

Office of the Director

November 7, 2019

The Honorable Trayon White, Sr., Chairperson
Committee on Recreation and Youth Affairs
Council of the District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20004

Re: Follow-Up Items to the “Access to the Public Field at Jelleff Recreation Center” Hearing

Chairperson White,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Bowser Administration and the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) at the public hearing on “Access to the Public Field at Jelleff Recreation Center.” DPR remains committed to fair and equitable access to all programs and facilities across the District. We recognize the high demand for recreation amenities in the Burleith and Georgetown neighborhoods, and want you to know that the Bowser Administration is committed to exploring both an expanded Jelleff Recreation Center and activating the Ellington Field for use by neighbors and the broader Ward 2 community. We are in receipt of your October 29, 2019, letter to Mayor Bowser regarding the need to reactivate Ellington Field. As we move forward in this process, we will ensure that the Committee is updated on our plans and timeline.

Partnerships are critical to support the work of DPR. The agency has worked diligently and in good faith to build trust with community, programmatic, and facility partners. We take great care to weigh the needs of the community and the benefits to taxpayers in our decisions. When DPR enters into a partnership agreement, it is to further the agency’s core mission of providing access to high-quality recreation spaces and programs. In fact, without partnerships, DPR would not be able to deliver on our core mission. Moreover, any action that would hinder our ability to enter into or maintain partnerships would have significant and detrimental effects on our long-term ability to provide equal and open access to recreational programs services and facilities across all eight wards.

In the case of the extension of the easement of use agreement between DPR and the Maret School, DPR gave the same level of care and consideration we give all of our partnerships. The needs of the community, as expressed by Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E (ANC2E) in their March 7, 2019 letter, heavily influenced our deliberative process and shaped DPR’s community engagement plan. The letter states in part:

“Under the Agreement, beginning on June 30, 2019 the School has the right to request that DPR extend the exclusive use arrangement for an additional nine years, ending on June 29, 2029. If the School makes such a request, DPR will be required to either consent to or deny the requested extension within thirty (30) days.

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At this time, ANC2E takes no position with respect to the ultimate outcome. However, ANC2E believes, as a guiding principle, that DPR should establish a transparent process – within DPR guidelines – that will give all interested user groups an opportunity to have a seat at the table and an equal opportunity to present the needs of their institutions.

ANC 2E strongly recommends that DPR host a community meeting open to all interested parties within the next sixty (60) days to gather the input needed to make a fair and informed decision when, and if, the School requests that the exclusive use arrangement be extended pursuant to the terms of the Agreement.”

In response to the March 7, 2019, ANC2E Letter, DPR established a transparent process to evaluate the extension of the agreement with Maret and communicated this process to both the community and ANC2E. On May 8, 2019, DPR hosted the community meeting that ANC2E requested at the Georgetown Public Library. Furthermore, as noted in sworn testimony, throughout March, June, July, and August of 2019, DPR met with ANC2E Commissioners, held calls with representatives of the Edmund Burke School, the Burleith Citizens Association, parents of Hardy Middle School, and other vested stakeholders showing our commitment to giving all interested parties a seat at the table. Throughout the deliberative process, DPR remained in communication with the Commissioners of ANC2E.

As evidenced in the March 7, 2019 letter, ANC2E was aware that Maret had the option to request an extension beginning on June 30, 2019, but did not request to be notified when Maret requested an extension. Had they done so, a formal notice would have been provided. DPR continued to operate in good faith and transparency and met with Commissioner Elizabeth Miller 2E07, Commissioner Kishan Putta 2E01, and Commissioner Joe Gibbons 2E02 in person on August 8, 2019, the day after the extension was granted to discuss the decision and next steps.

Although the agreement between DPR and the Maret School is unique in that it uses a “Use Easement and Maintenance Agreement,” DPR currently maintains several other successful partnerships with other organizations granting similar priority use; partnerships which, as you know, are critical to helping us carry out our core mission. A list of those agreements is included for your reference in Appendix A.

The Department of Parks and Recreation is proud of the work it does every day in the interest of the 702,000 plus residents of the District of Columbia, and we look forward to continuing to work with the Committee on Recreation and Youth Affairs to advance and enhance those efforts.

Sincerely,



Delano D. Hunter
Director

Enclosure – March 7, 2019, ANC2E Letter

Appendix A

DPR Property	Ward	Partner	Type of Agreement	Year Executed	Status	Relationship
Fort Dupont	7	Friends of Fort Dupont	DGS Ground Lease and DPR MOA	2013	Dec 31, 2023 or three 10 year renewal options	Site Manager
Ryan Zimmerman Field	6	Washington Nationals/UA	DPR Sponsorship Agreement (MOA)	2015	2025 Expires with one year options in DPR's discretion	Priority Hours to Capitol Hill LL (15 hours per week)
Kipp Brentwood/Hamilton	5	KIPP	DGS Ground Lease	2014	2044 with one 25 year option	Priority to KIPP 8-7 PM
Kipp Trinidad	5	KIPP	DGS Ground Lease	2013	2043 with one 25 year option	Priority to KIPP For Field 8-5 PM
Kipp Bundy Field (O St. NW)	6	KIPP	DGS Ground Lease	2011	2021 with two 5 year options (parties?)	Priority to KIPP For Field 8-7 PM
Bryce Harper Field	4	Washington Nationals/UA	DPR Sponsorship Agreement	2018	Expires 2028 with one year options in DPR's discretion	Priority Hours to Cap. City LL
Deanwood	7	Kiddie University	DGS License Agreement	2019	2024 with ten one year options	Daycare User
Arthur Capper	6	TOTH	DGS License Agreement	2018 executed 2019 one year extension	Annually	Daycare User
Chevy Chase	3	Northwest LL	DPR Sponsorship Agreement	2019	Annually	Site Maintenance
WTEF NorthEast	4	WTEF	DGS Ground Lease and DPR MOA	2009	Expires 2049 with two 15 year options	Site Manager
Jelleff	2	Maret	DGS Easement	2009	Expires 2020/June 2029 Option Executed	Priority Hours to Maret (15 hours per week)
Capitol Riverfront	6	Capitol Riverfront BID	DPR Grant Agreement	2018	Annual renewal no options	Park Manager
Franklin Park	2	Downtown BID	DPR Sponsorship Agreement (MOA)	2019	10 year renewal with 4 options	Park Manager
THEARC	8	Building Bridges, Inc.	DGS Lease	2001	Expires July, 3000	Site Manager