

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Tom Gross <tomgrossdc@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 3, 2022 12:24 PM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: BZA Application No. 20643: Maret School Athletic Fields Project

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Some people who received this message don't often get email from tomgrossdc@gmail.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,

Please accept my comments in support of the Maret fields project at the Episcopal Center For Children.

The creation of new playing space in the District of Columbia is cause for celebration for everyone involved in athletics in DC. Having raised two children in DC and a career in youth athletics spanning over 25 years, I know first hand the crying need for adequate playing space for our children in DC. There is simply not enough space devoted to athletics in DC. Every season is a dog eat dog competition among the athletic groups to find space for children to play. Raising athletic children in DC often involves driving insane distances out of DC just to practice and play. Even at the recreational level, excessive travel is the norm, not the exception. I understand that people are upset about building fields in a residential neighborhood. But that's where people live. It's in society's interest to bring the fields to the players.

What is especially appealing about the Maret project is it creates new space. The project displaces no other group. It's not a zero sum game. Every athletic group in DC benefits even if they never use the new fields. It reduces the stain on the existing inventory. The new fields at RFK are a fantastic addition to the field inventory. But I know for a fact those fields are near full utilization. On a recent Thursday evening I drove by the new Deanwood Recreation field. The field was completely carpeted with children playing. It was a beautiful sight but a reminder that there's a huge demand that needs to be met.

It's in everyone's interest that we nurture healthy children. I should think that people don't need a lecture on such an obvious point but I've been in enough community meetings about field developments to know otherwise. Exercise and play are the essence of health. Building new fields makes for healthy children who grow into healthy, productive adults. Everyone wins.

Tom Gross
4708 15th, NW
Washington DC, 20011
202-528-2336
tomgrossdc@gmail.com

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.20643
EXHIBIT NO.237