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[MPC Comment] Boys & Girls Club Expansion - March 12, 2015 MPC Agenda Item

1 message

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Dear MPC Commissioners, et. al.,

As a former Boys & Girls Club kid myself, I can speak from experience that the programs provided by Boys & Girls Clubs are vital and integral to the growth and development of many young children. As neighbors to the expanding facility on Caswell Avenue in Old North Knoxville, my partner and I remain excited to see the Boys and Girls Club facility improvements and program expansion and look forward to the investment being made in said property.

As a direct neighbor to the facility, I just want to make sure that the expansion plans are done in the most sensitive manner to the surrounding residential houses. We believe MPC can include requirements to soften the transition between this facility and the surrounding residences bordering the Boys & Girls Club on several sides and we kindly ask for consideration in this regard.

The March 12, 2015 MPC agenda Use on Review Report (<http://agenda.knoxmpc.org/agenda.pdf>) causes concern by stating "there are some houses still located in the immediate vicinity of the site, however, the predominant use in the immediate area are various types of commercial enterprises." On the contrary, there are actually residences bordering the Boys & Girls Club on Baxter Avenue, Silver Place and Irwin Street. In fact, Baxter Avenue is strongly residential on the side facing the Club property, including my residence. You see, the Club is essentially in my front yard with the current (to be demolished) Gene Monday Gym a mere 96 feet from my bedroom.

As most people know, a home is often a family's largest investment. I can say that about my home – it's my largest investment by far and something I take great pride in. So how can we make this a win-win for all? It's important to consider the needs of the Club but also foster a responsible and gentle transition to the neighboring residences facing Club entrances, buildings and detention pond.

Several Old North Knoxville neighbors met with Boys & Girls Club leadership in very early January to learn more about the project and also express some concerns about the plans. The areas of most interest discussed then, still include:

- **Light pollution:** The current facility includes eight VERY BRIGHT exterior lights. We would like to kindly request that the design team carefully consider the intensity, direction and type of lighting used on the property and affixed to the new structures. As it is now, our shades/curtains cannot black out the light being emitted into our home every night, all night.

- **Traffic control:** Baxter Avenue specifically is a double-line street; however, given the residential nature of the area, we hope that bus traffic for the Club will be carefully considered. As it is, the only parking available to the Baxter Avenue (and other streets) properties is on-street parking.
- **Detention pond location, maintenance, appearance and fencing:** The current plan doesn't seem to suggest any type of attractive (non-chain link) fencing or shrubbery/greenery surrounding the pond. We are concerned about not only the appearance of the feature, but also the safety of passersby and the potential attraction of mosquitos and/or rodents.
- **Loudspeaker volume:** From approximately 3pm-7pm during the week, neighboring residences can hear an incredibly loud speaker system announcing parent arrivals during child pick-up times. Attention to the location of the speakers, the system and volume of said system would be greatly appreciated.
- **Dumpster location, garbage retrieval times:** There is a problem at other commercial properties in our neighborhood with collection happening at 3am; as you can imagine, it's quite loud and, given the proximity of several residences to the dumpster(s) location, this is still an item in which we're keenly interested.

Our families thank you so very much for taking these concerns into consideration when determining the best path forward. Again, we remain excited about the new developments in our neighborhood and look forward to jointly figuring out how this can be a win-win for all involved.

With great thanks,

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