

Statement of Justification

SPEX 2012-0036- Brambleton Regional Park Sport Field Lighting

Special Exception approval to allow lighted sports fields at Brambleton Regional Park

Project Background and Goals

The purpose of this special exception request is for sports fields lighting of the nine (9) fields at the Brambleton Regional Park at the intersection of Route 659 relocated and Existing Route 659.

This park site is subject to ZMAP 1993-0005, ZCPA 1993-0007, SPEX 1993-0017. The site has been constructed per Loudoun County Site Plan STPL 2010-0022. Loudoun County Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services has requested that a special exception application be made to permit the nine (9) sports fields to be lighted. Lighted fields are not included in the original land use approvals, as condition of approval F.4. – states that the fields can be lighted with approval of a special exception.

I. Issues For Consideration

Below are set forth the criteria under Section 6-1310 of the Revised Ordinance to be addressed in this Special Exception and the manner in which the criteria are addressed by the application and the proposed facility:

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

Yes- This proposed facility is consistent with the Revised General Plan (Suburban Policy- Open Space Uses) as well as the Loudoun County Parks and Recreation (PRCS) standard that all sports fields be lighted.

In addition the proposal is in conformance from a Green Infrastructure perspective. The proposed lighting is based on 50% Energy savings over previous technologies, 50% less spill and glare over previous technologies.

The proposal continues to honor the Beaverdam Creek Reservoir Setback allowing the wildlife corridor to continue uninterrupted along Beaverdam Creek.

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

The facility will continue to meet all applicable building codes with respect to fire safety and measures of fire control.

(C) 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; AND

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

Neither noise, nor glare nor light generated by the proposed lighting is anticipated to be of concern or to negatively affect adjacent uses. This has substantial buffers surrounding all the existing playing fields with an approved Tree Conservation Plan as part of STPL 2010-0022. This existing vegetation is to remain as well as the proposed vegetation as part of the approval. Additionally, the proposed lighting never exceeds what is currently allowed per county standards (10FC) for publicly owned fields used for competition (zoning ordinance section 5-1504).

The proposed Foot Candles at the property line actually meet the more stringent requirement of .25 FC for the over **90%** of the perimeter of the site. There is approximately **18500 LF** of site perimeter boundary and there is approximately **1700 LF (9%)** of perimeter boundary in which the Foot Candle is between .25 and 4.13 FC.

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

This use is compatible with the existing uses surrounding the existing park. The lighting of these fields satisfies a need to extend the availability of playing fields in eastern Loudoun County.

(F) Whether sufficient existing or proposed landscaping, screening and buffering on the site and in the neighborhood, and adjacent parcels.

The majority of the land surrounding the existing field locations is existing vegetation to remain and / or NVRPA parkland. The park and fields on the east side of Belmont Ridge Road are adjacent to residentially zoned lands but the northern parcel is heavily buffered by Tree Conservation Area and the parcel to the south is also buffered by Tree Conservation Area and proposed planting per the approved Site Plan. The western most portion of the park is heavily wooded and buffer from all surrounding uses. The 300' foot Beaverdam Creek Reservoir Buffer has been honored with the approved site plan. The conserved tree canopy combined with the proposed planting per the approved site plan exceeds 35% of the total regional park site. This will remain unchanged with this Special Exception approval.

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

The proposed special exception preserves the existing regional park facilities. That being said the natural existing topography, treesave and forested wetlands. As mentioned above, the 300' foot Beaverdam Creek Reservoir Buffer has been honored with the approved site plan. The conserved tree canopy combined with the proposed planting per the approved site plan exceeds 35% of the total regional park site, which will remain unchanged with this Special Exception approval.

There are no archaeological or historic feature of significant importance within the site.

(H) Whether the proposed special exception will damage existing animal habitat, vegetation, water quality (including groundwater) or air quality.

This wildlife corridor along Beaverdam Creek Reservoir will continue to be preserved for this Park. As the site is currently developed as a Regional Park, limited disturbance will take place in order to install the field lighting. There will be no further damage of existing animal habitats, vegetation water or air quality from the installation of the lighting.

(I) Whether the proposed special exception at the specified location will contribute to or promote the welfare or convenience of the public.

The majority of the use from the lighting is demanded by Fall League play. By extending the playing season deeper into the Fall, the lighting of these fields does contribute to the services demanded by the citizens of Loudoun County.

(J) 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.

The park is well served by existing transportation facilities. Route 659/ Belmont Ridge Road bisects the park. An 8' multi-use trail links the parking, playing fields and the residential properties to the north, south and directly to the east. The lighting of the fields will not generate any more peak hour trips by the park facilities. The field lighting extends the playing time and availability of the fields past the PM peak hour trips (time).

(K) Whether, in case of existing structure proposed to be converted to uses required a special exception, the structures meet all code requirements of Loudoun County.

There are no existing structures in the park at this time.

(L) Whether the proposed special exception will be served adequately by essential public facilities and services.

The proposed lighting does not require public facilities. There is adequate power, supplied by Dominion Power, for the lights.

(M) The effect of the proposed special exception on groundwater supply.

It is not anticipated that the proposed special exception will have an adverse effect on groundwater supply.

(N) Whether the proposed use will affect the structural capacity of the soils.

It is not anticipated that the proposed special exception will have an adverse effect on the structural capacity of the soils on the Property. The proposed footings for the light poles will meet applicable building codes and will be properly reviewed by Loudoun County.

(O) Whether the proposed use will negatively impact orderly and safe road development and transportation.

The proposed use will not negatively affect road development or transportation. The proposal is consistent with the Revised Countywide Transportation Plan.

(P) 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.

The proposal extends the play-ability and availability these fields can be used for PRCS and other league play. These fields are in very high demand and lighting the fields is especially important in Fall playing seasons extending the use

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

The proposal is intended to help meet the Parks and Recreation needs of Loudoun County residents. This helps fulfill goals and objectives of Loudoun County PRCS which translates to better quality of life for the Citizens of Loudoun County.

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

Adequate infrastructure fully exists for this facility.

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

No odors will be generated by the uses on the site which will negatively impact adjacent uses.

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

There will be no adverse impact of construction traffic on existing neighborhoods and school due to the limited construction necessary to install the lighting. In addition there will be no construction traffic in adjacent neighborhoods due to the direct access from the park to Belmont Ridge Road.

II. SUMMARY

The proposed Special Exception for the lighting of these playing fields is an important step to the full completion of Brambleton Regional and Community Park while these original proffers from the Brambleton rezoning have been fulfilled, the lighting of the fields for optimum playtime and use is a valuable asset for Loudoun County.

III. COMMUNITY MEETINGS

The Applicant will hold a community outreach meeting in advance of each of the required public hearings at a location central to the project.