

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Application of
The Maret School

ANC: 3/4G02

STATEMENT OF THE APPLICANT

I. Nature of Application

This application is made by The Maret School (“**Maret**” or the “**Applicant**”) for special exceptions to use a portion of the property that has an address of 5901 Utah Avenue NW (Square 2319, Lot 832) (the “**Property**”) for athletics programming. Maret proposes to re-purpose one of the existing buildings on the Property to be used as a Fieldhouse and to construct a baseball diamond, a multi-purpose field and parking spaces on the Property (collectively, the “**Athletic Facilities**”). This application requests special exception relief pursuant to 11-U DCMR § 203.1(m) and 11-X DCMR § 104 to permit a private school use in a residential zone district; and pursuant to 11-C DCMR § 710.3 to allow parking spaces within a front yard. The development of the Athletics Facilities will conform to the Zoning Regulations requirements in the R-1-B Zone District in all other respects.

II. Jurisdiction of the Board

The Board of Zoning Adjustment (“**BZA**” or “**Board**”) has jurisdiction to grant the relief requested pursuant to Subtitle X § 901.1 of the Zoning Regulations (11-X DCMR §901.1).

III. Description of Property and Surrounding Area

The Property is bound by Nebraska Avenue, NW and an alley that serves properties that have frontage along Utah Avenue, NW, Rittenhouse, Street, NW and 28th Street, NW. The Property is comprised of approximately 5 acres and is located in the R-1-B Zone District. Single-family homes are located across Nebraska Avenue, NW from the Property, adjacent to the

campus athletic facilities at 3000 Cathedral Avenue, NW (two gymnasiums and a multipurpose athletic field) available to as many community groups as possible. These groups have included Stoddert Soccer (now known as DC Soccer), DC Dynasty Baseball, Horizons of Greater Washington, the DC Metropolitan Police Department and numerous other youth-focused organizations. In addition, Maret's Woodley Park campus is used for the Twin Spring's Farmers Market and Cleveland and Woodley Park Village activities.

While Maret makes extensive use of its Woodley Park campus athletic facilities, the Maret sports programs still require additional field space for athletic practices and competitions. Maret has utilized athletic facilities throughout the District, including: Duke Ellington Field; Wilson High School; Taft Junior High School; Jelleff Recreation Center; and the University of the District of Columbia. In the Fall of 2020, Maret signed a long-term lease (up to 50 years) with the ECC for the Property. Revenue from this lease with Maret will allow the ECC to remain a beneficial presence in the community where it has been for over 80 years, and will also allow Maret to augment its existing athletic facilities and satisfy its programmatic need for field space.

V. Development Proposal

The development of the Athletic Facilities on the Property presents a unique opportunity for Maret to enhance and simplify its athletic field needs, while also providing a significant community benefit in the form of athletic fields and open space that can be utilized by local schools, youth sports organizations, and residents of the surrounding community.

A. Athletic Fields

Maret proposes to develop a baseball diamond and a multi-purpose field that will be used for baseball, football, soccer, and lacrosse. The development of these fields will require re-

The proposed development of athletic fields on the Property presents a unique opportunity for Maret to enhance and simplify its athletic field needs, while providing a wonderful benefit and amenity to the surrounding community. The intended use for the Athletic Facilities will be for both Maret and other youth sport organizations consistent with Maret's policies at the 3000 Cathedral Avenue, NW property. During the school year, the Athletic Facilities will not be utilized by Maret prior to 2:00 pm. This presents an opportunity for ECC students or students from nearby schools to use the Athletic Facilities during portions of their school day. In addition, Maret anticipates that there will be the opportunity for structured neighbor access to the Property on weekends and in the early evenings throughout the year.

A description of the anticipated use of the Athletic Facilities and the Property are provided in detail below.

Mid-August to Labor Day

Maret teams will be using the Athletic Facilities Monday – Friday during the hours of 8:00 am – 6:00 pm (generally in three-hour blocks). Coaches and players will arrive at the Property via bus, with 50-60 coaches and players expected at any one time. Maret anticipates that the Property will be made available for structured neighbor access on the weekends and during the early evening hours. No activities are anticipated over the Labor Day weekend.

Fall Season (After Labor Day to Thanksgiving)

On weekdays (Monday – Thursday) in the Fall, Maret expects to utilize the Athletic Facilities after school from 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm, with Wednesday practices and games starting at 2:00 pm. About half of the weekday afternoons are practices with up to 60 players and coaches bused to the site; most game days will include approximately 40 players and coaches along with approximately 50 to 60 spectators. On those rare Friday afternoon/early evening games and

coaches along with 50-60 spectators for each game. Friday afternoon/early evening games and Saturday games (from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm) will occur approximately six times during the Spring season and are expected to draw up to 100 spectators and approximately 40 players and coaches. As noted above, “rivalry” games that could result in up to a couple of hundred spectators and these “rivalry games” (in total) will not account for more than 5% of Maret's total use of the Athletic Facilities.

Maret expects to make the Athletic Facilities available for youth sports organizations only on Sundays from 10:00 am – 6:00 pm. Structured neighbor access is anticipated on the weekends when the Property is not being used for the activities described above. No activities are anticipated over the federal holiday weekend of Memorial Day.

Summer Season (Early June – Mid August)

Maret does not anticipate utilizing the Athletic Facilities during the Summer months, but does anticipate making the facilities available to outside groups who can appropriately use the facilities, while also providing a benefit to the wider community. Potential Summer uses during the week could include a sports/day camp between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm. Participants in these camps are expected to be dropped off in the morning and picked up in the afternoon and not exceed 100 participants.

Maret expects to make the Athletic Facilities available for youth sports organizations in the weekday afternoons from 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm. Structured neighbor access is anticipated on the weekends. No activities are anticipated over the federal 4th of July holiday.

VI. Description of Relief Requested

Pursuant to 11-U DCMR § 203.1(m), the Board may grant special exception relief to allow private schools in the R-1-B Zone, subject to certain considerations. Pursuant to 11-X

category. This use category also does not include the home schooling of children in a dwelling by their parent, guardian, or private tutor. (**emphasis added.**)

The proposed Athletic Facilities are sports facilities that are an integral component of Maret's educational and academic instruction and mission. Maret students that participate on varsity athletics teams satisfy a portion of their physical education requirement that is necessary to graduate.

1. *The Campus Will Not Create Objectionable Impacts on Neighboring Properties (Subtitle U, §203.1(m)(1) and Subtitle X, 104.2).*

The use of the Athletic Fields is not likely to create objectionable impacts on neighboring properties due to noise, traffic, the number of students, or otherwise objectionable conditions.

a. Noise

The design of the Athletic Facilities will include significant landscaping to mitigate views and sounds from the immediately adjacent residential properties. A significant landscape screening buffer will be established along the perimeter of the Property, as depicted in Exhibit A.

As noted above in the discussion of the proposed field usage, no late-evening outdoor events that have the potential to create objectionable noise impacts on the neighborhood will be permitted. The Applicant has agreed that it will not propose, nor will it allow the installation or use of any lights to illuminate the athletic fields. Any lighting provided on the Property will solely be down-lit security lighting necessary to provide a safe environment.

Any public address sound system or buzzers/shot clocks¹ associated with the use and operation of the Athletic Fields will be designed to minimize noise. Maret also agrees to prohibit the use of any artificial noisemakers, such as cowbells or airhorns, by fans/visitors who are watching a game or practice on the athletic fields. For these reasons, the Applicant believes that

¹ Shot clocks are only used during lacrosse games and not in practices.

In addition, the Applicant will prepare a comprehensive transportation review (“CTR”) that will provide a detailed analysis of the traffic and parking impacts of the application. The CTR and the final Transportation Management Plan will be provided to DDOT, the BZA, and community stakeholders at least 45 days in advance of the public hearing in this case.

c. Number of Students

Maret’s use of the Property for Athletic Fields will not result in an increase in the number of Maret students. The maximum number of Maret students practicing or playing on the Athletic Facilities at any one time is not expected to exceed 50-60 players. This level of student activity is not expected to generate objectionable impacts on neighboring properties.

d. Other Objectionable Conditions

The development and use of the Athletic Facilities will not create any other objectionable conditions. The Applicant’s design team have undertaken significant efforts to minimize the impact of the development on the environment and have taken steps that will help improve the current conditions of the Property that negatively impact adjacent property owners.

The development of the baseball diamond and multi-purpose field will include the relocation of Heritage Trees to the north and northwest portions of the Property. The Applicant has prepared a tree relocation plan which will allow for the successful relocation of those trees. In addition, the design and layout of the Athletic Facilities has been carefully undertaken in order to reduce any potential impact on the 12 significant trees (sometimes referred to as the Apostle Trees) that are located on the ECC Campus adjacent to the Property.

3. *After hearing all evidence, the Board of Zoning Adjustment may require additional parking to that required by this title (Subtitle U, §203.1(m)(3)).*

The Applicant believes that the 50 parking spaces provided on the Property, and the implementation of the TDM Plan, will be sufficient to address the demand for parking generated by the proposed use of the Athletics Facilities. The CTR and the final Transportation Management Plan that will be submitted prior to the public hearing in this case will address this issue in greater detail.

4. *The development standards for a private school shall be those of the zone in which the private school is located. (Subtitle X, §104.3).*

The proposed Athletic Facilities satisfy all of the development standards (lot occupancy, building height, retaining walls, yards, pervious surface, etc.) of the R-1-B Zone District, except for the location of parking spaces adjacent to Nebraska Avenue. The satisfaction of the special exception relief standards for the location of the parking spaces is described in Section B below.

5. *In calculating density, the land area shall include not include public streets and alleys, but may include interior private streets and alleys within the school boundaries. (Subtitle X, §104.4).*

No public streets or alleys are included within the boundaries of the Property.

B. Location of Parking Spaces Adjacent to Nebraska Avenue, NW

As noted above, the Applicant is requesting that it be able to locate the parking spaces adjacent to the Nebraska Avenue, NW entrance to the Athletic Facilities. This area is considered to be the front yard of the Property. The Applicant is requesting special exception relief from the parking space location restrictions of Subtitle C, §710.2, pursuant to the enumerated standards of

feet wide and is not conducive to the amount of two-way traffic that would be occurring in accessing the 50 parking spaces on the Property. Therefore, the proposed location of the parking spaces provides a safer alternative for ingress/egress to the Property than a scenario in which the parking spaces were located on the northern portion of the Property.

2. *The parking spaces are located on the Property so as to furnish reasonable and convenient parking facilities for Maret students/faculty/staff, guests, and visitors to the Property (Subtitle C, §710.3(b))*

The location of the proposed parking spaces, adjacent to the Athletics Facilities, provide a simple and easy access point from Nebraska Avenue, NW. Allowing access to the parking spaces from Nebraska Avenue, NW, rather than the internal alley system in Square 2319 also mitigates potential adverse impacts on adjacent properties that have frontage on Utah Avenue, NW, Rittenhouse Street, NW, and 28th Street, NW and share that alley system.

3. *The BZA may impose conditions as to screening, coping, setbacks, fences, the location of entrances and exits, or any other requirement it deems necessary to protect adjacent or nearby property. (Subtitle C, §710.3(c))*

The Applicant believes that the extensive landscape buffer and screening depicted in Exhibit A effectively screens views of the parking spaces and it is not necessary for the Board to impose any additional requirements on the Applicant.

C. Satisfaction of General Special Exception Criteria (Subtitle X, § 901.2)

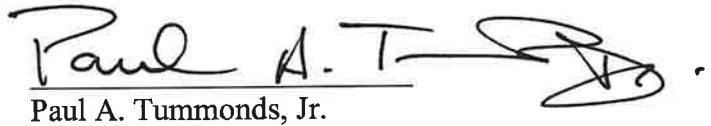
The BZA is authorized to grant special exceptions when granting such a special exception:

- (a) *Will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Maps;*
- (b) *Will not tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps; and*
- (c) *Will meet such special conditions as may be specified in this title.*

X. Conclusion

For all of the above reasons, the Applicant is entitled to the special exception relief requested in this case. The entire Maret Development Team looks forward to continuing to engage with the community and the ANC prior to the Board's public hearing regarding this application.

Respectfully submitted,


Paul A. Tummonds, Jr.