

I'd like to straighten out a few misunderstandings that I have read on the Chevy Chase listserv regarding the Episcopal Center's property.

My source in HUD tells me that that parcel of land is zoned – in perpetuity – for nonprofit only. Many writers have said a sports field is better than a block of homes. But no homes can ever be built on it.

“Suddenly becomes a neighborhood treasure”? Nothing sudden about it. My neighbors and I have absolutely treasured that land for 39 years. This is a fact; we comment on it all the time, as does everyone who visits us and sees it.

“Badly needed by a school”? Maret has sports fields on its property. Why do they badly need a second set? They've been getting along without it so far. High school sports are supposed to be for fun and exercise, not training for professional athletes.

Do you realize that more than 40 trees will be chopped down and replaced by Astroturf? Think of it: 5 acres of Astroturf! Does anyone care about the wildlife that lives there? Besides the deer, squirrels, rabbits, raccoons, and the occasional fox, what will happen to the birds? I regularly see bluejays, cardinals, finches, wrens, owls, tufted titmouses, hummingbirds, several species of woodpeckers, several species of sparrows, two species of crows, and at least one hawk, regularly. Are these trees and animals worth nothing?

“Usual panic.” We are not panicking, we are heartbroken.

“Traffic,” yes, they are putting in an entire block of 50 parking spots on the land abutting Nebraska Avenue. I suspect that will not be enough.

“Noise,” yes, they are putting in three sets of bleachers for parents. Will these parents sit like nuns in a chapel? No, they will cheer—translation: yell their heads off.

“Pollution,” yes, and coffee cups and trash that didn't make it into trash cans that are not completely convenient. Not to mention the visual pollution of a giant scoreboard and the 20-foot-high netting to catch the stray balls. Who would be happy with this at the end of their back yard?

Yes, we live near Rock Creek Park. Would it be okay to build “badly needed” sports fields in Rock Creek Park? No? Why doesn't this piece of land deserve the same consideration as Rock Creek Park? It absolutely functions as a wildlife sanctuary for trees and animals.

At first I thought they planned to use it as practice fields. Really, children practicing baseball or soccer on the fields as they exist would be fine, even welcome, but what Maret is proposing is just too much. This is not “useful change.” It's not useful to us residents, or to all the animal and plant life there.

How could we possibly not oppose this change?

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District of Columbia
CASE NO. 20643
EXHIBIT NO. 55
Sold the home at
2814 Rite House 10/21