

Regarding:
BZA Application No. 20643
Maret School Athletic Fields Project

Letter in SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Frederick L. Hill,

I am a local Chevy Chase resident and I have two young children. I previously lived a few blocks away from the main Maret School campus in Woodley Park. My daughter (6) attends DCPS Eaton Elementary School.

I am in SUPPORT of approving Maret's BZA Application No. 20643.

Change is inevitable. And, from my viewpoint as a Chevy Chase resident and DCPS parent, the change that the ECC and Maret is requesting supports the greatest good that could come of an empty field in an actively growing neighborhood.

The property in question is a private property and, ultimately, it should be the ECC and/or whoever purchases the land from them who has the greatest say in what happens to the land. Converting this empty space to a usable, viable, thriving field for children in a transaction that would also allow the ECC to remain open and continue providing therapeutic services to children with special needs would be the greatest outcome the neighborhood could hope for.

As an added benefit, Maret is willing to allow reasonable access by the public to the fields.

As a previous neighbor to the Maret campus on Cathedral Ave, NW, I can say that access to their property on the weekends and after school hours was greatly beneficial to our quality of life as a young city family. We used their front grass area and playground regularly as an extension of outdoor space for our daughters and we frequented the farmers' market. I can only imagine that Maret's commitment to the Chevy Chase neighborhood is as honest as their track record in Woodley Park.

As far as neighborhood concerns for traffic increase, it continues to evade me as to what residents of the city expect for continued development, growth, and bettering of city spaces. Any building on this property will change traffic demands. And, if ECC cannot remain open, they will be forced to sell the entire property that would logically go to a developer who will most likely plan a higher density project. I believe that these are changes we should embrace as residents in a vibrant, dynamic city.

I do not believe that Maret should be shuttered by the neighborhood because they are a private school with many resources. All educational opportunities are important and should be embraced for the mission they serve.

I hope that the BZA honestly and seriously considers the Maret application and sees the mutual benefits that will be served by allowing this project to proceed. As city residents, change must be embraced and we should welcome entities, such as Maret, who commit to making these changes with community input and values in mind.

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