

February 6, 2021

Chairman Frederick L. Hill
Bureau of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chairman Hill,

I am writing in support of the Maret School's application for an Athletic Fields Project at the Episcopal Center for Children located at 5901 Utah Avenue, NW (BZA Application No. 20643). I have lived in Washington, DC for 27 years and currently live in ANC 3G/Ward 4. All three of my children were born here in the District and attended Maret School; currently one is an 8th grader, another is an 11th grader and one recent alumni. All three of my children have participated in a variety of sports at a number of locations around Washington, DC over the last 15 plus years, so we are familiar with the shortage of playing facilities in the District.

We see Maret's partnership with the Episcopal Center for Children (ECC) as a win-win-win scenario. The athletic fields as proposed at ECC would meet Maret's long-term need for regulation-size fields for its high school baseball, soccer, lacrosse, and football programs. The ECC gets much needed support for its mission that will enable it to resume programming to meet the needs of the student population it serves. Finally, the people in the neighborhood and kids from around the District get access to quality athletic field space in the District that can be shared both by neighbors and a variety of youth sports organizations.

Maret School's mission focuses on the importance of community and the School has always sought to be a good neighbor and member of the DC community. Over the last 20 years Maret has developed long standing relationships with dozens of organizations in the District, including Horizons Greater Washington, an organization for which Maret has hosted six-week summer enrichment program for students from under-resourced communities in Washington, DC. Most importantly, Maret has demonstrated that commitment by offering its field and gyms to outside community groups, providing much-needed recreational space to DC residents.

Finally, this initiative will provide additional environmental benefits to neighbors in the form of enhanced stormwater runoff mitigation. Much as residents of Woodley Park value Maret as a community partner and neighborhood resource, we feel residents who live nearby the ECC will come to appreciate this environmental investment as well as the School's regular open communication and responsiveness to their concerns.

I am sure some neighbors have concerns about change in their community. Maret's proposal, working in partnership with the ECC, will have a much more minimal impact than some other kinds of changes that could occur if other types of more commercially-minded projects took over this space. What is clear is that change will occur, regardless of neighbors preferences. We feel strongly that Maret's intentional approach and history of community engagement will create minimal impact while providing significant benefit for the community, as well as kids from around the District. Thanks for your time and consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

Nate Tibbits