

Proposal for Lights to be Focused on the Baseball Field at Chevy Chase Park

WHO?

Q: Who is asking for lights on the baseball field?

A: Capitol City Little League, <http://www.capcityll.org/>, is working with the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) <http://dpr.dc.gov/dpr>, to upgrade the quality of the baseball field. Lights focused onto the baseball field are part of the upgrade. This project is part of Mayor Fenty's premier field initiative which is providing high-quality athletic facilities in various neighborhoods across the city.

Q. Who is Cap City LL?

A: Cap City LL is a community-based 501C3 organization that is incorporated in the District of Columbia and run by parents and other volunteers. Part of the national Little League organization, www.littleleague.org, Cap City LL has been providing baseball and softball opportunities for the pre-teen youth of NW Washington for over 20 years. Cap City is administered by a Board of Directors (11) from which officers (4) are elected. There are six divisions (4 baseball and 2 softball) which are run by commissioners (6). Total registration for the 2008 spring season was 475 players. Cap City serves kids ages 5 to 12 who are very closely supervised by a cadre of dedicated parents who are sensitive to the concerns of the neighborhood and their communities.

Q: Who would benefit from having the lights?

A:

- **Cap City LL:** The Cap City LL is growing. With lights, some of Cap City's baseball teams would be able to use the field until 9 p.m. One more game or practice could be played on a day.
- **Chevy Chase families:** Young people and their families need a place to go outside their homes. For many families, the baseball team is an essential part of the village that raises our sons and daughters. Healthy families make a healthy neighborhood.

WHY?

Q: Why is Cap City LL requesting that lights be installed at Chevy Chase baseball field?

A: During the past few years the number of baseball and softball players participating in Cap City LL has almost doubled. In order to continue providing high-quality baseball and softball opportunities, the Chevy Chase baseball field must be converted into a state-of-the art facility that is capable of hosting night games.

Q. Why can't Cap City LL use some other fields in DC to hold games and practices?

A. Cap City and neighboring Northwest are the two biggest LLs in the city. Combined they have over 1,000 registered players. The other three LLs in the city (Satchel Paige, Senators and Wards 7/8) were recently reorganized and reinvigorated under a new District Administrator (Paris Inman). In addition, DPR runs a tee-ball program at recreation centers and the Cal Ripken League uses many baseball fields across the city. As a result, there are no unused fields of the required LL dimensions (bases at 60', pitching rubber at 46' and outfield fence at 200') for which DPR could grant Cap City LL a permit.

How?

Q: How will the lights on the baseball field be configured? Will the lights shine into the neighboring houses?

A: No. Lights will focus directly on the baseball field only. The schematic shows the recommended placement of the focused lights.

Q: How can I be sure the lights will be turned off at 9 p.m.?

A: Participants in Cap City LL are 12 and under. We can all agree that 9 p.m., even on a Saturday night, is the end of the 12-year-old's organized sports day. The 9 p.m. lights out has worked well for the lights on the basketball courts as well.

Q: How will the lights get turned off?

A: The controls for the lights will be in a locked box that is only accessible to DPR and Cap City LL. Managers will be assigned the responsibility to turn off the lights.

Miscellaneous ?s (Noise, Trash, Parking)

Q: What about additional noise?

A: The sounds from the ballpark would be the same as they are now. There are no loudspeakers or PA system being requested.

Q: What about additional trash? The trash cans are overflowing as it is.

A: DPR is working to improve trash collection at Chevy Chase Park. Trash cans overflowing is a problem at the park throughout the year, not just in baseball season. To work on improving this situation, contact DC's Department of Public Works. The Friends of Chevy Chase Playground are already working on this. For its part, Cap City LL has contacted DPR and DPW to express concerns about trash and to request recycling bins for all of the fields it currently uses. In the interim, the league is encouraging its teams to bag and carry away their own trash.

Q: Hey, but more people are going to be parking there! How are the people who live near the park going to be able to park in front of their own homes?

A: There won't be any more people at Chevy Chase Park at any given time, so there will not be more cars taking up parking spaces. But if parking is currently a problem, please contact your councilmember or other authorities to encourage consistent and correct enforcement of parking regulations. The proximity of Chevy Chase Park to the Metro makes the area a tempting "park and ride" location for DC and Maryland residents as well. For its part, Cap City LL will discourage League parking on 41st Place.

What?

Q: What is gained by adding lights to the baseball field at Chevy Chase Park?

A: During the spring season (April to July) the new lights will permit an extra 30 to 90 minutes of practice and game time per day, when in use. During the fall season (September to November) the lights will permit an extra 90 to 120 minutes of use. These gains will permit Cap City to continue providing rich baseball and softball experiences for the youth of NW Washington. The following summarizes one neighbor's view of what is also gained:

I think eyes and ears in the park until 9 pm are a plus for neighborhood safety. Random people, including teens, use the area around the park as a place to hang out after dark making it a bit creepy at times when I walk home from the Metro. I'd love to be walking towards a lit park where families were recreating! Ellen Jones, Livingston Street