

03 March 2022

Regarding: Board of Zoning Adjustment Case #20643: Maret School

Cc: ANC 3/4G

Dear Chairman Hill,

I wish to write this letter to present concerns on behalf of myself and my husband regarding Maret's proposed use of the ECC field for high school athletics activities. Having familiarized ourselves with the many changes that Maret needs to make to the existing space to develop a sports complex, we are extremely concerned about a number of issues, including the removal of beautiful old trees that give the field its unique charm, increased traffic in a residential area where most homes have 1-2 children under the age of 8 playing outside, and the use of artificial turf in place of natural grass for the sports fields. This last change is an issue of great concern to us as we are aware of a number of health concerns that stem from the use of spaces containing artificial turf.

As you may be aware artificial turf is derived from petrochemicals and contain highly toxic fluorinated chemicals known as "PFAS". PFAS have come to be known as "forever chemicals," because they accumulate in our bodies and cannot be broken down and excreted by our natural defense systems. PFAS chemicals, which have been linked to lower childhood immunity, endocrine disruption and cancer. **Children are especially vulnerable to harm from PFAS** both in their childhoods, and as adults due to the chemicals' persistence in their bodies. I have a sibling who died from childhood leukemia as well as many relatives who have suffered from other cancers. I work hard to live a lifestyle that minimizes known carcinogens and toxins for myself and my family, and do not wish to live in proximity of a large physical area with these chemicals entering the air and water around us. Crumbled rubber pellets are known to break off from the turf and can adhere to shoes and clothing and end up in cars and homes. Harmful derivative chemicals are also released as gases into the air during heat and rain.

While Maret students and staff members attending these games will have incidental exposure to these chemicals, as local residents we will have continuous daily exposure over time. This truly feels like a grave health imposition that we cannot take lightly. We chose this neighborhood carefully with proximity to known toxins and contaminants in mind (and even selected schools for our children based on the materials they use for their playgrounds), so I can assure you that this isn't an issue that we are raising to pose an impediment to Maret without serious grounds.

I hope that you will look into "PFAS" (aka "Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances") and see that this is not suitable for large scale fields in the midst of a residential area with many young children in critical stages of organ development.

Kind regards,

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Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.20643
EXHIBIT NO.243