

To: ANC 3/4 G and BZA

From: Jon Axelrod

Re: Maret Application

I have been a friend of the Field for 47 years while living on Rittenhouse Street. I enjoy seeing the fox, deer, and raccoons living and playing on the Field. I enjoy seeing the hawks and eagle soaring over the Field. I even enjoy hearing the woodpecker in the trees on the Field. All that will be gone under the Maret plan. If I had the power, I would stop the Maret proposal and ask ECC to work with its neighbors to try to save ECC and its Field. But it is too late for that.

I reject Maret's contention that the Field will become a community "asset." In the context of the Maret plan, the "community" is like a dart board. The families within the 200 foot perimeter mandated by the BZA Regulations are the center, worth 10 points. As that perimeter expands, the rings are worth fewer points. And at some distance from the center, the dart scores no points. I am in the 10 point center of the dart board. Real estate people have estimated that homes in the center will lose about 10% of their value. One house on Rittenhouse Street (across the alley from the Field) sold in October 2021, the price reduced because the realtor's promotional material included a one page summary of the Maret proposal. We face 18 months of construction problems and then maybe 48 years of commercial Field use, with noise, traffic, and environmental degradation. And in Maret's December 15 proposal, community children, even those in the 1 point ring, cannot use the Field unless they are Maret students or sufficiently good athletes to pay into one of the athletic teams or leagues which will rent from Maret. There will be no time allowed for children (and parents) to use the Field, unlike the Lafayette School field where kids can, and do, play freely and uncoached, just to have fun. In sum, Maret gets the "asset" and we get the liabilities.

When ANC Commissioners toured the Field on January 13 and saw the 12 foot height of the projected retaining wall and the six foot fence above that, and then netting, Commissioner Gore's appropriate response was "Oh, my God." The wall and fence will dwarf the houses on 28<sup>th</sup> Street. Those neighbors will not be able to look to the Field and see children playing games. They will look and see a wall. Maret's plan may meet zoning requirements. But that does not make it right or fair.

There are other aspects of the Maret plan which may satisfy minimum District of Columbia requirements. Among these are traffic plans, water management, and the use of artificial turf. Maret has not yet provided enough information to determine whether they meet minimum standards or whether minimum standards satisfy the best long-term interest of the community.

