

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** OCTOBER 24, 2022

**TO:** CHAIR MACEK AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

**FROM:** JACK BROWAND, DEPUTY DIRECTOR *JB*  
RECREATION, PARKS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

**SUBJECT:** SUP#2022-00042 – 00046 / ATHLETIC FIELD LIGHTS, HAMMOND FIELD

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### ISSUE:

City Council, Planning Commission and City staff have received many letters and email correspondence related to the athletic field lighting SUP requests which are part of the record for the field lights SUPs. Though most are focused on the proposed lighting, some have noted other issues of concern. These issues include trash and litter left after field events, abandoned vehicles, alleged drug activity, noisy groups of people, including groups using the field without permits to use them.

In discussions with representatives of Seminary Hill, the focus of these complaints have been on the athletic facilities associated with FC Hammond Middle School. Staff investigated these issues further to determine if any formal complaints had been reported to the City regarding this location. Staff found that approximately 21 complaints were made through the City's 311 number and another 12 calls were made directly to the Alexandria Police Department. All these 33 calls were received between January 1, 2021 to October 10, 2022 and concerned the FC Hammond School property, and the adjacent streets including Taney Ave., Pegram St. and Lasalle Ave. These issues are not directly related to the lighting as no lighting exists on the athletic facilities today. Staff acknowledges these are important issues to be addressed but they are related to operational issues and not a result of field lighting.

Specifically, only a handful of the 21 complaints through 311 were related to field use (they concerned trash). The City has implemented activities reducing trash collection on the field. A number of the APD calls concerned perceived use of the fields without a permit. Field use is allowed without permit during posted operating hours (sunrise to sunset), and there are procedures already in place to address instances when unauthorized field use occurs. Because use of field lights requires a permit, the unauthorized use of a field is not exacerbated by the addition of lights.

### CC:

Karl Moritz, Director, Planning & Zoning  
Robert M. Kerns, AICP, Chief of Development  
Dirk H. Geratz, Principal Planner  
Abigail Harwell, Urban Planner  
James Spengler, Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities

### 311 Service Requests

Hammond Middle School; Taney Ave.; N. Pgram St.

Date Range: Opened Date equals Custom (1/1/2021 to 10/10/2022)

Service Request	Case #	Description	Date	Time
Alexandria Police Department Comments, Complaints, or Inquiries	22-00010990	This vehicle has been in this location for roughly 3 months multiple neighbors have reported on it reported that there's been crime drug dealing etc. in our neighborhood the car hasn't been checked to see if it's been part of another crime and it just sits there and rots it needs to be towed away this is not a public parking lot	4/21/2022	6:54 PM
Median Maintenance	22-00006802	From: EMALINE HENARD <ehenard@msn.com> Cc: Alicia Hart <alicia.hart@acps.k12.va.us> Subject: [EXTERNAL]Trash-higher and deeper! You don't often get email from ehenard@msn.com. Learn why this is important<http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> Mayor Wilson, I am writing again about the burgeoning trash problem on public property on North Pogram St. from the corner of Hammond School (N. Pickett and N. Pogram corner) down the long block to the beginning of private homes. I wrote previously from emmy.henard@acps.k12.va.us<mailto:emmy.henard@acps.k12.va.us>. Spoke with Oscar Mendoza Park Oration Division will handle. The situation has worsened since I last wrote. Dr. Hart, to whom your forwarded my email, has suggested that the land in question may not be school property. To whom does it belong? Bottles (many broken), plastic in all its forms, a large, thick, spongy wet thing about teen feet long that looks like a beheaded dragon, tin cans, a grocery cart, construction	3/8/2022	3:56 PM
	22-00019182	The entire sidewalk from Hammond/ Pogram down to the houses has completely overgrown bushes and shrubs. Lots of ticks and trash as well. I request this area be mowed when the school is moved on the next cycle.	7/3/2022	3:56 PM
Noise Issues	21-00015455	Loud vehicle noises from speeders. Drag-racing.	6/24/2021	7:32 PM
	22-00021414	For more than three hours Saturday night, starting around 8pm and continuing until well after 11pm, there was unrelenting noise from cars. The noise was all along S. Pickett Street and out onto the surrounding streets. All seemed to be in violation of Virginia's loud muffler law and at very least all disturbed the peace. What was going on? Was the gathering sanctioned by the City? If so, why? If not, why was it not stopped?	7/24/2022	7:32 PM
Parking Comments, Complaints or Inquiries	21-00006244	Late model Nissan with north carolina plates HKY 2457 appears to be abandoned. Parked a week ago and hasn't moved since. Not seen prior to a week ago.	3/24/2021	9:05 AM
	21-00011991	Possible abandoned car (Ford Pickup, 2 door) parked on Sutton Pl near N Pogram. Has been stationary since early to mid April 2021. No sign of an owner. License Plate Virginia UHA-3840 OCT 20.	5/20/2021	4:33 PM
	21-00028017	A grey Toyota Highlander with Va plates. This car seems abandoned. They do not lie here and there appears to have oil leaking out of it. We also need a new no parking, permit sign, ours was stolen. There are signs on the other side which is the same parking area, but a new sign would help. There are people parking and doing drugs, selling drugs and having sex while parked in addition to leaving theirs cars for days.	11/8/2021	8:02 AM
	21-00029251	There is a black Hyundai Tucson that has been parked on the North facing side of Pogram for several weeks. It has Maryland plates and a city bang tag, but has not moved in well over 72 hours. I have talked with neighbors and no one knows the owner of the vehicle.	11/22/2021	11:02 PM
	22-00002426	our neighborhood is getting bombarded by cars being left for days and sometimes truckers parking the semis 24 hours or more. I have pics of the same cars parked on north Pickett for days, seemingly abandoned and some from apartment complexes down the road. we have ppl breaking into cars and homes here, doing and selling drugs. we need to have this parking situation taken care of before it gets worse. some are parked illegally either not in parking spot or again leaving them for days.	1/21/2022	11:52 AM
	22-00012299	It has been there for months with tickets doesn't belong to anyone in the neighborhood. Needs to be towed, not a public parking lot and those spaces are needed for the residents and for activities at the school. It's a Gold Toyota Corolla with VA Tags last number is XFR 841 (plate is dented and can't make out last 2 digits completely). Corner of Lasalle and N Pickett.	5/4/2022	9:00 AM
Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities Comments, Complaints, or Inquiries	21-00013733	What has been going on with the tennis court at N. Pickett and Pogram? I don't see a sign posted with information about the project. I left a message at Hammond M.S. a couple months ago and have not received the call back that was promised. I don't remember being asked for input concerning this project. Please provide all information, who, what, when, why, how, etc. for this project.	6/8/2021	7:51 AM
Traffic Sign	21-00030226	I am resubmitting because the original response to me was blank. Many neighbors have witnessed drug use and sales on the streets that surround Hammond MS. Could we please get a drug free school zone sign or signs for the surrounding area? Similar to the ones near Jefferson-Houston's surrounding blocks?	12/6/2021	2:54 PM
Alex311 (Other) Comments, Complaints and Inquiries	21-00014035	Every time we are open for school on the weekdays, the field is full of trash from the weekend games. Trash and plastic bottles are left all over the field. This is an on going thing that has happened for years and it looks like no one has complained because it keeps happening. Is there a chance coaches can be held accountable for leaving the field with trash after their games are over? There needs to be a system in place to enforce people to pick up their trash after practices or games over the weekend. It is not okay to open the school with trash left from over the weekend or during evening practices. Maybe there also needs to be a better trash system. There are only trash bins and no recycling bins to encourage the recycling of plastic or aluminum. The bins are also not cleaned out often enough because the trash bins are overflowing as well.	6/10/2021	4:17 AM
Graffiti Removal	21-00004558	Graffiti is located on a brick wall closer to the track/turf field.	3/4/2021	4:09:00 PM
	21-00004575	Potential gang images (1 % other symbol JTC \$)	3/4/2021	6:50:00 PM
	21-00009517	The graffiti is located on a rock in the front of the school next to the large tree. The graffiti is on the back side of the rock.	4/27/2021	8:38:00 AM
	21-00009545	Need graffiti removed from a large rock (decoration) in front of the school. (near benches). The graffiti is facing the building.	4/27/2021	11:19:00 AM
	21-00014709	The graffiti is located in two locations. In the front of the school there is a large rock. Look behind the large rock and you will see the green graffiti. The other location is the walk path headed toward the soccer field. Look on the last rock on the left and you will see the graffiti.	6/16/2021	2:17:00 PM
	21-00014713	The first request for the removal of the graffiti was submitted on April 27th (below is info)  Request Number: 21-00009545 Request Type: Alex311 (Other) Comments, Complaints and Inquiries Location: 4646 SEMINARY RD Request Submitted: 4/27/2021 Estimated Resolution Date: 5/4/2021	6/16/2021	2:55:00 PM
Park Maintenance	21-00014034	We tried to pick up as much of the trash and bottles left on the field ground from the weekend when we came to work on Tuesday. People are not using the trash bins to throw away their trash, they are just leaving them on the floor. Any chance all trash can be picked up before school hours open so that our students don't haven't to play around trash.	6/10/2021	4:06 AM

\*\* RPCA Note: Field use is allowed without permit during posted operating hours (sunrise to sunset)

**APD Calls****Hammond Middle School; Taney Ave.; N. Prgram St.****Date Range: Opened Date equals Custom (1/1/2021 to 10/10/2022)**

Call Category	Call #	Date	Time	APD Report
Disorderly Conduct	21-028343	4/26/2021	7:04 PM	All for people playing on the field without a premit
Disorderly Conduct	21-028899	4/28/2021	7:21 PM	
Disorderly Conduct	21-030947	5/5/2021	6:47 PM	
Noise Violation	21-044238	6/19/2021	5:32 PM	Most of these were for big groups around the school not always associated to soccer field
Noise Violation	21-050314	7/10/2021	9:53 PM	
Noise Violation	21-056300	7/31/2021	10:34 PM	
Noise Violation	21-057397	8/4/2021	9:09 PM	
Noise Violation	21-057771	8/5/2021	11:19 PM	
Noise Violation	22-052298	7/3/2022	11:27 PM	1 was a party in the parking lot and the other 2 were for soccer games
Noise Violation	22-054342	7/10/2022	8:54 PM	
Noise Violation	22-070724	9/1/2022	9:01 PM	
Trespassing	22-070409	8/31/2022	9:10 PM	Kids playing soccer

**\*\* RPCA Note: Field use is allowed without permit during posted operating hours (sunrise to sunset)**

[EXTERNAL]re special use permit #2022-00046

Beltran Emelia <emelia@beltran-associatesrealty.com>

Sun 10/23/2022 12:54 PM

To: CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov <CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov>; PlanComm  
<PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from emelia@beltran-associatesrealty.com.

[Learn why this is important](#)

I am the owner of E Duncan Ave.  
So bright lites , noise, parking issues.  
Against.

Emelia Beltran  
Beltran & Associates Realty  
Broker  
Office 703.2418821  
Mobile 571.230.3789  
emelia@beltran-associatesrealty.com

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## [EXTERNAL]GW ATHLETIC FIELD LIGHTING PROPOSAL

Will Cameron <patuxentbranch@gmail.com>

Sat 10/22/2022 3:37 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Justin Wilson <justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov>; Jack Browand <Jack.Browand@alexandriava.gov>; James Spengler <James.Spengler@alexandriava.gov>; Abigail Harwell <Abigail.Harwell@alexandriava.gov>; Dirk Geratz <Dirk.Geratz@alexandriava.gov>; willie.bailey@acps.k12.va.us <willie.bailey@acps.k12.va.us>; Jacinta.greene@acps.k12.va.us <Jacinta.greene@acps.k12.va.us>; michelle.rief@acps.k12.va.us <michelle.rief@acps.k12.va.us>

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Alexandria Leadership,

My concerns are absolutely aligned with many of my neighbors' environmental issues but I have a few more objections to add. There are certainly issues of extended play time, extended noise/light (pollution), and increasing parking issues that the turf fields with lights will create. Having also been around for the construction of the existing fields, we (neighbors) had almost a year of dust, noise, and debris that covered our homes, vehicles, etc.. Additionally, I remember calling and writing to complain about soccer balls hitting our landscaping, our homes, and even us on occasion, which forced the city to add the large netting to block a majority of the balls from pummeling our properties. It was a much needed afterthought. The direction of the goals were also never considered so since that time I have lost some confidence in our planning groups. I digress. There are possibly 100 nearby households that pay well over 8-10k in taxes annually (and vote) that would be directly affected, Our planning groups (you) seem to be alarmingly dislocated from the impacts we, as residents, could potentially face once again. I am also skeptical of future home value with such an immense and physically disruptive project being permanently installed directly across my street. I am adamantly against the new fields and lights.

Sincerely,  
William Cameron  
510 E. Glendale Ave., 22301

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## [EXTERNAL]Resident Concerns Regarding Proposed GW Field Lights and Turf

KEARNEY STEELE <cksa1@comcast.net>

Mon 10/24/2022 2:52 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Abigail Harwell <Abigail.Harwell@alexandriava.gov>; Justin Wilson <justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov>; willie.bailey@acps.k12.va.us <willie.bailey@acps.k12.va.us>; James Spengler <James.Spengler@alexandriava.gov>; Jacinta.greene@acps.k12.va.us <Jacinta.greene@acps.k12.va.us>; michelle.rief@acps.k12.va.us <michelle.rief@acps.k12.va.us>; Brian Collins <brian.c1@me.com>; sglily@live.com <sglily@live.com>

You don't often get email from cksa1@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Members of the Planning Committee:

I share and agree with the concerns presented below and hope that you will seriously consider the effects on our community prior to voting.

Thank you for your consideration,

Charlotte Kearney Steele  
East Glendale Resident

**From:** Rob Benedict <[benerg03@gmail.com](mailto:benerg03@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, October 20, 2022 5:57 AM

**To:** [PlanComm@alexandriava.gov](mailto:PlanComm@alexandriava.gov) <[PlanComm@alexandriava.gov](mailto:PlanComm@alexandriava.gov)>; [abigail.harwell@alexandriava.gov](mailto:abigail.harwell@alexandriava.gov) <[abigail.harwell@alexandriava.gov](mailto:abigail.harwell@alexandriava.gov)>; [jack.browand@alexandria.gov](mailto:jack.browand@alexandria.gov) <[jack.browand@alexandria.gov](mailto:jack.browand@alexandria.gov)>; [justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov](mailto:justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov) <[justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov](mailto:justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov)>; [willie.bailey@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:willie.bailey@acps.k12.va.us) <[willie.bailey@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:willie.bailey@acps.k12.va.us)>; [james.spengler@alexandriava.gov](mailto:james.spengler@alexandriava.gov) <[james.spengler@alexandriava.gov](mailto:james.spengler@alexandriava.gov)>; [jacinta.greene@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:jacinta.greene@acps.k12.va.us) <[jacinta.greene@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:jacinta.greene@acps.k12.va.us)>; [michelle.rief@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:michelle.rief@acps.k12.va.us) <[michelle.rief@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:michelle.rief@acps.k12.va.us)>; Brian Collins <[brian.c1@me.com](mailto:brian.c1@me.com)>; [sglily@live.com](mailto:sglily@live.com) <[sglily@live.com](mailto:sglily@live.com)>

**Subject:** RESIDENT CONCERN WITH GW ATHLETIC FIELD LIGHTING PROPOSAL

Alexandria Leadership,

I have concerns regarding the cost, environmental impact and safety of the overall proposals to install lights and plastic turf around the GW athletic fields near E Glendale Ave. In addition, the lighting proposal has the potential to cause light spillage that could drastically impact the quality of life of over 20 homes and two residential apartment buildings that abut the field on E Glendale Ave. Further, I believe that a thorough examination of these factors that is coordinated by the appropriate Alexandria City Departments and Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) needs to be conducted prior to rushing through a decision. I believe this analysis will bear out that the proposal is not beneficial for the community and other options are preferable. Below are some key points I think should be addressed and considered:

### ***Environmental, Health and Cost Concerns***

A simple internet search yields hundreds of results of communities at odds with the installation of turf fields. Some of these arguments are pre-construction but many are post-construction and use. Communities across the country are recognizing the potential health impacts and are having buyer's remorse after the fact with turf fields. **To my knowledge it doesn't appear the city has done any unique analysis on the environmental or health impacts of these replacements. If this is the case, the city should conduct such analysis**

**before moving forward with turf replacements.** If I am mistaken and the city has completed research this should be shared with the impacted residents.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently released a PFAS action plan which looks to regulate the very chemicals that are known to be part of artificial turf fields. This action plan includes various on-going studies on the safety of these chemicals, potential minimum exposure levels both in air and water for these chemicals as well as potentially listing these materials as a toxic substance. **It seems irresponsible to move forward with these questions of health and safety remaining unanswered and would potentially open the city to liability down the line.**

In addition to the lack of study on environmental and health impacts it appears that based on conversations with the Planning and Zoning Department and the RPCA, it appears that more cost-efficient alternatives have not yet been studied. **The city should conduct a full cost benefit assessment on the replacements including the impact on property values of the surrounding homes, the impacts on parking, increased traffic, and noise.** Traffic on Glendale Avenue has already reached a point of concern particularly when school gets out. Adding multiple night activities on a street that was not designed to act as a major thoroughfare will create safety issues and further restrict already limited parking.

### ***Coordination of efforts and dual tracking of turf and lighting decisions***

I am sure it is not intentional but the dual tracking of both the “lighting proposal” and the “turf proposal” with two differing bodies on seemingly the same time track is confusing and a bureaucratic nightmare for residents to navigate. It is tough to track which body is responsible for what and this leads to concerned citizens throwing up their hands and giving up. This was demonstrated by the dualling (but ultimately rescheduled) meetings of the planning commission and ACPS in early October. **We ask that these groups better coordinate the “lighting” and “turf” proposals because to date it seems the process is meant to confuse and dissuade public input.**

### ***Light Pollution for the residents of East Glendale Ave***

In addition to fears about the turf itself, the potential for light to impact the residents of E Glendale Ave is a very real and large concern. Regarding the light spillage issue the city’s own Special Use Permit (SUP) request (#2022-00043) appears to acknowledge the issues of light spillage and flippantly dismiss the issue. The request states the following (penultimate paragraph of page 5):

*Light spill beyond the school property up to 65 feet from the northern end of the field is possible, with the light limited to the sidewalk on the north side of E Glendale Avenue (Graphic 1). However, there are existing street trees along the south side of E Glendale Avenue which will help to minimize the light spillage as the trees continue to mature.*

Note – The SUP text mistakenly refers to Graphic 1 instead of Graphic 2, illustrating the “Aerial Night Rendering” of the GWMS proposed lighting impacts. That said graphic 2 shows a 65 ft measurement at the north end of the field along E Glendale Ave. The surrounding neighborhood is darkened in Graphic 2, obscuring that the 65 ft marker falls within the front yard of the homes along E. Glendale Ave. Many of the residents of E Glendale have measured the distance from the field and it is approximately 50ft. This means that the light spillage will cover the front half of the over 20 rowhomes and two large residential rental buildings that abut the fields. These row homes feature a master bedroom on the second floor overlooking the GW fields. These bedrooms look over the trees the SUP claims will block the light.

**The SUP claims the existing trees will minimize the light spillage, but this is not accurate as the tree coverage is limited. Additionally, these trees are small and have been planted under powerlines, requiring annual trimming. They will not block the light from the larger towers, even as they mature.** The installed light fixtures will be 60 ft tall, meaning it will be more than a decade before the trees are remotely effective at minimizing light spillage on to E. Glendale Ave. **Put simply the SUP's assumptions on light spillage are flawed or purposely downplaying the findings to justify the project.**

### ***The Other Fields at George Washington Middle School being considered***

I would also ask that if the City and ACPS were to move forward with lights and turf at GW middle despite the concerns we listed, please consider upgrading the run-down fields at the corner of Braddock and Mt. Vernon Avenue as an alternative. This would expand the availability of quality fields available (two new fields could fit there easily) and impact less residents since that area is largely lined with businesses, has ample parking, and a streetlight regulating traffic into said parking (unlike Glendale Ave.).

Specifically, there are over 20 rowhomes and two large residential apartment buildings on E Glendale Ave that abut the proposed location whereas upgrading the run-down fields at the corner of Braddock and Mt. Vernon Avenue would only impact 7 row homes and businesses which would not be impacted. **I am aware other locations were considered but I urge you to reconsider the E Glendale proposal in light of these valid concerns.**

### ***Conclusion***

I would ask that the city push pause and more closely examine the actual need for lights and plastic turf at the E Glendale location and the environmental hazards and health risks to children of plastic turf. **As member of our community, I want the children and youth to have ample safe places to play sports but feel the city is rushing important decisions that impact many constituents.**

My neighbors and I look forward to the opportunity to work closely with the Planning and Zoning Department, RPCA, and ACPS to find a solution that is both cost and environmentally conscious. I express the above concerns in an effort to find the best possible solution for the homeowners and youth of our community.

Thanks for your consideration,

Rob and Lauren Benedict  
Residents of East Glendale Ave.

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## Samantha Lockwood

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**Sent:** Wednesday, October 26, 2022 4:45 PM  
**To:** Samantha Lockwood  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Lights for after-dark play at Jefferson-Houston  
**Attachments:** Light Fixture Photo.pdf

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**From:** Jack Browand <[Jack.Browand@alexandriava.gov](mailto:Jack.Browand@alexandriava.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 7, 2022 10:52 AM  
**To:** Bethany Znidersic <[Bethany.Znidersic@alexandriava.gov](mailto:Bethany.Znidersic@alexandriava.gov)>; Dirk Geratz <[Dirk.Geratz@alexandriava.gov](mailto:Dirk.Geratz@alexandriava.gov)>; Abigail Harwell <[Abigail.Harwell@alexandriava.gov](mailto:Abigail.Harwell@alexandriava.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL]Lights for after-dark play at Jefferson-Houston

FYI

Jack Browand, Deputy Director, Park Services, CPM CPRP  
Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities  
1108 Jefferson Street  
Alexandria VA 22314  
703.746.5504 (office)  
202.497.7452 (cell)

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**From:** Tony LaColla <[anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov](mailto:anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 7, 2022 9:13 AM  
**To:** Dino Drudi (DPI Contact) <[dino.drudi@gmail.com](mailto:dino.drudi@gmail.com)>  
**Cc:** James Spengler <[James.Spengler@alexandriava.gov](mailto:James.Spengler@alexandriava.gov)>; Jack Browand <[Jack.Browand@alexandriava.gov](mailto:Jack.Browand@alexandriava.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL]Lights for after-dark play at Jefferson-Houston

Responses to your questions are underlined after each question.

1. The report says that the lighting will not spill upwards (dark sky) or beyond 30 ft. on the south side of the field facing Cameron St., but because the light poles are higher than the one-story wing of the Jefferson-Houston K-8 School along the 200-block of N. West St. (the east side of the field), will there be lateral light spillage sideways from the poles into the two-storey houses and apartments along the 200-block of N. West St. or the corner of N. West & Cameron St.? The proposed lighting is equipped with shields that direct the light toward the playing surface to avoid lateral light spillage. Page 175 of SUP2023-00044 indicated that 0 footcandles will be reached 50 feet east of the field endline. The school will provide additional screening for the neighborhood.
2. Because the light poles are higher than the two-storey wing of the Jefferson-Houston K-8 School facing Queen St., will there be lateral light spillage from the poles, esp. the ones at the eastern end of the field, into the two- and three-storey houses near the corner of N. West & Queen St.? The proposed lighting is equipped with shields that direct the light toward the playing surface to avoid lateral light spillage. Page 175 of

SUP2023-00044 indicated that 0 footcandles will be reached 35 feet north of the field sideline and 50 feet east of the field endline. The school will provide additional screening for the neighborhood.

3. If, due to defective, broken, or malfunctioning equipment, there is light spillage into residences, how rapidly will the Dept. of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Activities rectify the situation? The City will work with residents to resolve issues related to defective, broken and/or malfunctioning equipment as soon as possible based on the specific issues. The lighting controls include a feature that sends an alert if the system has broken parts. This will assist in identifying and diagnosing issues and expediting repairs.
4. Can technical information about how these light fixtures function with respect to light dispersal be provided? Technical information regarding the proposed light dispersal is provided on pages 175-182 of SUP 2022-00044. Additional information can be provided with further clarification on the type of information requested.
5. Can shielding be installed behind and on the side of the lighting fixtures to block light spillage toward residences? The light fixtures as proposed include shielding to direct the light to the playing surface. An image of the light fixture is attached.
6. On frame 182 out of 184 of the .pdf version of the staff report, the illustration shows four light beams onto the playing field from the two mid-field lights, consistent with their each having four lamps, but the four goal-line lights have three light beams illuminating different parts of the field, even though they are only supposed to have two lamps each. Consistent with the staff report analysis, the graphic on page 182 depicts the pole and lamp configurations. The Equipment List for Areas Shown table on the right side identifies four poles, poles S1, S3, S4, and S6, each having three luminaires (light fixtures) per pole and two poles, poles S2 and S5, each having four luminaries (light fixtures)

**Tony LaColla, AICP**

Land Use Services Division Chief  
City of Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning  
301 King Street, Room 2100  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
703.746.3829 (desk)  
571.329.1896 (cell)  
[anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov](mailto:anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov)

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**From:** Dino Drudi <[dino.drudi@gmail.com](mailto:dino.drudi@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2022 4:54 PM

**To:** Tony LaColla <[anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov](mailto:anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov)>

**Cc:** James Spengler <[James.Spengler@alexandriava.gov](mailto:James.Spengler@alexandriava.gov)>; Jack Browand <[Jack.Browand@alexandriava.gov](mailto:Jack.Browand@alexandriava.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL]Lights for after-dark play at Jefferson-Houston

I have studied the staff report and have several questions/concerns mainly about lateral light spillage:

- The report says that the lighting will not spill upwards (dark sky) or beyond 30 ft. on the south side of the field facing Cameron St., but because the light poles are higher than the one-story wing of the Jefferson-Houston K-8 School along the 200-block of N. West St. (the east side of the field), will there be lateral light spillage sideways from the poles into the two-storey houses and apartments along the 200-block of N. West St. or the corner of N. West & Cameron St.?
- Because the light poles are higher than the two-storey wing of the Jefferson-Houston K-8 School facing Queen St., will there be lateral light spillage from the poles, esp. the ones at the eastern end of the field, into the two- and three-storey houses near the corner of N. West & Queen St.?
- If, due to defective, broken, or malfunctioning equipment, there is light spillage into residences, how rapidly will the Dept. of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Activities rectify the situation?
- Can technical information about how these light fixtures function with respect to light dispersal be provided?
- Can shielding be installed behind and on the side of the lighting fixtures to block light spillage toward residences?

- On frame 182 out of 184 of the .pdf version of the staff report, the illustration shows four light beams onto the playing field from the two mid-field lights, consistent with their each having four lamps, but the four goal-line lights have three light beams illuminating different parts of the field, even though they are only supposed to have two lamps each.

I would appreciate these questions and any responses be included in the materials provided to the Planning Commission.

Thank you.

Dino Drudi  
315 N. West St.

On Thu, Sep 29, 2022 at 1:26 PM Tony LaColla <[anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov](mailto:anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov)> wrote:

Here is a link to the docket with hyperlinks to the staff reports.

[https://legistar.granicus.com/alexandria/meetings/2022/10/2343\\_A\\_Planning\\_Commission\\_22-10-06\\_Docket.pdf](https://legistar.granicus.com/alexandria/meetings/2022/10/2343_A_Planning_Commission_22-10-06_Docket.pdf)

**Tony LaColla, AICP**

Land Use Services Division Chief

City of Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning

301 King Street, Room 2100

Alexandria, VA 22314

703.746.3829 (desk)

571.329.1896 (cell)

[anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov](mailto:anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov)

---

**From:** Dino Drudi <[dino.drudi@gmail.com](mailto:dino.drudi@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2022 12:21 PM

**To:** Tony LaColla <[anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov](mailto:anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov)>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Lights for after-dark play at Jefferson-Houston

You don't often get email from [dino.drudi@gmail.com](mailto:dino.drudi@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Your presentation at yesterday evening's federation meeting covered the playing fields for which the Dept. of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Activities would like to install lights for after-dark play which will be at

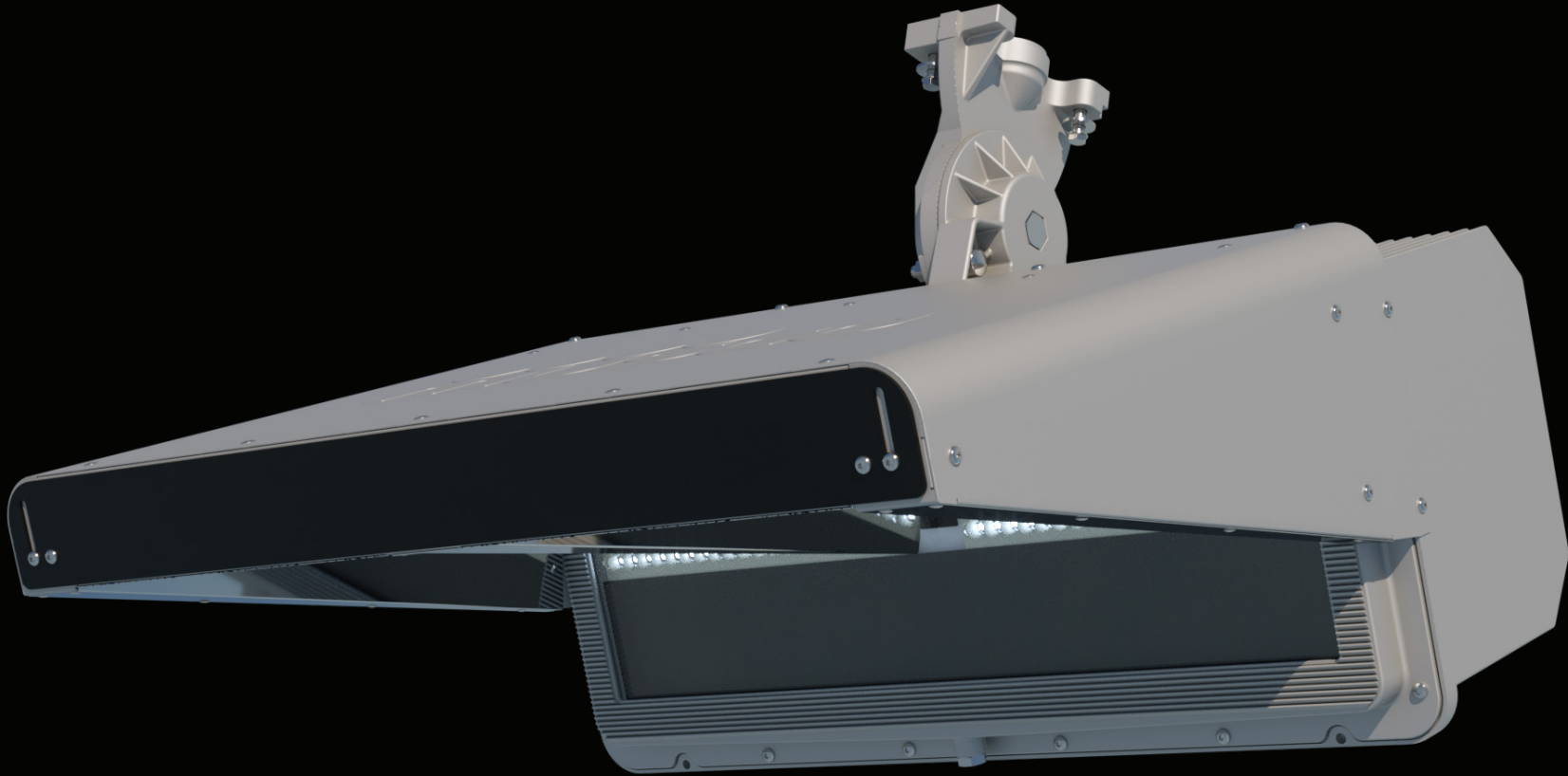
Planning Commission next week. Are the materials, incl. the staff report, available now in paper copy for me to pick up at city hall so I can review and share w/ the members of my association?

My particular concern is how the lighting will be placed and how it is designed to make sure it doesn't become a nuisance for those living across the street.

Thanks.

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## Samantha Lockwood

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 26, 2022 4:55 PM  
**To:** Samantha Lockwood  
**Subject:** Invitation to Community Meeting: GW Field Improvements

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**From:** SG Lily <sglily@live.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 24, 2022 5:49 PM  
**To:** Arte'a Funderburk <artea.funderburk@acps.k12.va.us>; Brian Collins <brian.c1@me.com>; John Finnigan <john.finnigan@acps.k12.va.us>; willie.bailey@acps.k12.va.us <willie.bailey@acps.k12.va.us>; james.spengler@alexandriava.gov <james.spengler@alexandriava.gov>; jacinta.greene@acps.k12.va.us <jacinta.greene@acps.k12.va.us>; michelle.rief@acps.k12.va.us <michelle.rief@acps.k12.va.us>  
**Cc:** John Finnigan <john.finnigan@acps.k12.va.us>; Trudi Bick <trudibick@verizon.net>; Christy Payne 506 Glendale <cpayne@nsf.gov>; Kelly Joe <Kbdresen@gmail.com>; Norman Wiebusch <norman.wiebusch@acps.k12.va.us>; Brian Cubbage <bwcubbage@gmail.com>; Rob Benedict <bennerg03@gmail.com>; Lauren Yanusas <lauren.yanusas@gmail.com>; akhanna@erols.com <akhanna@erols.com>; Will Cameron <patuxentbranch@gmail.com>; karl.mortiz@alexandriava.gov <karl.mortiz@alexandriava.gov>; Abigail Harwell <Abigail.Harwell@alexandriava.gov>; Justin Wilson <justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Invitation to Community Meeting: GW Field Improvements

ACPS School Board members,

There is still no content under GW Middle school project link. Can you please just send us the document? Is Thursday going to be a time for actual community input? Can we attend in person?

I would welcome discussion of the following at the meeting on Thursday.

According to the Athletic Fields Report 2021 - ***all fields in the city of Alexandria were used 56% of their available hours based on best use practices. Most notably the Lenny Memorial Fields at Braddock Park were utilized at only 26% of their available hours. According to the Athletic fields 2021 report there are 4 total fields at Braddock park offering a total additional 3000 hours of playing time if left grass.***

Also notable, ***according to RCPA, in 2022 no applications for field playing time have been denied.*** This is with the fields at Minnie Howard already having been taken offline for construction. ***The need for additional playing time has not been demonstrated by the current body of research compiled by ACPS/the City. According to RCPA, the fields at Braddock park have not been studied as a location for enhancement of any kind - to include turf or lights. To move forward with this proposal - without that information in hand - would not be sound management of our tax dollars.***

To be clear, I am against the use of plastic turf because cities across the country are realizing that they carry environmental and health risks for our youngest athletes - these cities are banning turf.

***Where is the possible compromise? It may be plastic turf with organic infill in large areas where there are multiple fields - for example Lenny Memorial Fields at Braddock Park or Simpson Fields. Shift the funding for***

***plastic turf from GW and other schools with a small amount of field space and use it for these larger areas. The fields at Lenny Memorial Field do not currently have irrigation infrastructure under them, making them a smarter choice for plastic turf. The city would also realize a savings because it would be lighting fewer fields. Residents would be happier because our school playing fields would remain pristine for our youngest athletes and for students during physical education. There would be less light pollution pouring into our windows. Fully leveraging Lenny Memorial would also get ACPS better use of the onsite parking lot.***

I look forward to these discussions on Thursday evening.

Respectfully

Mary Cypressi

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**From:** Arte'a Funderburk <artea.funderburk@acps.k12.va.us>

**Sent:** Friday, October 21, 2022 1:56 PM

**To:** Brian Collins <brian.c1@me.com>

**Cc:** John Finnigan <john.finnigan@acps.k12.va.us>; Trudi Bick <trudibick@verizon.net>; Mary Cypressi <sglily@live.com>; Christy Payne 506 Glendale <cpayne@nsf.gov>; Kelly Joe <Kbdresen@gmail.com>; Norman Wiebusch <norman.wiebusch@acps.k12.va.us>; Brian Cubbage <bwcubbage@gmail.com>; Rob Benedict <benerg03@gmail.com>

**Subject:** Re: Invitation to Community Meeting: GW Field Improvements

Happy Friday Brian,

With the migration to the new website, we are consistently working on getting all information current and up-to-date that was available on our former platform. Thank you for bringing this to our attention. I will work with our web specialist to ensure that these project pages have current information.

Have a great weekend,

**Arte'a Funderburk** (she/her)

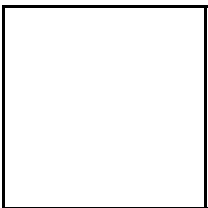
*CIP Communications Specialist*

Office of Capital Programs, Planning & Design

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Alexandria City Public Schools

703-619-8076 Office



## [EXTERNAL]Request to Deny SUP 2022-0043 and Remove it from 01 November Docket

SG Lily <sglily@live.com>

Wed 10/26/2022 10:15 PM

To: Justin Wilson <justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov>; PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Karl Moritz <Karl.Moritz@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: willie.bailey@acps.k12.va.us <willie.bailey@acps.k12.va.us>; Michelle M. Rief <michelle.rief@acps.k12.va.us>; Abigail Harwell <Abigail.Harwell@alexandriava.gov>; Dirk Geratz <Dirk.Geratz@alexandriava.gov>; Brian Collins <brian.c1@me.com>; hsujack@gmail.com <hsujack@gmail.com>; Trudi Bick <trudibick@verizon.net>; akhanna@erols.com <akhanna@erols.com>; Ethan Lucarelli <ethanluc@gmail.com>; Victoria Correa <vcorrea@gmail.com>; Rob Benedict <benerg03@gmail.com>; Lauren Yanusas <lauren.yanusas@gmail.com>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sglily@live.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Mayor Wilson, Chairman Macek, Director Moritz,

The residents of E Glendale Avenue respectfully request that Special Use Permit (SUP) 2022-00043 regarding the installation of lights around the George Washington Middle School be denied and removed from the 01 November docket. We make this request because the SUP contains inaccuracies and misrepresents the adverse impact to the community. The data below is drawn from the SUP and has been confirmed through conversations and e-mails with the International Dark Sky-Association and Musco Lighting on 24 and 26 October 2022.

- Light spillage/glare: On page eight of the SUP, the graphic incorrectly depicts slight spillage/glare to be limited to 65 feet over the north edge of ACPS property. The SUP further incorrectly claims that zero foot candles of light would reach the properties on E Glendale Ave.
  - On page 24 of the SUP, the rendering produced by Musco depicts light spillage at 150 feet from the edges of the field (blue line). The north side of the track receives between 10-14 foot candles of light (red line around the athletic field). **The north side of E Glendale Ave will in fact receive 3 foot candles of light, (straight vertical black line) falling directly in the front yards of residents.** Note that the foot candles on this rendering are taken at 30 foot increments. The red zeros are actual zero values and the black zeros are a fraction of a foot candle.
  - **This level of light spillage is in direct violation of City Ordinance 13-1-3 which limits light trespass to .25 foot candles from any commercial or residential property onto the adjacent residential property.** According to the Illuminating Engineering Society, three foot candles of light is sufficient to light an outdoor parking lot or an auditorium.
- Light spillage/glare cont: Page 27 depicts total candelas of light at 150 feet from the edges of the field. Candela is used to measure glare or light shining in your face. The rendering on this page shows 845 candelas shining 150 feet over the north edge of the field. That means the houses on E. Glendale Ave should receive about 2700 candelas of light (This is the only figure that is my own calculation). One candela is equal to about the light from one candle. Imagine sleeping with 2700 lit candles outside your window.
- Trees on E. Glendale Ave: The SUP incorrectly states that the trees along the south side of E. Glendale Ave will block the light spilling off the field. This is inaccurate. Those trees are located under power lines and are trimmed every year to stay at their current height. Also, the trees are deciduous.



In addition to, the inaccuracies in the SUP, we would like to highlight that the data in the 2021 Athletic Fields Report (AFR) does not support the need for additional synthetic fields or lights.

- According to Appendix C of the AFR, the city has 12 regulation size synthetic playing fields (counting Patrick Henry ES) and 8 of them have lights. ***Every single synthetic, lighted field was under utilized during the time period covered in the report.*** AFR states that the city should be able to program a synthetic field with lights for 2100 playing hours a year. With the exception of the Witter Fields, no synthetic playing fields with lights reached even 1600 hours, with average programmed hours coming in at 1400 per field. ***Therefore, according RCPA's own research, there are an average of 700 hours of unused playing time sitting on each of one of those fields - that's 5600 total unused hours on our existing synthetic fields with lights.***
- Of the 12 over-programmed natural fields, identified in the AFR, eight are baseball diamonds. However of the five locations for which RCPA has submitted SUPs to install lights - none are used for baseball.
- ***According to the AFR, all playing fields (synthetic and natural) in the city of Alexandria were used 56% of their total programmable hours.***
- Also notable, ***according to RCPA, in 2022 no applications for field playing time have been denied.*** This is with the fields at Minnie Howard already having been taken offline for construction.

**Given the inaccuracies contained in the SUP 2022-0043 and because the need for additional playing fields has not been demonstrated by the current body of research compiled by ACPS/the City; to move forward with this proposal would be poor management of our tax dollars. The AFR states on page 15 that "the city has enough fields to meet its needs," but must focus on better programming the fields. We would ask that the RCPA do what it wrote in its own report - fully program those 5600 hours of playing time that are being wasted every year on our existing lighted synthetic fields, before investing additional tax payer dollars into additional synthetic fields or lighting.**

To be clear the residents of E Glendale Ave love hearing the kids playing on the fields across the street from our homes. We just want the fields to be managed in a manner that is economically and environmentally conscious and protects our home values. To that end, we welcome a dialogue on how to fully leverage the Lenny Memorial Fields at Braddock Park, which were utilized at only 26% of their available hours and contain three baseball diamonds and one football field. We have already reached out to the local business community to obtain estimates on the cost of transforming those fields into the beautiful community athletic area that they should be.

Respectfully,

Mary Cypressi

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## SEMINARY HILL ASSOCIATION, INC.

August 8, 2022

Ms. Megan Alderton  
Chair  
Alexandria School Board  
1340 Braddock Place  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Mr. James Parajon  
City Manager  
City of Alexandria, Virginia  
301 King Street  
Alexandria, Virginia. 22314

Dear Chair Alderton and Manager Parajon,

The Seminary Hill Association (SHA) is writing to express our concerns and questions over the proposed lighting of additional athletic fields in the city. Mr. Jack Browand of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities (RPCA) informed us at our June 9<sup>th</sup> board meeting that RPCA or ACPS will be filing for a SUP for Hammond Middle School as one of the first two fields to add field lights. We learned that RPCA filed the application on August 5, 2022, to be heard at the October 6, 2022 Planning Commission meeting. Hammond is within the boundaries of SHA, and we have some specific questions that we believe should be answered by Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) and RPCA promptly in connection with the application.

First, by way of background for those who were not on the School Board or employed by the city in 2011, ACPS proposed adding a turf field with lights at Hammond that year. At that time, no site plan was required by the city in order to do this work, so only a grading plan was submitted as part of the SUP application. SHA and nearby residents warned ACPS and RPCA about the serious infrastructure and flooding issues at Hammond, but these concerns were ignored. Residents surrounding Hammond were forced to file an appeal to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) and a lawsuit to compel compliance with zoning and City Code requirements. As you are aware, ACPS abandoned plans to light the Hammond field and an agreement was reached that no electrical work would be placed on the site to facilitate the installation of lights.

Once construction began to install the artificial turf field, the extent of the stormwater and infrastructure issues became known. ACPS spent millions installing the field and remediating the site, which included enormous new concrete piping under most, if not all, of the field. The work also required moving the bus lane and creating a bioretention pond on the site. The actual cost of this additional work was never publicly released, but SHA was informed that the overrun was a minimum of \$1.9 million, which was paid by ACPS.

Given this background, SHA requests that ACPS and the city provide answers to the following questions regarding the current plan to light the Hammond field.

1. ACPS holds Development Site Plan 2000-0044 for Hammond. DSP 2000-0044 contains a provision stating that any application for lighting must be through an SUP submitted by ACPS. City staff verified this in its report accompanying ACPS' application for lighting at Hammond in 2011, Staff

Report, page 4, citing that DSP 2000-0044 contains “a development condition requiring ACPS to go through a Special Use Permit review when considering the installation of athletic lighting” at Hammond.

In 2011, when SHA brought the case of lighting the Hammond field to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA), the BZA entered a legally binding decision stating that “ACPS is the owner of the property” and “[t]he use of field and lights by other City Departments and community organizations does not change the characterization of the facility for school purposes.” The city and ACPS urged the BZA to make those formal legal findings. In the subsequent lawsuit, ACPS and the city continued to represent that ACPS is the only correct applicant.

We learned on Friday, August 5, 2022, that RPCA inappropriately submitted an application for a SUP. Their application states that the City of Alexandria is the owner of school property and ACPS merely operates a school on the site, which appears inconsistent with the laws of Virginia. It was silent on the DSUP and binding legal decisions regarding the site (which are consistent with Virginia law). Is this your understanding of control of the use of land where ACPS schools are located? If the city’s and ACPS lawyers have changed their position, ACPS will be required to seek a modification to its DSUP, and the city and ACPS will need to approach the BZA (and perhaps the court) to correct those legal decisions based upon faulty information from the city and ACPS in 2011 and 2012.

It is also concerning that the city believes it can place uses on property being “operated by ACPS” without the approval and consent of ACPS. Given the DSUP, city staff reports, city and ACPS legal submissions and the accompanying BZA order and court actions stating that ACPS is the property owner and must file the SUP application, under what authority is RPCA applying as the owner of the Hammond property?

2. A review of the June 2<sup>nd</sup> School Board meeting showed only a very brief informational presentation, and the docket noted that the presentation was “for information, not action” only. Dr. Hutchings stated that a School Board vote would be required to authorize lighting at any school field after the City Council approves any SUP, although there appeared to be some confusion. Is Dr. Hutchings correct, or is the statement by RPCA that the School Board has no role beyond being briefed? If so, can you please provide SHA with documentation from ACPS and the city transferring title to the property for the site from ACPS to RPCA, which appears to be a requirement in Virginia? Can you please clarify the role of ACPS and identify the ACPS person responsible for community engagement on this issue?

3. Does ACPS concur in RPCA’s estimate of \$400,000 for the work at Hammond, given the conditions that are unique to Hammond, including the extensive underground stormwater infrastructure under and around your field? In the event of cost overruns, is ACPS or RPCA responsible for paying for the overruns?

It is important to remember that as part of the agreement with residents to drop the lawsuit with ACPS and the city regarding issues associated with lighting Hammond, ACPS and the city committed in writing that electrical conduits for field lights would not be installed at Hammond during the installation of the new turf field. ACPS and the city verified that the grading plan specifically excluded any infrastructure work supporting lighting, including any electrical work. ACPS updated SHA during

construction to confirm no electrical infrastructure work was being performed, and SHA toured the site to verify that no electrical work to allow for the installation of field lights was done before installing the current turf field. Does your preliminary planning with RPCA include a recognition that electrical conduits and other required infrastructure do not currently exist at the site, but can now be added given the large concrete stormwater infrastructure that was placed under the turf field in 2011?

In addition, a site visit to Hammond shows very little space between the track and the fence line and public right of way on Pickett Street. SHA would like to receive any planning analysis that has been done at Hammond to show that the installation of lights is feasible and consistent with land use requirements, including minimum setback requirements in the zoning code.

4. A chronic and serious challenge to city fields, and especially at Hammond, is the use of the fields without a permit. Around Hammond, residents have documented problems that have existed without resolution since the installation of the turf field and continue to exist now without lights, which involve unauthorized use and quality of life issues for adult events, such as broken beer bottles, drug paraphernalia, overflowing trash receptacles, and excessive noise. While the turf field is fenced from the publicly available track, there are routinely groups of “fence jumpers” who use the field as a dog run and other unauthorized events. Boom boxes send music into the surrounding neighborhood until dark. These problems will only get worse if the field has lights and can be used until 10:00 p.m. at night, which is the time RPCA has indicated on the Hammond application that the field will be used seven nights a week.

The major reason for the problems at Hammond and other city fields is that there is no clear responsibility or accountability for oversight for use of the fields. In the application, RPCA asserted that “site monitoring” at night is an “ACPS security responsibility.” In contrast, ACPS has viewed use outside of school hours on the field at Hammond to be the responsibility of RPCA. Both ACPS and RPCA have advised residents to call the Alexandria Police Department (APD) for violations. When residents call, APD asserts such violations are not criminal in nature, they lack staffing, and do not respond, instead telling residents to work with ACPS and RPCA. There is, therefore, no remedy in place for residents who endure irresponsible and unauthorized behavior on a constant basis at Hammond.

As part of the application for lights, is ACPS prepared to commit resources and staff to oversee permit compliance and SUP violations during evenings and weekends? Or does ACPS view it as the responsibility of RPCA, despite the fact that RPCA has stated its position that it is the responsibility of ACPS to monitor such illegal activities? Since APD has said it cannot assist, what then is the remedy that ACPS and RPCA propose for unauthorized use of the Hammond field if the hours of use are extended by the installation of lights? It is not appropriate to add more lighted fields that will only worsen and continue this shell game of “passing the buck” that leaves no one with the responsibility for field security and use.

5. The true purpose of installing the lights at Hammond is unclear to SHA at this time. Certainly, ACPS has a need for a field and track there during the school day for its students, and it is due for replacement in the next two years. At the June 9<sup>th</sup> SHA meeting, RPCA stated that the proposal was for use by adults and youth. At the June 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting School Board meeting, RPCA stated the purpose of the proposal is “expanding capacity for youth programs.” SHA cannot imagine that the youth of Alexandria

need a field that can be lighted until 10:00 p.m. SHA believes it is necessary to be honest about who will be using this field if the proposal is approved.

6. If the lighting is approved, who will be authorized to control the timing and use of the lights at night? Will it be ACPS personnel or RCPA personnel or private citizens? The August 5 application states that “safety measures” include “user activated field lighting,” suggesting that anyone can access and turn on/off the lights at any time. What access security will be in place to assure only authorized persons can access lighting? Who will serve as the person responsible for assuring the lights are off at the permitted time, especially in the event the lights continue to burn past the required time if staff fails to activate the remote shut-off? In addition, the construction of lights and new turf will mean the use of the field for Hammond students will be lost for at least several months, if not longer, depending upon the engineering challenges of installing lights.

Given that SHA was only made aware of this proposal in June and RCPA has stated its intent to bring this matter before the Planning Commission at its October 6, 2022, meeting, we would appreciate a prompt response to our questions. Given the importance of this matter to residents of Seminary Hill, we anticipate further questions once we have had more time to review the plan and conditions. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter that affects the quality of life for numerous residents of Seminary Hill.

Sincerely,

*Carter Flemming*

Carter Flemming  
President, Seminary Hill Association, Inc.  
carterflemming@gmail.com



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
301 King St., Suite 3500  
Alexandria, VA 22314

JAMES F. PARAJOON  
City Manager

703.746.4300  
Fax: 703.838.6343

September 13, 2022

Carter Flemming, President  
Seminary Hill Association, Inc.  
[carterflemming@gmail.com](mailto:carterflemming@gmail.com)

Ms. Flemming,

The following is the City response to your letter on behalf of the Seminary Hill Association, Inc., dated August 8, 2022, regarding the proposal to add athletic field lighting at Francis C. Hammond Middle School (Hammond).

With regard to your first two questions, neither the development site plan (DSP#2000-0044), nor the Board of Zoning Appeal's (BZA's) decision, nor the court order, nor any other written agreements prohibit the current special use permit (SUP) application.

Under the Zoning Ordinance both ACPS and the City are qualified to apply for a SUP for the Hammond property. Per Zoning Ordinance Section 11-503(A)(1), a SUP applicant needs to be "the owner, contract purchaser, lessee or other party having a legal interest in the subject property." The City is the property owner of record pursuant to deed and ACPS has a legal interest in the property pursuant to Virginia statutory law. With respect to land use matters, the City and ACPS work collaboratively related to school properties and have done so in this situation. In support of the City's application, the Alexandria City School Board adopted the attached resolution.

The current land use application for Hammond is for the approval of a SUP. Pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 6-403(F), a SUP for field lighting can be approved that exceeds the zoning height limits for congregate recreational facilities. This differs from the earlier proposal under SUP#2010-0079, where ACPS was seeking SUP approval for field lighting under Zoning Ordinance Section 7-2100 (Increased density and height for public elementary and secondary schools.). Additionally, the court appeal related to the BZA's decision was dismissed through an agreed order between the parties on the basis of the withdrawal of the SUP application by ACPS (see attached order). Further, there are no agreements that limit the City's ability to file the current SUP application.

Regarding your question 3, the lighting project is funded by the City. ACPS is not responsible for potential additional costs to implement the installation if approved. The City, in coordination

with ACPS, do not have information to support the potential barriers as presented in your letter. The current athletic field has a standard underdrain system and that will not impede the installation of athletic field lighting. The analysis related to the compliance with the Zoning Ordinance related to the SUP, and as per regular practice, will be part of the staff report written by Planning and Zoning staff.

As to your question 4, the City is responsible for the management (permitting & monitoring) and maintenance (e.g. trash collection) for the athletic field after school hours. All synthetic turf fields are open for community use after school hours, either through a permit issued by the Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities (RPCA) or for open drop-in use by the community during posted operating hours. If lighting is approved, athletic field lighting will only be available for use by permitted activities through RPCA.

During school hours, ACPS school administrators and security are responsible for enforcing athletic field usage at Hammond. Should unauthorized use occur during school hours, ACPS may coordinate with Alexandria Police for assistance as needed. Should use of the athletic field or any other amenity be used after posted operating hours, security is primarily monitored by ACPS security.

Regarding your question 5, all athletic fields and recreation amenities managed and operated by the City are available to any and all members of the community. Although this field and many others are on school property, permitted and drop-in use is not limited by age group.

With respect to your question 6, all athletic field lighting, including the lighting at this location, will be monitored and operated by RPCA. This is consistent with all fields, with the exception of the ACHS Parker-Gray Stadium, which is operated by ACPS through an agreement with the community. The management of athletic fields are addressed in the Shared Facility Use & Outdoor Maintenance Agreement between the City and ACPS.

The system that is proposed to be installed at Hammond, and at all locations that are new or upgraded, are programmable and only available when a permit is approved. Lights are programed to only be activated (turned on) during the approved permit time, and will automatically be deactivated at the end of the permit time or by 10 p.m.

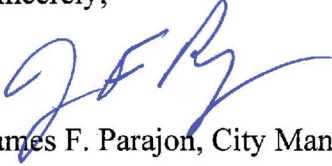
The installation of lighting will not require the field being offline. All lighting installation activity will occur outside the athletic field and under the field through boring. When the field is scheduled for turf replacement, the lighting will not be impacted, and the field will be offline for approximately one month.

RPCA is planning to hold one additional community meeting in late September to address concerns raised from the meetings held in the spring and to answer further questions. If you have

Ms. Carter Flemming  
September 13, 2022  
Page 3

additional questions on the athletic field lighting proposals, please contact Jack Browand, Deputy Director, RPCA at [jack.browand@alexandriava.gov](mailto:jack.browand@alexandriava.gov) or 703.746.5504.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JFP', is written over the printed name of James F. Parajon.

James F. Parajon, City Manager

Enclosures:

1. Board of Zoning Appeals Order of Dismissal
2. ACPS School Board Resolution – September 8, 2022

cc: Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager  
Joanna Anderson, City Attorney  
Christina Brown, Deputy City Attorney  
James Spengler, Director, RPCA  
Jack Browand, Deputy Director, RPCA





**ALEXANDRIA CITY SCHOOL BOARD  
RESOLUTION REGARDING SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATIONS  
FOR ATHLETIC FIELD LIGHTING**

WHEREAS the City of Alexandria, through its Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities (RPCA), in order to meet current and increasing scholastic and community needs for lighted athletic field space, and to better provide equitable access to recreational facilities to all City residents, has filed applications for a special use permit (SUP), set forth below, to allow for the installation of athletic field lighting at several school sites operated by the Alexandria City School Board (School Board); and

WHEREAS those SUP applications, and school sites, include the following:

2022-00042, for Francis C. Hammond Middle School

2022-00043, for George Washington Middle School

2022-00044, for Jefferson Houston PreK-8 School

2022-00045, for Patrick Henry K-8 School; and

WHEREAS the foregoing school properties are titled in the City of Alexandria, but under Section 22.1-125 of the Code of Virginia, are operated by, and subject to the official care and authority of, the School Board; and

WHEREAS the School Board concurs that the aforementioned projects will benefit both the students and school communities at these respective schools, as well as the community generally; and

WHEREAS the aforementioned projects will be constructed entirely with funding provided by the City;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board hereby consents to the SUP applications set forth above.

Adopted by the ALEXANDRIA CITY SCHOOL BOARD  
this 8th day of September, 2022

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Jacinta E. Greene, Vice Chair

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

DONNELL R. FULLERTON, NANCY  
JENNINGS, AND SEMINARY HILL  
ASSOCIATION, INC.

Petitioners,

**V.**

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA CITY COUNCIL

# BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS FOR THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS,

### Respondents.

At Law No. CL11005121

## AGREED FINAL ORDER OF DISMISSAL

THIS MATTER came before the Court on an appeal of a decision of the Alexandria Board of Zoning Appeals;

IT APPEARING TO THE COURT, that


1. The matter being appealed involved the Director of Planning and Zoning's determination regarding the application for Special Use Permit #2010-0079 submitted to the City of Alexandria ("City") by the Alexandria City Public Schools ("ACPS");
2. On January 17, 2012, the ACPS informed the City that they are withdrawing their application for Special Use Permit #2010-0079; and
3. The parties agree that the case should be dismissed, as evidenced by the signatures of their respective counsel below.

Now, therefore, it is hereby


ADJUDGED, ORDERED AND DECREED, that this case is dismissed with prejudice.

AND THIS CAUSE IS ENDED.

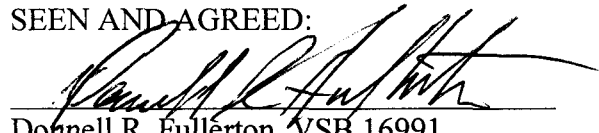
ENTERED this 17<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2012.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge, Circuit Court for the City of Alexandria

SEEN AND AGREED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
James L. Banks, Jr., VSB #28052  
Christopher P. Spera, VSB #27904  
Joanna C. Anderson, VSB #65463  
Office of the City Attorney  
301 King Street, Suite 1300  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314  
(703) 746-3750  
Counsel for respondents

SEEN AND AGREED:

  
Donnell R. Fullerton, VSB 16991

Erika L. Dogan, VSB 70954

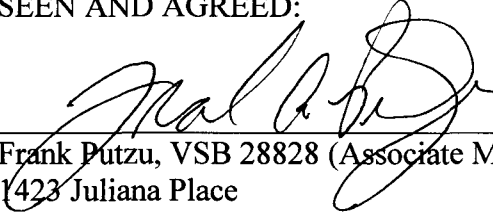
Carter, Fullerton, & Hayes, LLC

4115 Annandale Road, Suite 205

Fairfax, Virginia 22003

Counsel for Petitioner Donnell R. Fullerton

SEEN AND AGREED:



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Frank Putzu, VSB 28828 (Associate Member)  
1423 Juliana Place  
Alexandria, Virginia 22304  
Counsel for petitioners Nancy Jennings and Seminary Hill Association, Inc.

SEEN AND AGREED:

Julia Judkins by JCA with permission  
Julia Judkins  
Bancroft, McGavin, Horvath & Judkins, PC  
3920 University Drive  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
Counsel for Respondent Alexandria City Public Schools