

Celeste Regan ([celesteregans@gmail.com](mailto:celesteregans@gmail.com)) and Sam Smith ([ssmith7673@aol.com](mailto:ssmith7673@aol.com))  
5833 Nebraska Ave NW Washington, DC 20015  
202.363.4280 (landline) and 202.716.2350 (cell)

January 17, 2022

Board of Zoning Adjustment  
District of Columbia Office of Zoning  
441 4<sup>th</sup> St NW #200-S  
Washington, DC 20001

ANC 3/4G  
Northwest Station  
PO Box 6252  
Washington, DC 20015

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

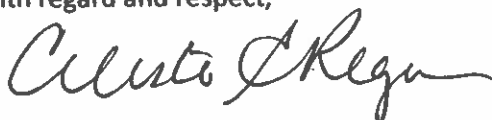
Our purpose in writing this letter is to support the concerns better-articulated by our neighbors, who also are adjacent to, across from or in the streets surrounding the Episcopal Center for Children, about land being proposed to be developed into a sports complex.

Of primary concern to us are the items noted below:

1. Environmental insensitivity:
  - a. The impact of replacing the natural vegetation and (re)moving about 40 mature trees of the area with artificial turf and hardscaping re: parking spaces is inconsistent with the District's other work on improving the environment. The heat island effect, off-gassing and particulate distribution of 3.7 acres of artificial turf would not be insignificant or mitigated by other factors.
  - b. The proposal indicates that the athletic fields would require a 35 foot elevation change. Even if one assumes all related stormwater issues can be handled through the proposal, the proposed retaining walls' height would dwarf the scale of the nearby homes.
2. The proposal seeks too much lot coverage and activity on this small site without adequate visual and sound buffers.
  - a. The maximum sound level in this R-1-B district is 60dB. Sporting events and activities, in all likelihood, exceed that level regularly.
  - b. The request for zoning relief to allow this activity in an R-1-B district runs counter to zoning principles. The request for this special exception to allow parking 50 cars in the "front yard" facing Nebraska Avenue is not in keeping with the single-family character of this neighborhood and not in keeping with what had been the field-use activities of the ECC, activities that were within the character principles of the zoning.
3. The increase in traffic from the proposal is a safety concern, particularly during weekday afternoon use which is concurrent with commuter traffic.

As nearly two-decade residents directly across from one of the Episcopal Center for Children's buildings and the field, we had been grateful for the mission and the year-round activities. We were surprised and saddened to learn it was closing just before the end of the 2018-2019 school year. However, with the collective talent available in the District and among the parties of interest, commitment to meeting the objectives of 'good' land use, and early, effective communications, we believe the objectives sought by this special exception – income for ECC and playing fields for Maret and possibly others – can and should be met with alternative options.

With regard and respect,



Board of Zoning Adjustment  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO.20643  
EXHIBIT NO.43