

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: McLish, Thomas <tmlish@AKINGUMP.COM>
Sent: Tuesday, February 1, 2022 3:36 PM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: BZA Application No. 20643: Maret School Athletic Fields Project

Some people who received this message don't often get email from tmlish@akingump.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the DC Government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know that the content is safe. If you believe that this email is suspicious, please forward to phishing@dc.gov for additional analysis by OCTO Security Operations Center (SOC).

Dear Chairman Hill,

I offer these comments in support of the above-referenced application.

I have been a homeowner in the vicinity of the Episcopal Center for Children for more than 25 years. We lived on 33rd St for 18 years and now reside on Patterson St. between 32nd and 33rd. We can see the ECC from our house.

I am 100% supportive of the arrangement between Maret and ECC to build a baseball diamond and multi-use field on the currently unused ECC property behind the main building. For many years I have walked my dog past that property and thought that it is a shame that it is going unused. Space like that is such a rarity in DC and it should be put to use. Of course, I knew it would eventually be developed in some way, especially when ECC announced a couple of years ago that it was essentially shutting down.

So I was thrilled when I heard last year that a plan was in the works and that it involved creating playing fields, rather than a housing development, senior living facility or something along those lines. I was also glad to hear that ECC elected to go with Maret. My three children graduated from Maret (we have no remaining affiliation with the school) and the one thing I can tell you about the leadership of that school is that they are all about making Maret an being exemplary citizens of their community. I doubt that there is any other organization that ECC might have partnered with that would be more focused on doing the right thing with that property and the surrounding neighborhood than Maret. That includes the District – just look at how poorly they maintain the grounds at nearby Lafayette Elementary School.

I understand why people whose houses abut the property or are across from it on Nebraska have concerns. Anyone would. It is my understanding that Maret is addressing the reasonable concerns, such as a formal 50-year commitment not to add lighting or a sound system. To the extent folks are objecting to the plan in its entirety (I don't know of any who are, except for people quoted in the Post), I believe that is unreasonable. That property is not going to sit unused for much longer and the other alternative uses are almost certainly worse. It is only because ECC has been unable financially to make full use of that space that it has sat unused for all these years. It is not reasonable to buy a house next to a school and then object to it being used for quintessentially school-type activities.

In short, I wholeheartedly support the plan. It will be great for the neighborhood, certainly much better than any plausible alternative. It will allow ECC to get back on its feet. It will create much-needed field space for others, not just Maret. The space will no longer be an empty expanse surrounded by "No Trespassing" signs. The storm water runoff situation will be dramatically improved.

Thanks for reading and for your service as Chairman of the BZA.

Respectfully,

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.20643
EXHIBIT NO.119

Tom McLish
3210 Patterson St., NW
Washington DC 20015
202-247-1207
tmclish@akingump.com

The information contained in this e-mail message is intended only for the personal and confidential use of the recipient(s) named above. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by e-mail, and delete the original message.