



**ARLINGTON COUNTY
SPORTS COMMISSION**
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 414
Arlington, Virginia 22201



March 6, 2017

Honorable Jay Fisette
Chair, Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Losing an Ultimate Field in Arlington County

Dear Chairman Fisette,

I am writing to request that the County Board not approve the final use permit for the Stratford Middle School as it is being proposed. Instead, I request that the County Board direct Arlington Public Schools (APS) to redesign the school's proposed athletic field and parking lot to maximize open space and increase the number of sports that can make full use of the field.

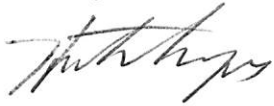
This field is currently used by both recreational soccer and ultimate frisbee teams and is the most heavily used field for high school-age ultimate frisbee teams in the county. APS' proposal to use a portion of the field for parking reduces the field to 100 yards long, below the 120 yards required for a regulation ultimate frisbee field. Participation in ultimate frisbee is rapidly growing in Arlington and only last Fall became an official APS sport. Eliminating this current regulation size ultimate frisbee field will make it exceedingly difficult to meet the field needs for this sport on both a recreational and school basis.

Furthermore, converting athletic field space into parking sets a terrible precedent. As you know, the county cannot meet the current demand by county residents for scheduled recreational sports fields. Therefore, reducing the amount of athletic field space available should never be an option taken lightly. The County Board recently closely scrutinized the need for parking at the Wilson School site. The Board should apply the same level of scrutiny to parking requirements at the Stratford Middle School site.

From our February 28, 2017, briefing by APS on the proposed use permit, it appears that the proposal did not fully consider the sport of ultimate frisbee by non-APS users and APS teams in regards to athletic fields size in its decision-making process. While APS took care to preserve a regulation size soccer field, APS did not appear to have given adequate consideration of other sports users of these fields. It should be noted that the original field design in the use permit was developed prior to August 2016, when APS dedicated \$90,000 to launch the sport of ultimate frisbee in every middle school and high school in Arlington County.

The Sports Commission stands ready to bring the perspective of the broad range of sports user groups to these projects in the future, if brought in early as members of the Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC) to ensure that all relevant perspectives are fully considered.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heather Cocozza". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Heather Cocozza

Chair, Sports Commission