

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
STAFF REPORT

PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

DATE OF HEARING: May 26, 2010
SPEX 2009-0036, Loudoun Youth Soccer Association Lighting
DECISION DEADLINE: July 27, 2010
ELECTION DISTRICT: Catoctin PROJECT PLANNER: Sophia Fisher

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Loudoun Youth Soccer Association, Inc. of Leesburg, Virginia, has submitted an application for a special exception for the lighting standards of 5-1504(A), to exceed the allowed 0.25 foot candles above background light levels measured at the lot line of any adjacent lot in the JLMA-20 (Joint Land Management Area-20) zoning district. Maximum illuminations at the property boundaries measured 5.29 foot candles on the west, 5.32 foot candles on the south, and 6.08 foot candles on the eastern boundary. The property is located partially within the Ldn 60-65 aircraft noise contours of the Leesburg Municipal Airport AI (Airport Impact) Overlay District. This application is subject to the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance, and Section 5-1504(C) allows a special exception if the standards of 5-1504(A) cannot be met. The property is approximately 12 acres in size and is located on the east side of Sycolin Road, east of the Town of Leesburg Airport and south of the Loudoun County Park and Ride Lot, at 19798 Sycolin Road, Leesburg, Virginia in the Catoctin Election District. The area is governed by the policies of the Revised General Plan (Leesburg Joint Land Management Area Policy Area (Leesburg Community)), the Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP), and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan (BPMMP), which designate this area for Business uses.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission forward the application to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation of approval, subject to the Conditions of Approval dated May 5, 2010, and based on the Findings in the May 26, 2010 staff report. The proposal does not cause negative impacts from the spillover of light due to the non-residential uses (including County park use on two sides) on the adjacent properties.

SUGGESTED MOTIONS

1. I move that the Planning Commission forward SPEX 2009-0036, Loudoun Youth Soccer Association Lighting, to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation of approval, subject to the Conditions of Approval dated May 5, 2010, and based on the Findings contained in the May 26, 2010 Staff Report.

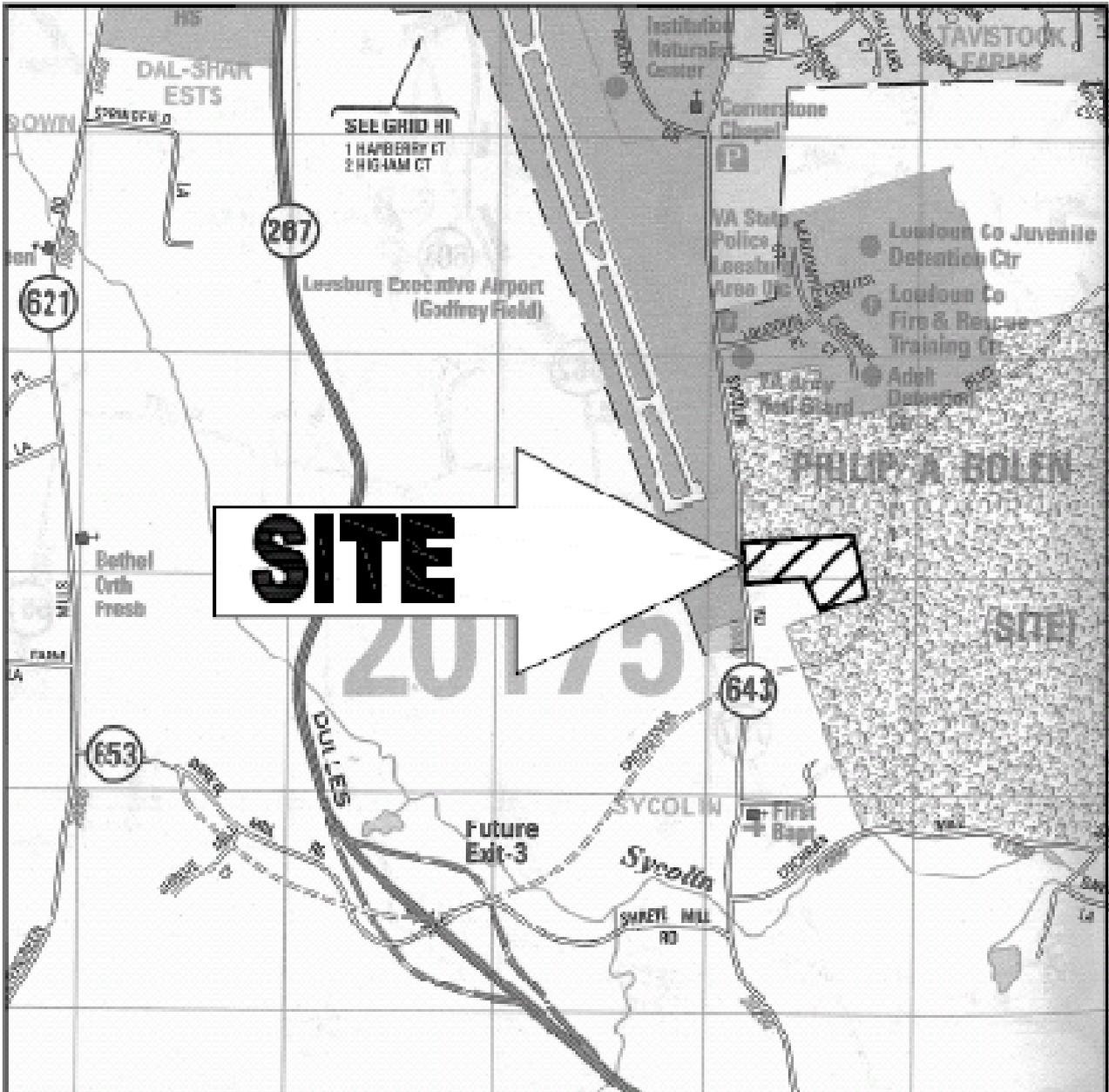
Or,

2. I move that the Planning Commission forward SPEX 2009-0036, Loudoun Youth Soccer Association Lighting, to a work session for further review.

Or,

3. I move that the Planning Commission forward SPEX 2009-0036, Loudoun Youth Soccer Association Lighting, to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation of denial, based on the following Findings:

VICINITY MAP



Directions: From Leesburg, proceed south on Sycolin Road (Route 625) past Loudoun Center Drive. Site is on the east side of the road, just south of the Leesburg Park and Ride commuter parking lot.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Application Information.....	5
II.	Summary of Discussion	6
III.	Findings for Approval.....	6
IV.	Conditions of Approval	7
V.	Project Review	7
	A. Context.....	7
	B. Summary of Outstanding Issues	8
	C. Overall Analysis	8
	D. <u>Zoning Ordinance</u> Criteria for Approval.....	10
VI.	Attachments	14

I. APPLICATION INFORMATION

APPLICANT: Loudoun Youth Soccer Association, Inc.
Caroline M. Deutsch, Field Administrator
304-B Industrial Court
Leesburg VA 20175
571-225-3921
caroline@loudounsoccer.com

OWNER: James J. Hogan, Jr.
34266 Snickersville Turnpike
Bluemont VA 20135
703-793-3220
hogan@hspdirect.com

REPRESENTATIVE: Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley, Emrich & Walsh PC
Michael Romeo, AICP
One East Market Street
Leesburg, VA 20176
571-209-5772
mromeo@ldn.thelandlawyers.com

PROPOSAL: A Special Exception to allow lighting that does not meet the standards of Section 5-1504 (A) pursuant to Section 5-1504(C).

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 19798 Sycolin Road, Leesburg, VA

PROJECT LOCATION: East side of Sycolin Road, east of the Town of Leesburg Airport and south of the Loudoun County Park and Ride Lot

TAX MAP/PARCEL: Tax Map — /60/////////16/ MCPI — 192-36-5833-000

PROPOSED ZONING: JLMA-20

SURROUNDING:	<u>ZONING</u>	<u>EXISTING LAND USE</u>	<u>PLANNED LAND USE</u>
NORTH	JLMA-20	Park and Ride Lot	Business Community
SOUTH	JLMA-20	Phil Bolen Park	Business Community
EAST	JLMA-20	Phil Bolen Park	Business Community
WEST	R-1	Airport	Town of Leesburg / Airport

ELECTION DISTRICT: Catoctin

II. Summary of Discussion

Topic/ Issue Area	Issues Examined and Status
Comprehensive Plan / Zoning / Town of Leesburg	Lighting exceeds limits at the property boundaries as proposed. NO ISSUE – surrounding uses are non-residential and should not be negatively affected.
	Commit to the type of lighting and hours of operation for proposed lights. RESOLVED – See Conditions #2 and #3.
Transportation	Acknowledge future realignment of Sycolin Road and future right-of-way of Crosstrail Boulevard. RESOLVED – Applicant is fully aware of these and has planned for them with the underlying recreation use; see Attachment 3, page A-37.
	Ensure that lighting is not directed at public roads. RESOLVED – Lights will be focused on the two southern and eastern-most fields, and subject to Conditions #2 and #3.

Policy or Ordinance Sections Subject to Application
Revised General Plan
<i>Chapter 5, Green Infrastructure/Lighting and Night Sky</i>
<i>Chapter 9, Towns Policies</i>
Countywide Transportation Plan
<i>Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan (2003 Bike & Ped Plan)</i>
Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance
<i>Section 2-1300 / Table 2-1303</i>
<i>Section 5-1504 – Lighting and Glare Standards</i>
<i>Section 6-1300 – Criteria for Consideration</i>

III. FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL

1. The proposed lighting that exceeds Ordinance standards at property boundaries will facilitate a recreational use that is consistent with the policies of the Revised General Plan.
2. The proposed lighting that exceeds Ordinance standards at property boundaries is consistent with the regulations of the Revised 1993 Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance, as conditioned.
3. The conditions limiting the hours of operation and type of lighting, and thus the impacts of light spillage across property boundaries, mitigate any impacts on those neighboring properties.
4. The proposed lighting that exceeds standards will cause negligible, if any, impact on public roads from the underlying permitted recreational use.

IV. CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL (May 5, 2010)

1. Substantial Conformance. The proposed Special Exception per Section 5-1504(A) for lighting that exceeds standards shall be developed in substantial conformance with the lighting plan on the Special Exception Plat, Sheet 2 of 2, dated November 16, 2009, and revised through April 2, 2010 (“the Plat”), and with the Revised 1993 Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance. Approval of this application does not relieve the Applicant of any Zoning Ordinance, Codified Ordinance, or any other requirement.
2. Lighting. The Applicant shall utilize the Musco Light-Structure Green model brand of outdoor field lighting or the performing equivalent. The poles holding the lights shall not exceed eighty-five (85) feet in height. If the outdoor field lighting needs to be replaced, the replacement lighting shall match the existing lighting model or be replaced with an equivalent or more technologically advanced outdoor field lighting model designed to provide equivalent or better reduction of light intensity, off-site glare, and reflection.
3. Hours of Operation, Lighting. As referenced on the Plat, the outdoor fields shown to have lighting shall be lit only between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.

V. PROJECT REVIEW

A. CONTEXT

This application is subject to the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance, and the almost 12 acre property is zoned JLMA-20. The property is bounded on the north, east, and south by the developing Phil Bolen Park (County property); it fronts on Sycolin Road to the west, just opposite the southern tip of the Leesburg Airport. Plan policies designate the property for Business uses, of which recreational uses are acceptable.

The underlying use on the property – a ‘rural recreational establishment, outdoors’ – is a permitted recreation and entertainment commercial use per Table 2-1303. Section 5-1504(A), Light and Glare Standards, requires that sources of glare must not cause illumination in excess of 0.25 foot candles above background light levels measured at the boundary or lot line of any adjacent lot. Section 5-1504(C) allows for a special exception if this minimum level cannot be met, subject to Section 6-1300, upon a finding that the proposed alternative lighting is appropriate.

Per the Special Exception Plat (Page 2), six light standards with a maximum height of 85’ will be used to illuminate two turf soccer fields, with maximum illuminations at the property lines of 5.29 foot candles on the west (adjacent a non-residential use), 5.32 foot candles on the south (adjacent Phil Bolen Park), and 6.08 foot candles on the eastern boundary (also adjacent Phil Bolen Park).

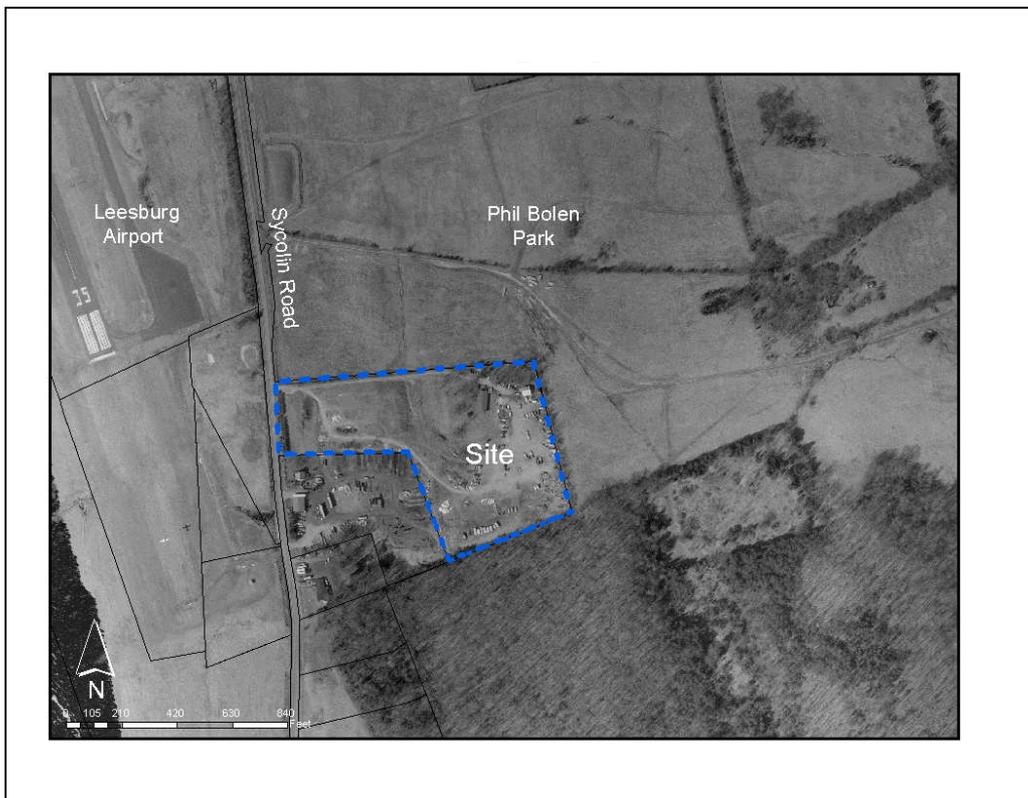
B. SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES

There are no outstanding issues. The applicant is in general agreement with the draft Conditions of Approval dated May 5, 2010, which are currently under review by the County Attorney. An update regarding the Conditions will be provided at the public hearing.

C. OVERALL ANALYSIS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The site is governed under the policies of the Revised General Plan, the Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP), and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan (BPMMP). The site is contained within the Leesburg Joint Land Management Area (JLMA) and is planned for Business uses. The proposed application has been reviewed under the Revised General Plan Towns Policies of Chapter 9 and the Green Infrastructure policies of Chapter 5.



LAND USE

Lighting

The Plan promotes sound night-lighting standards that will “reduce light pollution such as glare, energy waste, light trespass, and the deterioration of the natural nighttime environment”. The Light and Glare Standards of the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance (Section 5-1504(A)) specifies that all sources of glare must not cause illumination in excess of 0.25 foot candles above

background light levels measured at the boundary of the property as it abuts the adjacent lot. A Special Exception, per Section 5-1504(C) is requested so that the lighting on the outdoor fields may exceed these standards to varying degrees at certain points along three property boundaries; see the Special Exception plat.

Compatibility

Plan policies support recreational uses in Business community planned areas. The lighting of these playing fields will allow them to be used to their full potential, thus benefitting both the residential and non-residential communities nearby. Given the nature of the surrounding properties – three sides are the County-owned Phil Bolen Park, the other a commercial nursery operation – the impacts of the light intrusions will largely go unnoticed. The County park will have lighted fields of its' own, which per Section 5-1504, have a different standard for the foot candle limit at property boundaries.

Landscaping and Buffering

Landscaping, buffering, and screening are intended to mitigate the effects of uses upon adjacent uses, and are regulated per Section 5-1400 of the Zoning Ordinance. In the area of this special exception request, the underlying permitted recreational use is providing a 25' wide building setback (which is also noted as a landscape buffer).

Given the nature of this application – light levels greater than 0.25 foot candles crossing over property boundaries from light poles of up to 85' tall – it would take a significant amount of buffering, screening, or landscaping on the ground level to diminish these light levels. The only precise means to mitigate an impact of this nature would be distancing the light source from property boundaries.

Conditions #2 and #3 limit the type and time of when these lights will be on, and thus provide for a predictable schedule of when these light intrusions will occur. Given the limited nature of the when the lights will produce these Ordinance exceeding limits (after dark but no later than 10:00 PM), and the non-residential adjacent uses, the impact of this light trespass is insignificant.

Environment

A review of County GIS records indicates wetlands, steep slopes, and moderately steep slopes on-site, however they are located in an area that will not be impacted by the lighting which exceeds Ordinance standards.

Traffic

The property is served by Sycolin Road (Route 643), which is currently classified as a minor collector road, and is currently built as a two-lane (R2) road within a variable right-of-way (ROW). The ultimate configuration for Sycolin Road is for it to be widened to a four-lane divided (U4M) facility within a 90-foot ROW and then be reclassified; a segment just to the north of the site has been widened by Loudoun County, installing left- and right-turn lanes at Loudoun Center Drive and a left-turn lane at Claudia Drive (the entrance to the Leesburg Park and Ride Lot). The Town of Leesburg is in the process of widening Sycolin Road to four lanes within the Town Limits. According to the most recent data provided by VDOT (2008), Sycolin Road carries 3200 daily vehicle trips.

The Applicant's submitted traffic statement reviewed the existing conditions along Sycolin Road at the site entrance and the impacts of the proposed permitted use on the roadway. The traffic statement indicates that the four fields proposed on the site (i.e., two full-size lighted soccer fields and two smaller unlighted "play areas") should be counted as three fields given the smaller size and capacity of the "play areas". Using rates published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) in Trip Generation (8th Edition), vehicle trips generated by the proposed permitted fields – *Soccer Complex, ITE Code 488* - are 9 in the AM and 65 in the PM peak hours.

The nature of the lights – *used in the evenings after sunset to extend the playing time on the two fields* – means that for most of the year (and the likely usable months of the fields, between March and November) they would only result in increased trips after the PM peak hour. The traffic statement notes that, even if the lighting of the fields moved the PM peak hour of the generator (fields) to be coincident with the adjacent street (commuters on Sycolin) PM peak hour, an addition of only five percent (three vehicle trips) would result. The traffic statement concludes that this is not a significant traffic increase, which staff agrees with.

The traffic statement also analyzed the need for left and right turn lanes on Sycolin Road at the site entrance, and determined that neither is warranted. See Attachment pages A-10 through A-15 for full data on this topic.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Though the nature of the application does not have a direct correlation to public safety, the Department of Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Management, the property will be served by the Leesburg Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company, with approximate response times of about 7 minutes for fire apparatus from Station 20 and rescue apparatus from Station 13.

ZONING

The subject site is zoned JLMA-20 (Joint Land Management Area - 20) and governed under the provisions of the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance. This zoning is meant to provide for uses that will support the Leesburg Airport and existing agricultural uses. Table 2-1303 provides for a wide variety of residential, agricultural, public and institutional, commercial, and industrial uses; the underlying 'rural recreational establishment, outdoor' comprised of four (4) soccer playing fields is an acceptable form of this use. All comments made by Zoning Administration of the Department of Building and Development were addressed by the applicant, with proper notations and corrections on the Plat and the submission materials.

D. ZONING ORDINANCE CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL

Section 6-1310 of the Loudoun County Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance states "In considering a special exception application, the following factors shall be given reasonable consideration. The applicant shall address all the following in its statement of justification or special exception plat unless not applicable, in addition to any other standards imposed by this Ordinance":

Below is Staff's analysis of these criteria; see the Applicant's Statement of Justification (Attachment 2) for their response.

(A) Standard *Whether the proposed special exception is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.*

Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will only increase the usefulness of the recreation use, which is supported by the Plan for a Business community area.

(B) Standard *Whether the proposed special exception will adequately provide for safety from fire hazards and have effective measures of fire control.*

Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries is not expected to have any impact on fire hazards or safety, but all potential fire hazards will be addressed at the time of site plan and building permit review.

(C) Standard *Whether the level and impact of any noise emanating from the site, including that generated by the proposed use, negatively impacts the uses in the immediate area.*

Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will not result in any increase in noise coming from the property.

(D) Standard *Whether the glare or light that may be generated by the proposed use negatively impacts uses in the immediate area.*

Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries, as shown on the Plat, will not have negative impacts on the surrounding non-residential properties, especially the three sides that are County park land that will have lighted ball fields on them.

(E) Standard *Whether the proposed use is compatible with other existing or proposed uses in the neighborhood, and adjacent parcels.*

Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries is compatible with the surrounding non-residential uses, especially with Phil Bolen Park which surrounds it on three sides.

(F) Standard *Whether sufficient existing or proposed landscaping, screening and buffering on the site and in the neighborhood to adequately screen surrounding uses.*

Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries does not require any special landscaping, screening, or buffering, given the surrounding land uses. Required landscape buffers are being provided.

(G) Standard *Whether the proposed special exception will result in the preservation of any topographic or physical, natural, scenic, archaeological or historic feature of significant importance.*

Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will have no effect on these features.

- (H) Standard *Whether the proposed special exception will damage existing animal habitat, vegetation, water quality (including groundwater) or air quality.*
- Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will have no effect on these features.
- (I) Standard *Whether the proposed special exception at the specified location will contribute to or promote the welfare or convenience of the public.*
- Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will allow the playing fields to be used after dark, thus increasing the number of participants that can take part in the LYSA programs.
- (J) Standard *Whether the traffic expected to be generated by the proposed use will be adequately and safely served by roads, pedestrian connections and other transportation services.*
- Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will have an insignificant impact on traffic generation, given that most trips are coming to the property prior to the lights being on, and generally, the period of time the lights will be on is after the P.M. peak period.
- (K) Standard *Whether, in the case of existing structures proposed to be converted to uses requiring a special exception, the structures meet all code requirements of Loudoun County.*
- Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will not utilize existing structures.
- (L) Standard *Whether the proposed special exception will be served adequately by essential public facilities and services.*
- Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will be adequately served but the public facilities serving the permitted recreation use.
- (M) Standard *The effect of the proposed special exception on groundwater supply.*
- Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will no affect on groundwater supply.
- (N) Standard *Whether the proposed use will affect the structural capacity of the soils.*
- Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will have no affect on the soils.
- (O) Standard *Whether the proposed use will negatively impact orderly and safe road development and transportation.*
- Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will have an insignificant impact on traffic generation, given that most trips are coming to the

property prior to the lights being on, and generally, the period of time the lights will be on is after the P.M. peak period.

(P) Standard *Whether the proposed special exception use will provide desirable employment and enlarge the tax base by encouraging economic development activities consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.*

Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will increase the viability of this private recreational use, possibly making Loudoun County a more desirable place to locate.

(Q) Standard *Whether the proposed special exception considers the needs of agriculture, industry, and businesses in future growth.*

Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will have no direct impact on these sectors of the economy; the underlying recreation use is permitted, and supported by the General Plan for this Business community.

(R) Standard *Whether adequate on and off-site infrastructure is available.*

Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will be well served by the infrastructure in place to serve the permitted recreation use.

(S) Standard *Any anticipated odors which may be generated by the uses on site, and which may negatively impact adjacent uses.*

Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will have no impact on odors generated by the property.

(T) Standard *Whether the proposed special exception uses provide sufficient measure to mitigate the impact of construction traffic on existing neighborhoods and school areas.*

Analysis Lighting that exceeds the allowed limits at the property boundaries will have no increase in construction traffic compared to if the permitted lights met the Ordinance regulations regarding limits at the property boundaries.

VI. ATTACHMENTS	PAGE #
1. Review Agency Comments	
a. Building and Development, Zoning Administration (02/19/10)	A-01
b. Planning, Comprehensive Planning (02/22/10)	A-03
c. Office of Transportation Services (03/19/10)	A-06
d. Parks, Recreation, and Community Services (03/19/10)	A-17
e. Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services (02/18/10)	A-19
f. Town of Leesburg / Airport (02/04/10)	A-20
2. Applicant's Statement of Justification (January 7, 2010)	A-21
3. Applicant's Response to Referral Comments (04/09/10)	A-31
4. Disclosure of Real Parties in Interest (signed 04/22/10)	A-43
5. Reaffirmation of Disclosure of Real Parties in Interest Affidavit (signed 04/22/10)	A-56
Special Exception Plat Set (November 16, 2009, revised 04/02/10)	Attached