



March 1st, 2022

Frederick L. Hill
Chairman, Board of Zoning Adjustment

Chairman Hill,

My name is Carl Ehrlich and I'm writing on behalf of Maret School's proposed field project at the ECC. I'm the Founder of Flag Star Football – a local sports league serving thousands of DC youth each year - and I can unequivocally say that the Maret School, their administration and students have been the backbone of our ability to serve these local, youth constituents and their families. The proposed ECC field project would only increase the power of that partnership.

Before I speak to the immediate benefit of a turf, all-weather field that Maret would share with local youth sports organizations, I want to spend a moment to speak to the values I've seen Maret conduct themselves with through the years; I do believe those come first. I've watched first-hand as the Maret Athletic Department has *dedicated* themselves to their athletes, creating life-changing developmental and educational opportunities for the men and women they serve (many of whom work as coaches/officials in our leagues). Flag Star has employed *countless* Maret student-athletes who've gone on to become first-generation college students and I've watched as the Maret coaches and community took special care of these students and their success. There are important, life-changing things going on in Maret's athletic department and I do want that to be captured in this endorsement.

Speaking to their more immediate proposal, the ECC field project would be a massive windfall to the local sports community. Turf fields are at an incredible premium in this city and, as a result, nearly all of our programs are canceled/postponed because of rain. To add a weather-resistant field that was shared with the youth sports community would create hundreds of additional playing opportunities for our kids each season. And these kids need to play!

The thing that would be especially impactful about the ECC development - as opposed to other private facility projects in the city - is that the fields would actually be *shared* with the local sports organizations. We've seen far too many private facilities and turf fields constructed in the city, only to be hoarded by the private institution, leaving outside sports leagues sidelined. Conversely, Maret has always been incredibly accommodating to outside youth sports organizations like ours, making sure that outside community groups get as much access as possible. I know and trust that the proposed ECC project will create countless opportunities for our local leagues and families.

With all of that in mind, my organization and I are behind this project 100%. Please don't hesitate to reach out should you have any other questions, as I'm eager to speak on behalf of this school and this project. Maret has been a thoughtful partner to the youth sports community for many years now and the ECC field project only stands to increase the power of that partnership.

Many thanks for the consideration,

Carl Ehrlich

Founder, Executive Director; Flag Star Football