



**OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT
MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL**

November 7, 2012

Mr. Isiah Leggett
County Executive
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD 20850

Ms. Shirley Brandman, President
Montgomery County Board of Education
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Leggett and Ms. Brandman,

We write you today regarding a matter with which you are very familiar: the fate of the Brickyard Road Junior High School site in Potomac.

In our view, there are four very legitimate interests at issue here: (1) the desire of affected communities to have input into the disposition of public property; (2) the documented need for more soccer fields downcounty; (3) promoting the benefits of healthy eating and organic farming; and (4) the interests of the school system in being able to reclaim land that they may need in the future. Regrettably, in the current environment, these interests have been pitted against each other. The way this matter has unfolded has been ugly and costly to everyone involved, including our County and the school system. We do not think this result is either necessary or inevitable.

As you know, the Circuit Court of Montgomery County recently stayed the lease of the property from the Board of Education to the County. Now that Judge Greenberg has essentially hit the pause button, we believe you have an opportunity to take a step back. Applying a renewed sense of public engagement and collaboration, we believe it may be possible to craft a solution that addresses all of the legitimate interests at stake here. Such an outcome is not guaranteed of course, and would depend upon the good will of all stakeholders to be willing to collaborate in an open ended, transparent process that seeks "win-win" solutions.

We are aware of at least three possible approaches that could be considered in such a process:

- One such approach that has been put forward in the past, which we believe deserves continued consideration, is a compromise at the Brickyard site that would continue the current organic farming use and incorporate a reduced number of fields from that which is currently contemplated. The site's twenty acres suggest that such a compromise could be feasible.
- An alternative approach would be to consider installing additional ball fields at an already existing park, such as Avenel Local Park. Members of the community have suggested that this park does not make the most efficient use of existing space, that more soccer fields could possibly be accommodated there, and that making the

maximum use of an existing asset would be a more amenable solution than creating an entirely new location.

- Finally, Park and Planning staff have identified other potential sites in the downcounty, including publicly owned land, that could possibly be used for soccer. We believe you would be well served by exploring these options, with full stakeholder and public participation, and assessing whether there are in fact other sites that could more easily, and with less adverse community impact, accommodate additional soccer fields.

We deeply regret the continued anxiety that this issue has caused our constituents and the uncertainty to Montgomery Soccer, Inc, which successfully applied to the RFP. The court's "stay" very clearly indicates that none of the stakeholders are guaranteed a victory in this contest. Bringing the best of Montgomery County to bear, we believe it may be possible to find common ground and put this matter behind us. Accordingly, we urge you to seriously consider using this "time out" to consider fresh approaches and a transparent process to meeting each of the legitimate needs of our community that has been raised by this divisive debate.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Phil Andrews
District 3



Roger Berliner
Council President
District 1



Marc Elrich
At Large



Valerie Ervin
District 5



Hans Riemer
At Large

CC: Tim Firestine, Chief Administrative Officer
Joy Nurmi, Office of the County Executive
David Dise, Director, Department of General Services
Gabe Albornoz, Director, Department of Recreation
Sophia Maravell, Education Director, Brickyard Educational Farm
Keith Williams, President, Brickyard Coalition
Doug Scheussler, Executive Director, Montgomery Soccer Inc.