the normal contour of the land, will see into our back yard and house. For that reason, we are happy to let the Field School generate revenue from the rental of its facilities, but are opposed to unrestricted usage of these facilities as unrestricted usage will negatively impact the use and enjoyment of our residence, and its value. In particular, we are very concerned about late night usage of the gym as the noise from such use would substantially disturb the use and enjoyment of our residence.

- b. Fields. There is a proposal to allow Stoddert Soccer to use the Field School soccer field. As 44th Street is the closest on-street parking to the soccer field, we will bear the brunt of this usage from the aspect of traffic and, unfortunately, what we should expect in the way of trash being left by departing motorists. Therefore, we would object to unfettered use of this field and appreciate the willingness of the Field School to work with us and our neighbors on 44th Street to resolve this issue in a manner that works for all of us.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, we understand that the City is generally pleased with the construction of the Field School, and I would admit that the Field School looks great from the Foxhall Road side. But, as constructed, the Field School hid all of its ugly workings from the Foxhall Road view by putting them on the side of its property facing my residence. Now they want to, in essence, double down on these ugly workings.

By fronting the gym, bus parking, chiller and 10 foot high wall against my property line, the Field School caused a significant loss to the value of my residence, and presumably the value of my neighbors' residences as well. In 2006, the City's Office of Tax and Revenue agreed that the loss in value to my residence alone was \$229,270.00.

We believe that if the application is approved without the conditions recommended by the ANC, the loss to the value of my property alone will increase to well over \$400,000.00. This loss does not take into account the cost, which I am currently incurring, of the long-term damage now showing up as a result of the persistent flooding of our property for a period of over 9 years.

As part of our effort to reach out to the Field School and in recognition of their efforts to improve their relationship with us over the last several months, my wife and I are not, today, actively opposing the expansion of their school. We are certain, however, that the value of our property will further diminish if each of these conditions as outlined by the ANC letter is not imposed at this time. Therefore, we support the Field School application if, but only if, each of the conditions are included as part of the final order.

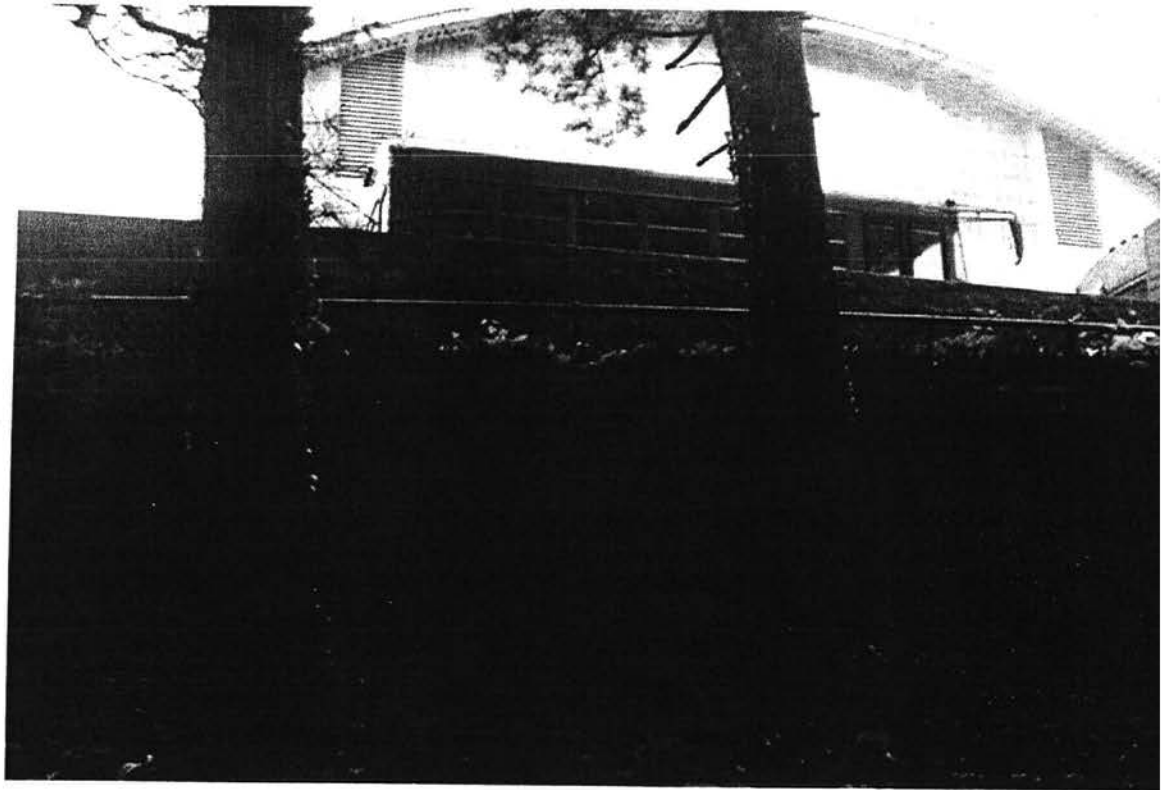
In this respect, we are willing to try to work with the Field School on the type of screening to be put in place, the noise level of the chiller, and the use of their facilities and fields. We would have liked to have had a chance to work out more of these details with the Field School prior to today's hearing, but they opposed a continuance at the ANC level. We hope that, if their application is approved, they will continue to work with us, but, based on the first 9 years of our 10-year history with the Field School, we cannot rely on this assumption and, therefore, strongly oppose approval of their application without conditions similar to those recommended by the ANC.

I appreciate your consideration of my testimony.

Regards,

Mark Scott





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