

August 19, 2020

Attn: To Whom It May Concern

RE: John Paul Athletic Complex
Resident Comments

To Whom It May Concern:

Over fifteen years ago, my wife and I bought our first home in Greenville's Planters Walk neighborhood. We were excited to move into the neighborhood as it was close to work and many Greenville's amenities. Few places in Greenville felt both urban and sylvan simultaneously, but Planters Walk did. Finding it was why we moved from the Pitt County countryside into town.

As an architect, I have a passion for smart development, the type that attracts a diversity of people into our wonderful city. It is only with smart development that we will continue to attract residents, good jobs, and investments while also preserving the quality of life that attracted my family and some many others to Greenville in the first place.

I been following much of the ongoing correspondence and public input regarding the JP2 Athletic Complex, and believe the balancing act between smart development and quality of life referenced in my introduction to be seminal to how all of us should think regarding the matter.

My wife and I now have three young children, Liam, Eleanor, and Tilly, and while I care immensely about the situation with JP2, I am also concerned about the broader precedent being set and how it impacts the broader City of Greenville, the public's trust in how important decisions are made, and the balance between smart development and quality of life issues that will define the future of Greenville for the next generation.

Regarding the impact to the broader City of Greenville, there are already well-established rules and restrictions related to noise, light, etc. While everyone involved is probably intimately aware of these restrictions by now, I have included those herein as a convenient reference. As someone born in Greenville, I have a deep-rooted passion for everything sports, including ECU athletics and Friday night high-school football. For six to ten events per year, we can hear Dowdy-Ficklen from our house...and honestly, I hope to hear the cannon a bit more. Similarly, Friday night football often impacts adjacent properties for six to ten events per season. Since only a few sports have large enough crowds to merit significant amplified sound, the overall impact to surrounding residents is fairly limited.

The existing rules for sound and light within Greenville for sport venues were largely written around these types of events and what I will call the 'Friday-Night Lights' type events...limited in number, planned well in advance with a schedule easily available to neighbors, etc.

To my knowledge, the history behind our present noise ordinances as they relate to the JP2 Athletic facility and the broader context of Greenville have not been fully considered. Placing a private facility which is capable of replicating the noise of ECU's athletic facilities within a location surrounded by established residential neighborhoods presents a new set of considerations, considerations that will implicate all of Greenville. If the total number of events (both JP2 events and third-party events), were clearly limited to between six and ten events annually and those events were scheduled so residents could plan for them, then the narrative would be somewhat analogous to what happens at most public high schools. Any deviations exceeding a limited number of events could be permitted on a case by case basis (as is presently already the case). To the best of my knowledge, this is not what is being discussed.

OFFENSES AND PUBLIC NUISANCES

Use Occupancy Category	Time	Sound Level Limit (dB(A))
Residential	7:00 a.m.--11:00 p.m.	60
	11:00 p.m.--7:00 a.m.	55
Public space, commercial or business	7:00 a.m.--11:00 p.m.	65
	11:00 p.m.--7:00 a.m.	60
Manufacturing, industrial or agricultural	At all times	75

(d) Sound levels in excess of the limits established in Table 1 will be permitted in public space, commercial or business space, manufacturing, industrial or agricultural space, but not on residential space, as follows:

Table 2

	Without Permit (dB(A))	With Permit to Exceed (dB(A))
Weekends (Friday 5:00 p.m.--11:00 p.m. Sunday)	70	80
Holidays (as defined in section 12-5-2)(Noon—11:00 p.m.)	70	80

JP2's Athletic Complex is private and once the present text amendment process has run its course, the facility will not be accountable in any way to the adjacent community. Conversely, public facilities are funded and managed through decisions made by elected leaders. When there is a problem with how a public facility impacts neighbors, there is an ongoing public process which allows for autocorrection. This is not the case for private facilities. Once rules such as those under consideration are passed, it is very difficult to undo or correct them subsequently. If every church in Greenville had space and means to install a similar facility, would it be appropriate? How many neighborhoods could potentially be impacted by decisions being made to accommodate JP2? I don't think anyone in Planter's Walk or the adjacent neighborhoods could reasonably object to a scenario where the total number of amplified events are analogous to a public high school, events are scheduled with ample public notice, and there is some type of public mechanism should non-compliance or modification to rules be needed.

Trust in government is paramount to a health democracy. We, the citizens of Greenville, should feel like decisions are being made with the public's best interest in mind. The JP2 process is a textbook example of the public process being undermined. All parties involved know that if the JP2 Athletic Complex's developer had not been involved in bringing 200+ jobs to Greenville, none of the rule modifications, Greenville city staff time, etc. would have been allocated nor would the situation have gotten to this point. The facility was approved under one set of rules. Had the present intentions regarding the use of the JP2 Athletic Complex been expressed at the original approval of the facility, it would have been denied. This circumventing of the public process sows the seed for mistrust.

August 19, 2020

JP2 Letter

Page 3

As a citizen who wants good jobs in Greenville, I am grateful to those working tirelessly to improve our city, but not at the expense of the public trust in government. Presently Covid has forced many of us to re-image work, school, government meetings, etc. I say this because there is a major difference in casting a vote virtually and the public pressure and accountability that comes from sitting in the same room (Council Chambers) with a room full of families, friends, neighbors, etc. Just because Covid is forcing us to adapt, doesn't mean that the accountability of our leaders to their constituency should diminish. I know we are all doing our best with the present situation, but that doesn't mean that the JP2 situation and other public process are being helped by being virtual. I believe we are all committed to making public decisions the right way, and I hope that any virtual votes cast related to JP2 or other city business are mindful of the present limitations of government.

My final point of concern is the balance between smart development and quality of life. It is the quality of life afforded to my family that keeps me in Greenville. I volunteered on Uptown Greenville's executive board for many years because of my commitment to smart development. I would love to see a walkable dense city center continue to grow and emerge, while simultaneously limiting uncontrolled sprawl of low quality development into the beautiful surrounding countryside. If JP2's Athletic Complex were more akin to Boyd Lee Park (but funded by a major private donor), then my kids would have a park they could walk to. Not long ago, the JP2 Complex was a farm field, a place where my kids and I would use to walk our dogs. Having grown up on a farm myself, we were respectful of the crops and picked up random trash at the edges of the field. At one point, the farmer even offered my young son a ride in the combine. He still talks about that experience some seven years later. We also walked along the edges of the field to the Quail Ridge pool. The field was a place where memories were made, and a valuable 'part' of our neighborhood long before the JP2 facility. On Christmas day when the JP2 facility was being built, my kids and I walked to the edges of the property to look at the progress and someone yelled at us saying they were going to call the cops...on Christmas. Shortly thereafter a chain-link fence was installed around the JP2 facility with NO TRESSPASSING signs every 30 feet around the entire fence. It was the exact opposite of neighborly.

As a design professional, I'm keenly aware of the ingredients that make-up smart development. None of those principles appear to have been followed with the development of the JP2 Athletic Complex.

Everyone wants good neighbors. I've always done my best to be one. As a resident of Greenville's Planters Walk neighborhood, I don't think it is too much to expect a church affiliated facility to exemplify what it means to be a good neighbor. No rules should be amended without the consideration of what it would be like to live next to the JP2 Athletic Complex.

Sincerely,



Albrecht McLawhorn, AIA, NCARB

2104 Crooked Creek Rd.

Greenville, NC 27858

file: e:\misc\200819-jp2 letter.docx