

August 28, 2024

Easton Ehlers
Marin County Community Development Agency
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903

RE: Letter in Opposition to:
Archdiocese of San Francisco Design Review (P4506) - County of Marin

Dear Mr Ehlers,

We reside on Almenar Drive in Greenbrae on the hillside opposite Marin Catholic High School (MC). We purchased our home in 1987 and raised our family here. An amenity of our home is the direct view of Mt. Tamalpais, and this view attracted us to our home in Greenbrae. We continue to enjoy this clear view.

We checked on the noise levels emanating from MC before closing on the purchase of our home. We noted that the noise occurred on weekdays during daylight hours, and on the weekends during daytime athletic events. For us, those noise levels were acceptable.

Now MC is proposing the installation of 80-foot-high lights along with an expansion and extension of their athletic teams' activities into the night. This will mean loud noise at night and the deterioration of our Mt Tamalpais view.

We oppose the lights project and encourage the County government to deny the requisite permits.

Marin County codes and planning policies provide abundant reasons to oppose the MC lights project as follows:

- Marin Municipal Code - Section 22.42 – Design Review

Design Review consists of a review of plans and proposals for land use and design of physical improvements in order to implement the goals of the Countywide Plan and is intended to **ensure that:**

- The natural beauty of the County, and the public's ability to use and enjoy it, **are preserved and encouraged.**
- The design of the built environment respects and preserves **the natural beauty** of the County and the environmental resources found within.
- The exterior appearance of proposed structures, along with their associated landscaping, parking, signs, etc., is compatible and harmonious with the design, scale, and **context of surrounding properties.**

- Kentfield / Greenbrae Community Plan

Goal 10: ...preserve the natural beauty and **view corridors** of the planning area. ...

- Marin Countywide Plan

GOAL DES -1 Preservation of Community Character

DES-1.a : Add Design Components to Community Plans

...respond to local design issues, encourage ridgeline and **viewshed protection**...

- Other planning-related concerns.

1. Enforcement

MC has demonstrated in the past that it engages in scofflaw behavior with respect to lights and sound. MC has provided an outline of expected field usage under the lights proposal.

What if actual usage exceeds expected usage.

What if the lights are left on longer than expected.

In these situations, what agency can be called upon to enforce the field light restrictions.

It is unrealistic to expect the Marin County Sheriff to enforce the light restrictions.

2. We are an impacted community, with nighttime quiet required for relief.

We are impacted by the considerable number of high traffic generators in our small community:

Bon Air shopping center

Marin General Hospital (Marin Health)

Marin Catholic High School

Bacich Elementary School

Kent Middle School

College of Marin

Branson School

Traffic volumes decline in the evening; the evenings are the “quiet time” for our community. We cannot have the noise and traffic from nighttime athletic activity at MC intrude upon our evenings.

3. Traffic Two More Times A Day – MC Shifting Practice / Game Times

MC is a commuter school. Most students reside outside of our community; thus the heavy in/out traffic volumes before and after school.

With the installation of lights, MC will shift practices and games to evenings and nights. The lights proposal goes far beyond allowing a limited number of Friday night football games. Restated the whole athletic program will undergo a time shift. The result will be a second commute period to/from MC.

4. No lights at other high schools in the community

Below are the other high schools in the community along with a notation about field lights:

Redwood High School: No lights

Archie Williams High School: No lights

San Dominico: No lights

Branson School: No lights

5. Domino Effect – Growth Inducing Impacts of MC Lights Installation

The installation of lights at MC will encourage others to install field lights:

Redwood High School – Field is pre-wired for lights.

Archie Williams High School

Bay Club (Kentfield)

6. MC and the community

Please be mindful that MC is a private school with its own private agenda. Excelling at sports is clearly on the agenda.

The installation of the 80 foot high light poles may be a benefit to MC, but the community will bear the burden and suffer the consequences.

Please also be aware that other private high schools in the broader community have arranged to use non-campus sites for their athletic functions. For example, Branson has an agreement with the College of Marin to use its sports fields.

MC should explore such opportunities.

Based on the incompatibility of the MC lights project with many of the Marin code requirements, planning policies, and community principles, I am requesting that the County government deny the MC lights proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Larry Mansbach

Greenbrae

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