

Marin Independent Journal Letter, September 27, 2016

Field lights would change the neighborhood

A recent letter suggesting that Marin Catholic High School field lights represent a community benefit ignores key aspects of the project.

First, there were several flaws in the submitted studies.

The biological site assessment, for example, failed to consider any negative cumulative impacts, which would be required for an environmental report. Marin Catholic's suggestion that the environmental impact of four, 80-foot light towers and 514 night events annually would be "minimal" should itself raise a red flag.

Second, since approximately 85 percent of its students do not live in the local area, Marin Catholic is not a community school. The sole beneficiary of this field lighting proposal is a private school, not the community.

Despite meeting with overwhelming opposition from the community on each of its previous failed attempts for stadium lights, the school continues to try to force this project on its neighbors, all the while calling itself a "community school."

Contrary to the letter's implications, virtually all opponents agree that sports participation should be encouraged, not "politicized and demonized."

The opposition to this project has nothing to do with youth sports and the ability of young people to participate in them. Rather, it focuses on Marin Catholic's assumption that this self-serving, divisive project should not only be allowed to transform our neighborhood, but that we should welcome and embrace it.

The proposal is completely contrary to the premises defined in the Marin Countywide Plan, the Kentfield/Greenbrae Community Plan and the residential character of Marin County in general.

— *Jim McClellan, Preserve Ross Valley*