

# Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D

## Government of the District of Columbia



February 5, 2025

Mr. Frederick L. Hill  
Chairman  
District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment  
441 Fourth Street, NW, Suite 200-S  
Washington, DC 20001

Re: The Field School | 2301 Foxhall Road, NW  
BZA Case No. 18431-A

Dear Chairman Hill and Members of the Board:

Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 3D writes in support of BZA Case No. 18431-A. At its duly noticed, regularly scheduled public meeting held on February 5, 2025, and with a quorum present at all times, ANC 3D voted 7-0-0 to approve this letter. This matter was brought to Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D by J.P. Szymkowicz, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for Single Member District 3D07.

The Field School is the applicant in the above-referenced case. The School currently operates at 2301 Foxhall Road, NW, subject to a private school plan that was most recently updated under BZA Order No. 18431. On November 12, 2024, the School filed an application requesting: (i) a Modification With Hearing pursuant to Subtitle Y, Section 704 to allow various changes to its approved private school plan; and (ii) a special exception pursuant to Subtitle C, Section 1402.1 and Subtitle X, Section 901.2 for retaining wall relief.

Before filing the application with the BZA, the School provided an introduction of the project to the ANC at our monthly meeting held on October 9, 2024. During the months that followed, the School maintained an ongoing dialogue with ANC 3D commissioners and the neighbors living adjacent to or in close proximity to the School's campus. The ANC appreciates the School for making responsive changes to its application after having numerous in-person meetings, telephone calls, and email communications with abutting and surrounding neighbors. Specifically, the ANC acknowledges that the School withdrew its request to shift the athletic field, which would have necessitated the construction of a 27-foot high retaining wall. The ANC appreciates the School's efforts to find solutions and implement measures that will mitigate adverse impacts to nearby homeowners and the larger community.

The School presented the following modifications to the approved private school plan to the ANC:

- a. Construction of a new addition to be known as the Innovation Center;
- b. Minor upgrades to the existing athletic field that will include new lighting and a new/relocated scoreboard;
- c. Reconfiguration of the existing basketball court and parking areas to the north of the athletic field to create a practice field;
- d. Reconfiguration of the School's existing parking lot and bus parking zone;

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- e. Increase to the student enrollment cap from 400 to 425; and
- f. Increase to the FTE faculty/staff cap from 110 to 120.

The School also presented the requested special exception to allow the construction of three over-height retaining walls central to the campus. In addition to providing structural support, the retaining walls are needed to accommodate a new accessible ramp between the School's main buildings and the athletic field.

Therefore, in light of the foregoing and the materials filed with the applicant's Prehearing Submission dated February 3, 2025, including the Updated Plans and the Proposed Conditions marked as Exhibit 26A and Exhibit 26B in the case record, respectively, **ANC 3D recommends that the Board grant the School's requested modifications and special exception.**

As justification for its support, ANC 3D notes in particular the School has committed to the following:

- a. The Field School will continue to respond to issues raised by neighbors when they arise, consistent with the school's past practice of demonstrating responsive and effective engagement with its neighbors, including addressing potential stormwater management concern.
- b. The Field School will make its athletic field available for use by members of the community as well as youth sports organizations, including the local MacArthur High School, when it is not in use by the school. Information about the availability of the field and instructions for submitting rental requests will be provided on The Field School's website.
- c. The Field School will install athletic field lighting that is designed to significantly reduce lighting spill outside the playing field areas to mitigate impacts on surrounding properties.
- d. The school shall turn off the exterior event lighting no later than 9:00 p.m. daily. The school will manage activities on the athletic field in the evening hours to limit noise associated with competitions or other events that would draw a large number of people. The school will respond to potential issues, if any, raised by neighbors as to the usage of the athletic field during the evening hours and work in good faith to address concerns. In the event that field usage presents an unreasonable burden on surrounding neighbors, the neighbors may raise the issue with the ANC, and the Schools commits to work in good faith with the ANC to mitigate the activity creating the unreasonable burden during the evening hours, including, but not limited to, reducing or eliminating use of the field by youth sport and other community groups.<sup>1</sup> It should be

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Regulatory Requirement (for background and clarification)

"If a building permit or certificate of occupancy has been issued under the authority of a decision of the Board of Zoning Adjustment ["BZA"]) to approve a special exception or variance, then for purposes of Subtitle A §§ 303.4 and 303.5, each condition to the approval of the special exception or variance shall be treated as a condition to the issuance of the building permit or certificate of occupancy." 11-A DCMR § 303.3. "Any person who owns, controls, occupies, maintains, or uses any building, structure, or land, or any part of any building, structure, or land, shall at all times comply with any condition to the issuance of the certificate of occupancy for the building, structure, or land, or part thereof." 11-A DCMR § 303.4. "Any person who erects, constructs, reconstructs, alters, converts, owns, controls, occupies, maintains, or uses any building, structure, or any part of any building or structure shall at all

noted that the athletic field already exists and is used regularly for matches and The Field School has not heard complaints from neighbors regarding noise from such games.

- e. The Field School will maintain its existing vegetative buffers in areas adjacent to nearby neighbors to continue to provide appropriate visual and noise screening.
- f. The Field School will implement a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan that outlines its commitments with respect to continuing its shuttle bus service, encouraging carpooling and public transit use, and promoting active transportation modes as alternatives to driving to campus.

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D urges the Board to grant relief pursuant to its authority in this case, giving great weight to this ANC's findings and issues raised herein. Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner J.P. Szymkowicz (whose Single Member District is 3D07) is authorized to testify before the Board on Zoning Adjustment in any hearing related to this matter.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely yours,



Bernie Horn, Chair

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times comply with any condition to the issuance of the building permit for the building, structure, or part thereof." 11-A DCMR § 303.5.

According to these provisions of the Zoning Regulations, a person who believes that a condition of an order approved in BZA Case No. 18431-A (which is in turn a condition of the certificate of occupancy) may file a complaint with the Office of the Zoning Administrator of the DC Department of Buildings ("OZA") for violation of a condition. The complaint can be submitted through website, and DOB will begin reviewing the complaint. [<https://dob.dc.gov/page/zoning-services>; <https://dob.dc.gov/node/1620801>]. To the extent that there is validity to the complaint, OZA typically contacts the Office of Zoning, who will contact the applicant to review and confirm compliance with condition. Following that discussion, OZA will either order the applicant to comply with the condition or find that the complaint is without merit. If the Zoning Administrator finds the complaint to be without merit and the neighbor continues to believe that there is non-compliance, then the neighbor may appeal that decision to the BZA pursuant to 11-X DCMR § 1100.2, which provides that the BZA may hear and decide "zoning appeals where it is alleged by the appellant that there is an error in any order, requirement, decision, determination, or refusal made by the Zoning Administrator."