

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Bryan Jones <bdj314159@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 6, 2022 10:58 AM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Cc: Speck, Randy (SMD 3G03); Higgins, John (SMD 3G02)
Subject: BZA Application No. 20643: Maret School Athletic Fields Project

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Dear Chairman Hill,

Good afternoon! I'm writing with **comments in support** of Maret School's proposed fields at the Episcopal Center for Children. The need for athletic fields outstrips supply in our area of DC.

I have been a Ward 4 resident for 12 years, with 10 of those years as a soccer parent. We moved from nearby Arlington, VA, in part to be closer to practices and game locations for my son's school and recreation league, which are both here in DC. As he progressed through the age levels, we drove all over Northwest, usually driving far longer distances than we had while soccer parenting in Arlington. To drive back and forth to the Palisades neighborhood, at the literal opposite side of the District, for dinner-hour practices seemed both a waste of time and a shame for rush-hour traffic. In the rare years that our games were in Ward 4, our team had a home-team advantage at the poorly maintained Carter Barron fields, where a large hole in the field provided a barrier to the opposing teams.

A friend of mine who currently coaches her two young sons' teams shared her frustration with field availability, noting that finding practice time on fields is "nearly impossible," and that she schedules all team games in Takoma Park, MD, since there are no good times for home games available here in Ward 4.

Planning an additional field at the ECC site seems like a reasonable and needed addition. Most of the soccer fields we drove to during our decade of sports were in residential neighborhoods, and it was a great way to get to know the city. Discovering such gems as nearby Broad Branch market was all due to being welcomed to various fields around town. Parking was rarely a problem at such fields -- especially in locations such as Wilson High School along Nebraska Avenue, NW -- which have large frontages.

Thank you for reading,
Bryan Jones
6805 6th St NW
Washington, DC 20012

703-585-7087
bdj314159@gmail.com