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October 18, 2019

Lucy Kempf
Executive Director
Metropolitan Planning Commission
Howard Office Building
700 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210

Dear Director Kempf,

Please find attached to this correspondence letters from schools, community leaders and partners, and residents of the Edgehill community in support of the batting facility at Rose Park Middle School. With the exception of the letter from David Proffitt at MNPS, these letters were prepared in support of the facility in response to the Item A Appeal that was recently considered by the Board of Zoning Appeals. As you may know, the BZA voted to uphold the determination of the Zoning Administrator to permit the construction of the batting facility at Rose Park Middle School.

I am submitting these letters to you because we have not had time to secure updated letters of support directed to the Planning Commission since being notified that this matter will be on the agenda of the Planning Commission this Thursday.

Please distribute these materials to the members of the commission.

Sincerely,

Jason B. Rogers
Vice President for Administration and University Counsel

Information
Batting Facility at Rose Park Middle School
to be Built by Belmont University

- Metro Nashville Public Schools and Belmont University propose to build (at Belmont's expense) \$6,000,000 indoor batting practice facility on the property of Rose Park Magnet Math and Science Middle School.
- The building is the result of 2.5 years of working with Metro Parks, MNPS, Metro Council members, nonprofits, local congregations and the community.
- The building will be a community education facility that will be owned by Metro Nashville Public Schools and shared by MNPS, nonprofit organization RBI, Inc., and Belmont University. It will provide educational and mentoring opportunities for the MNPS student athletes and children attending MNPS schools who participate in an after school program that will utilize Carter Lawrence Elementary, Rose Park Middle, the Easley Community Center and all the athletic venues at Rose Park.
- The MNPS-led afterschool program in collaboration with neighborhood churches and non-profits will feed children a hot meal, teach academic skills led by Metro teachers with individual assistance for each child from neighborhood church members and Belmont students, and provide performing arts and sports to promote life-long healthy choices. The enrichment program is planned to be a model that can be implemented at all MNPS schools to develop well-rounded, academically proficient, and physically healthy children.
- The main floor of the facility will be dedicated to the athletic development of student athletes from MNPS, MNPS students participating in MNPS after school programming and Belmont student athletes. It will include batting practice areas, storage rooms, restrooms and office space that will be shared by MNPS, Belmont and Returning Baseball to the Inner Cities (RBI) a nonprofit organization founded by Major League Baseball dedicated to teaching children the game. The second floor will be space to be used by Belmont for locker room, athletic therapy and treatment, meeting and administrative space.
- Belmont will pay for the entire cost of construction, an annual grant payment of \$35,000 to use the facility, and for the maintenance and upkeep of the facility.
- A portion of the grant paid by Belmont will fund Saturday operating hours for the Easley Community Center at Rose Park.
- This will be the only indoor batting facility on MNPS property and will be available to MNPS baseball, softball, and golf teams as well as after school program participants at no charge.
- The facility builds on the successful collaboration between Belmont and Metro Parks on Rose Park property which has resulted the investment of over \$13,000,000 by Belmont in the Edgehill community including costs of improvement at the park, scholarships for MNPS graduates attending Belmont University, maintenance and upkeep, and annual lease payments by Belmont benefitting the Easley Community Center and the PTOs at Carter Lawrence and Rose Park Schools.
- In 2018-19, Belmont utilized the athletic venues at Rose Park 13% of the time the park was open and available for use by the public.
- Since the venues opened in 2011, Belmont has sponsored at least 74 programs and initiatives designed to meet the housing, health, recreation, arts and cultural needs of the Edgehill community.
- To date in 2019 at least 64 outside groups have reserved the athletic venues at Rose Park for their activities.



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2601 Bransford Avenue, B-215 · Nashville, TN 37204

David Proffitt, AIA

Executive Director

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david.proffitt@mmps.org

October 17, 2019

Ms. Lucy Kempf
Executive Director
Metropolitan Planning Commission
Howard Office Building
700 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210.

RE: Education and Sports

Dear Director Kempf,

There has been debate in the past few weeks and days about how the batting facility at Rose Park Middle School will benefit children educationally. In conjunction with our Director of Extended Learning, Dr Jennifer Bell, we wanted to offer some clarity on that subject so there are no misunderstandings on this subject.

Athletics and afterschool programs play an integral role in student success. These programs foster positive mentorship, build confidence, promote teamwork, and afford students an opportunity to engage in a program of interest. In a city in which crime rates peak between the hours of 3:00pm-8:00pm, it is critical that we seek to expand opportunities for students to engage in a positive experience as opposed to negative and/or unsafe influences in the communities in which they live.

Out of school time programs have a proven impact on student success. As indicated below, out of school time programs impact our Metro Schools Key Performance Indicators for student success. As you will see, student learning does not cease at dismissal. Every opportunity to engage in a child's life increases their potential to succeed...That is what education is about....

- According to the Afterschool Alliance, 50% of students who attend an afterschool program regularly improved language arts grades.
- A meta-analysis of 68 studies of afterschool programs reported that students who participated in afterschool programs that used evidence-based practices saw significant improvement in their school-day attendance.
- Statewide evaluations of 21st Century Community Learning Centers have found the programs to have a positive impact on their students' school-day attendance.
- According to the Afterschool Alliance, 60% of students who attend an afterschool program regularly improved behavior in class.
- A 2016 evaluation found that the school-day disciplinary incidence rate for high school students attending the program for 60 days or more was 23 percent lower than students who did not participate in the program.

- According to the Afterschool Alliance, 50% of students who attend an afterschool program regularly improved math grades.
- A study of approximately 3,000 low-income, ethnically diverse elementary and middle school students found that those who regularly attended high-quality programs for more than two years gained up to 20 percentiles in standardized math test scores compared with peers who were routinely unsupervised during the afterschool hours

It should be easy to reconcile, with the above statistics, that afterschool programs and sports, and by extension their facilities, play an integral role in educating our children. To think that this facility could not be a part of that educational experience would be saying no sport could play a role in a child's welfare and their educational opportunities. We know otherwise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Proffitt", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David R Proffitt, AIA, Architect
Executive Director
Facilities Maintenance and Construction
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

CC: File
Dr. Jennifer Bell, Ed



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September 16, 2019

Board of Zoning Appeals
c/o Ms. Emily Lamb
700 Second Avenue North
Nashville, TN 37210

Dear Members of the Board of Zoning Appeals:

An Item A Appeal challenging the right of Metro Nashville Public Schools and Belmont University to build an indoor batting practice facility on the property of Rose Park Magnet Math and Science Middle School will be considered by the Board of Zoning Appeals at its meeting on September 19th. The facility will be owned by Metro Nashville Public Schools and shared by MNPS, nonprofit organization RBI, Inc., and Belmont University and will provide educational and mentoring opportunities for the children at Rose Park Middle School and other children in the Nashville community. As such, the use of this MNPS owned facility on MNPS owned property is consistent with community education uses for the children of Nashville.

For the past two and a half years Metro Nashville Public Schools, Belmont, and the Metro Nashville Parks and Recreation Department have been engaged in discussions about a batting facility at Rose Park. These discussions were prompted by Metro Parks' announcement in early 2017 that the batting practice facility constructed by Belmont in 2003 at Greer Stadium for use by Belmont and the Nashville Sounds would be torn down when the stadium was removed. The discussions included six meetings between Belmont representatives and a group representing concerned neighbors facilitated by council member Colby Sledge. In addition, Councilman Sledge hosted three community-wide meetings to provide information about a proposed new batting facility at Rose Park. Over the past two years, three different sites for the facility on Metro Parks' property within Rose Park have been discussed and in that time two different sites were approved by the Metro Parks Board. Yet, the concerns of a few vocal community members persisted and Belmont withheld beginning construction in a good faith attempt to address the concerns.

Last fall MNPS officials approached Belmont about locating the facility on Rose Park Middle School property rather than the E.S. Rose Park property and the opportunities such a facility would create for the students at Rose Park and the community. In late November, the Board of Public Education approved an agreement for the facility to be located adjacent to the school and grading work commenced on that site in late June, 2019. Belmont University is fully funding the construction of the building which will be the property of MNPS and will be operated by Belmont for the benefit of MNPS' teams and teams associated with MNPS' Extended Learning Site (after school enrichment program) at Rose Park as well as Belmont teams and Major League Baseball's RBI Program (a nonprofit dedicated to giving children who live in the inner city the opportunity to play baseball and softball). As the batting facility will be adjacent to E.S. Rose

Park, the baseball and softball venue that Metro Parks and the neighborhood share with Belmont, the location is ideal. Furthermore, MNPS desires a partnership with Belmont at this location so that it may implement MNPS sports programs at the facility to pilot a physical health component of its afterschool program.

According to the agreement between MNPS and Belmont, scheduling staff and supervision of the batting facility will be provided by Belmont as well as shared office space for Belmont's building supervisor and RBI/MNPS staff. In addition, Belmont will provide funding to support this initiative in the amount of \$35,000 a year which will enable Metro Parks to meet the request of Edgehill neighbors to maintain Saturday operating hours for the Easley Center.

Over the past 12 years Belmont University has invested \$13,016,525 in the athletic facilities at E.S. Rose Park on Parks Board property. The investment includes the cost of the improvements, annual payments to the Parks Department and the Parent Teacher Organizations of Carter Lawrence Elementary and Rose Park Math and Science Academic Magnet Middle School, maintenance and operation of the improvements, and \$1,795,981 in Belmont University college scholarships to graduates of MNPS schools who live in the area. And just like the collaboration between Belmont University and the Metro Nashville Board of Parks and Recreation, the completion of the batting practice facility will benefit all parties involved: the community, MNPS, Belmont and most importantly the young people who attend our public schools. The students of both MNPS and Belmont will refine their skills in a facility that is unmatched anywhere in Metro and will learn from each other through the programs that bring them together. Belmont University looks forward to working with Metro Nashville Public Schools and the community to make the batting facility at Rose Park Middle School a success.

I am attaching, for your consideration and review, letters of support from key community partners. I hope that these documents will provide further confirmation that the agreement between Belmont and Metro Parks is a public/private collaboration that holds wonderful promise for student athletes of MNPS, Belmont and children living in the Edgehill community who are interested in developing their baseball and softball skills.

On Thursday the 19th, please vote to reject the Item A Appeal challenging zoning staff decision to approve a building permit for this facility.

Sincerely,



Robert C. Fisher
President

September 12, 2019

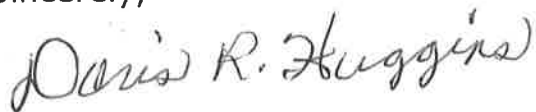
Board of Zoning Appeals
700 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210

Members of the Board of Zoning Appeals:

I currently serve as the Co-Chair for Organized Neighbors of Edgehill and conducted our monthly meeting on July 16th when we were asked to distribute a letter to candidates for office to oppose building a batting facility at Rose Park Middle School. At the meeting, those present voted to not distribute such a letter. No board member had contacted me prior to our meeting or expressed verbally or in writing that they authorized another member to vote on their behalf since they would be unable to attend our meeting. It was several days later when those attending that July 16th meeting learned that the letter was sent to candidates running in the general election even though we had voted not to send the letter.

At our next meeting on August 20th, which I also conducted, the minutes of our previous meeting was approved. Again, there had been no requests for proxy voting. Our agenda did not include discussion of submitting an Item A Appeal to ask that a batting facility not be built at Rose Park School and we took no vote to submit an appeal to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doris R. Huggins".

Doris Huggins, Co-Chair,
Organized Neighbors of Edgehill

September 12, 2019

Board of Zoning Appeals
700 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210

Dear Members of the Board,

As president of the Resident Association for Edgehill Apartments, I am a tenant and elected to represent all of the families living in 380 public housing units. There have been at least four meetings for neighbors to discuss putting a batting facility in our community.

Our Association has discussed the facility and feel that it would directly benefit our children and grandchildren. While we like green space, we know that there is a greater need to have our kids productively occupied after school. While some children's parents in our gentrified community can get in a station wagon to go to Brentwood for their children to play baseball or soccer, it is more environmentally friendly for us to go across the street to Rose Park or Easley soccer where there is a well-kept, state-of-the-art sports facility. While some kids' parents can pay for their kids to be tutored or to take ACT prep classes, it is more beneficial and cost effective for our kids to get academic support from a Metro School run program right in their own neighborhood.

I have been a part of Metro Schools planning team to do an enrichment program in Edgehill. This comprehensive program includes hot meals for our kids, academic support, and a choice of arts and sports, one of which will be baseball. The batting facility, that has been under discussion for too long in our neighborhood, will mean our kids have the opportunity to practice and get better and better so that when they compete outside our neighborhood, they are not awed by a facility in another city or another part of the city because they have the best right in their own neighborhood. It is time to stop talking about this and build this facility at Rose Park School to give our children and other teams in Metro Schools a place where they can go to practice, be excellent, so that it improves their chances to get scholarships to go college.

Neighborhood churches, non-profits, Metro Parks, Metro Schools, and the Edgehill Apartments Residents Association are all on board. Let's do this. I hope you vote to say that plans for the batting facility at Rose Park School does indeed conform to zoning as your own staff already says it does.

Sincerely,


Brenda Morrow, President

MDHA Edgehill Apartments Residents Association



*Watson Grove Missionary Baptist Church
1415 Horton Avenue
Nashville, TN 37212
(615) 298-4045 Church
(615) 383-0121 Fax
Rev. Dr. John R. Faison Sr., Senior Pastor
www.thegrovenash.org*

September 9, 2019

Emily Lamb and the Board of Zoning Appeals
Board of Zoning Appeals
700 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Watson Grove Baptist Church, which I have the privilege of serving, has 2,400 members. We are located adjacent to Edgehill Apartments and are a few blocks away from Metro Parks Easley Center and Rose Park Middle School. Many of our congregants live in the Edgehill area, and we are known for community activism and our connection to community.

Watson Grove has had a representative on a planning group for a much needed afterschool and Saturday enrichment program for our youth to include academic support, arts, STEAM, wellness, and sports activities. As a partner in the program, Metro Schools desired to place a batting facility on its property so that they offer the facility as a resource to Metro Schools' baseball and softball teams, youth sports teams, and Belmont University teams.

As I interact with families in our neighborhood, I try to understand their needs and work with them to find a way to address those needs. I am clear that we need to equip our children with skills to succeed. They need academic skills. They need to learn how to be healthy. They need to develop team building skills that allows them to thrive in a work environment as adults. Many families in this rapidly gentrifying can drive their children to more affluent places to play soccer, baseball and softball, but many of the children we serve are not exposed to opportunities because they lack transportation.

Having a first-class batting facility conveniently located at Rose Park School speaks volumes to our children without saying a word. It says that adults who control organizations and policy can come together to demonstrate that they care about our kids, that our kids will not be left behind, that we will provide the best facilities where our kids can put forth their best efforts to be their best in life. Metro Schools, Metro Parks, area non-profits, area churches, and Belmont have come together to support our children. Watson Grove is on the team, and I hope that you are too. Please vote to support the zoning staff's determination that a batting facility at Rose Park School is consistent with zoning. Such a vote will benefit schools, residents, community, and the

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GROWING His Kingdom*

university in our neighborhood. Let our neighborhood be the model for working together. In the end, it all benefits Nashville.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Faison, Sr.", written in a cursive style.

John R. Faison, Sr., DMin.
Senior Pastor

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GROWING His Kingdom*



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September 10, 2019

Ms. Emily Lamb and Board of Zoning Appeals
700 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210

Dear Board of Zoning Appeals:

I have been a part of the team, spearheaded by Metro Nashville Public Schools, planning an enrichment program for the Edgehill community.

We want a batting facility to be located on the Rose Park Middle Magnet School grounds. As principal of Rose Park Middle, I am excited about having the facility become a part of our campus and having MNPS teams use this facility along with Metro Parks and Recreation, non-profit youth baseball organizations, and Belmont University.

We envision that Rose Park Middle will be the site for a hot meal after school. After eating, youth in the enrichment program will go to Easley and Rose Park for academic skills before they attend their preference for physical activity -- sports, dance, theater, etc. We have all come together to plan for how all that is needed will be contained in the block including Carter Lawrence, Easley Center, Rose Park Athletic Facility, and Rose Park Middle School and be easily accessible to children and their parents. Having the batting facility conveniently located on our site and near the sports complex at Rose Park will help to facilitate success of our plan.

I implore you to vote to endorse the BZA staff's determination that the batting facility is consistent with zoning. The batting facility is essential for us to achieve our goal to improve academic skills for our children and have them learn now to live an active lifestyle.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rommie L. Vasser, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rommie L. Vasser, Jr.
Executive Principal
Rose Park Magnet Middle School



September 10, 2019

Board of Zoning Appeals
c/o Ms. Emily Lamb
700 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210

Ms. Lamb and the Members of the Board of Zoning Appeals:

Carter Lawrence Elementary Magnet School is located on the corner of Edgehill Avenue and 12th Avenue South. Many of our students already participate in the afterschool program at Metro Parks and Recreation's Easley Center, the community center located in Rose Park. Because the park is adjacent to Carter Lawrence Elementary, we also utilize the sports complex at Rose Park as a part of our daily programming.

Children at Rose Park Elementary, as well as the children who are residents of Edgehill, will be offered the opportunity to be a part of the enrichment program being planned for our community by Metro Nashville Public Schools. Carter Lawrence, a partner in the program, is intended to be the place where dance will be taught to kids who choose that option. We have also planned for the children who choose baseball as their option for the enrichment component's health component to learn the rules of the game and have the opportunity to batting training at the batting facility, which we hope will be at Rose Park Middle School, also adjacent to the park.

We want our children to have use of the batting facility to be shared by Metro Schools, Metro Parks, non-profit baseball teams, and Belmont University. Thus, we urge you to vote to uphold the decision of the BZA staff that building the batting facility at Rose Park Middle Magnet School conforms to zoning regulations.

Cordially,

Sherleta Sanders, Ed. D.
Executive Principal and Chief Energy Officer
Carter Lawrence Elementary Magnet School



September 10, 2019

Board of Zoning Appeals
c/o Ms. Emily Lamb
700 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210

Members of the Board of Zoning Appeals:

Salama Urban Ministries is a faith based youth development organization, focused on academics, performing arts and spiritual development. We have been a part of the Edgehill community for 34 years and we remain committed to partnerships which help to support the growth and development of our community's youth specifically, and the community as a whole, collectively. To that end, Salama has been meeting with Metro Nashville Public Schools, Metro Parks, Edgehill Apartments representatives, and Belmont University regarding the development of an enrichment program for children in the Edgehill community. Salama's contribution to this program will be teaching performing arts. The enrichment program, to include academic support, will also expose our children to sports: basketball, soccer, baseball, football, lacrosse, etc., at the Sports Complex at Rose Park.

Metro Nashville Public Schools is requesting that a batting facility be built on the Rose Park Middle School site so that students who are a part of the enrichment program, students in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools baseball programs, Reviving Baseball Ball in Inner Cities, and Belmont University will share use of the facility. As we instruct kids enrolled in performing arts in developing and honing the craft, the children who choose baseball will also be learning the skills which help win games and helps the players to become more comfortable as they learn to bat.

As a part of the planning team for our enrichment program, I write to ask each of you for your vote to confirm that a batting facility for Rose Park School is consistent with zoning as already determined by the Board of Zoning Appeals staff.

Sincerely,

Dawana L. Wade
Chief Executive Officer

September 6, 2019

Emily Lamb and Board of Zoning Appeals
Board of Zoning Appeals
700 Second Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37210

Dear Members of the Board of Zoning Appeals and Ms. Lamb,

This letter comes to support the partnership between Metro Nashville Public Schools and Belmont University to construct an indoor batting facility at Rose Park Middle Magnet School.

I sponsored the original agreement approved by the Metro Council in 2007 that provided for an athletic facility at Metro Parks' Rose Park that would be owned by Metro Parks and utilized by Carter Lawrence, Rose Park Middle, Metro Parks Easley Center, the community and Belmont University because I knew that our youth needed access to a state-of-the-art sports facility. This partnership has worked well and has proved successful.

Everyone can agree that "practice makes perfect". Currently, students playing on Metro Schools' baseball teams have no batting facility where they can perfect their batting skills. Putting a batting facility on property owned by MNPS maximizes use of a facility to be built by Belmont University, owned by MNPS, and utilized by teams at MNPS, Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (the non-profit operating baseball and softball teams for underserved communities), and Belmont. This partnership with MNPS, Belmont, and Metro Parks will also allow MNPS to operate a one-of-a-kind afterschool enrichment program that includes academics and sports for the Edgehill community. This enrichment program can be replicated throughout Metro to address bettering our kids' learning skills while simultaneously promoting active, healthy lifestyles.

I urge you to vote to approve the batting facility sorely needed by Metro Schools to be put at Rose Park Middle School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ludy N. Wallace" followed by a stylized flourish.

Ludy N. Wallace
Former Metro 17th District Councilman