

February 24, 2022

Chairman Fred Hill
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th St. NW, Suite 200/210-S
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chairman Hill,

For 26 years my family and I have lived on the corner of Patterson St. and Utah Ave. NW. I see the front of the Episcopal Center for Children (ECC) through my windows and face it when I walk out my front door. For most of this period, ECC teachers and staff would park in front of my house and the ECC co-existed harmoniously with the neighborhood. While there were rumors of hardships ECC was facing, ECC never reached out to the community to make us aware of these hardships or to engage us in potential solutions for their sustainability. Then, just a few months ago, we suddenly learned that ECC would be leasing space behind its building to the Maret School to develop sports fields for its middle and high school students.

Please understand that I, along with others in the community, support the ECC and would like to see it continue to help the students with special needs and their families. However, the lack of engagement with those who will be most impacted by these plans—which have been proceeding apace—has been an affront to our community. Asking the community to accept multiple sports fields—and the numerous environmental, traffic, safety and noise issues they bring—is an unfair burden to the immediate taxpaying neighbors who have coexisted with ECC for decades.

In their recent proposal presentations, Maret officials have continued to downplay and smooth over the reality that neighbors will face on a daily basis: increased car and bus traffic, noise, and inevitable trash. The traffic concerns are particularly worrying. Those of us who live here know that the intersection of Nebraska and Utah is already dangerous, with commuters speeding to get through the traffic lights while riders of the M4 bus, pedestrians and dogwalkers try to cross the streets. With the current proposal, the after-school period will be a disaster waiting to happen. Adding to the current commuter traffic will be school buses, cars driven by Maret and visiting school parents and caregivers, cars driven by parents and caregivers of those attending the ECC and their planned afterschool program for elementary school students. I fear it will be just a matter of time before someone is seriously injured.

I appeal to you to please postpone this decision until there can be 1) a more thorough examination of the full consequences of the ECC-Maret proposal, and 2) engagement with the community on alternative solutions to ECC's sustainability that would be more beneficial and less disruptive to the concerned neighborhood.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Susan Gigli
3105 Patterson St. NW

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.20643
EXHIBIT NO.242