

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Frank Buchholz <buchholzfd1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 27, 2022 2:34 PM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: Application No. 20643 of the Maret School

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Part of 5901 Utah Avenue Special Exceptions from matter of right uses of Subtitle U 203.1 (m)

Project: To permit a private school use in the R-1-B Zone that is three miles away from the Maret School

My name is Frank Buchholz. I reside at 5877 Nebraska Ave NW Washington DC. I am an adjoining and nearby neighbor of the property at 5901 Utah Ave NW and live within 200 feet from it. In fact I can see the property from my kitchen window.

According to the DC Zoning Regulations Subtitle 203.1 the following uses shall be accepted in a B group (m) private schoolssubject to the following conditions

(1) shall likely be located so as not to become objectional to adjoining and nearby property because of (a) traffic, (b) noise, and (c) number of students or objectional conditions.

The property currently consists if a five-acre empty field, an in-ground swimming pool, a playground, a library, a baseball diamond, and two-half basketball courts. Maret wishes to replace the foregoing with a baseball diamond, bleachers, a multi-purpose field, a 48-car parking lot, goal posts four bays for on-street bus parking and a locker room most of which are shrouded by 20-foot netting.. In addition Maret wishes to lease out the fields on a timeshare basis to schools in the Washington basis. The entrance to the project is on the 5800 block of Nebraska Ave NW.

I find that the location of the proposed private school to be objectional for the following reasons.

(a) Traffic: I live on Nebraska Ave. Over the next two years my neighbors and I face a perfect storm of traffic problems. For its part Maret will add 48 parked cars, four buses, and construction vehicles, In addition Maret is planning on 2 rivalry day games which will add about two hundred cars to residential parking. Finally Maret is planning to lengthen the light at Utah and Nebraska that will cause traffic jams..

Meanwhile the Episcopal Center for Children (ECC) which owns and shares the site with Maret will be reviving its program in the fall of 2022 for 25 students who will be driven in buses In addition the ECC staff who maintain a one-to-one ratio with its students will be driving and either parking 25 cars on the ECC property or on residential streets.

Finally traffic will substantially increase on Nebraska Ave because of the reopening of Oregon Ave. In addition traffic will naturally increase in the post-pandemic era.

(b) Noise The principal noise is that of cars using the parking lot. In addition piercing official whistles will damage the piece and quiet that we have come to expect in a residential neighborhood. We can also expect the noise common to adolescents engaged in sports six days a week.as late as dusk,

(c) Number of students The numbers can be anywhere from 30 to 100 students and up to 200 parents on rivalry day,. In addition Maret is planning on leasing timeshares to local schools even though it has a \$30 million endowment and doesn't need the rental money.

Note: One impetus for this project has ben the future of the ECC a non-sectarian school for special needs children that closed temporarily three years ago. Under the Individuals with Disability Education Act all children are eligible for a free

public appropriate education. As such DC Public Schools provides about 16,000 special needs students with financial assistance.(Source Office of the State Superintendent of Education)

In addition in recent years Maret has expanded its campus with five academic buildings, a large gymnasium, and dozens of parking places. Now it wanders the city seeking land for athletics for itself, for its sports opponents. and for a team to be named later,

The Maret project site is in a R-1-B zone that provides for single family homes up to three stories in height as a matter of right,

The purpose of this zone is to protect and to stabilize quiet residential area and to promote a suitable environment for family life. The Maret proposal as currently formulated does none of these. It is not in harmony with the general purpose of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps and will tend to affect adversely the use and value of neighboring properties,

Recommendations:

1. The BZA should deny Maret's application for a special exemption for the reasons cited above, alternatively the BZA should

2. Approve Maret's application for a special exception with the following conditions which are intended to reduce the intensity of use and certain obnoxious elements of Maret's plan thereby protecting and stabilizing our quiet residential area:

A. Maret shifts rivalry day fo its 3000 Cathedral Ave campus.

B Maret cancels its timeshare plans to rent the field to other schools.

C Maret eliminates the baseball diamond from its plans

D, Maret bans the use of officials whistles

E. Maret uses the field only between 9 AM and 5 PM Monday to Friday but not on Federal or District holidays so residents can have peace and quiet when not at work.

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