

ATTACHMENT B – STAFF ANALYSIS

STAFF PERSON: Rebecca Ragsdale, Planning Manager
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: June 7, 2023
PROJECT: SE202300017 St. Anne's Sports Field Lighting
PARCEL ID: 06000-00-00-05700

PROPOSAL:

The applicant requests a special exception to add four (4) light poles to an existing turf field (see Attachment A). Under the applicable R1 Residential district regulations (County Code § 18-13.3), maximum structure height is limited to 35 feet. This request is to modify (increase) the maximum permissible height for proposed outdoor luminaires at an athletic facility from thirty-five (35) feet to seventy (70) feet, pursuant to County Code §18-4.17.5.

CHARACTER OF THE AREA:

The property is developed with multiple academic and support buildings. Several playing fields include lighting similar to the proposed, and surface parking areas. To the northeast is vacant wooded land owned by the University of Virginia. To the northwest and southwest is a large property owned by the University of Virginia Foundation. To the southeast is the Route 250 Bypass.

PLANNING AND ZONING HISTORY:

The St. Anne's Belfield special use permit for a private school was approved in 1994 and most recently amended in 2008 with SP200700053.

ANALYSIS OF SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUEST:

Requests for modifications must be reviewed under the criteria established in County Code § 18-33.9, taking into consideration the factors, standards, criteria, and findings for each request. County Code § 18-4.17.5(a) sets forth the factors to be considered in reviewing this request and are listed below followed by staff comment:

- a. ***The Board of Supervisors may modify or waive any standard set forth in section 4.17.4(a) under subsections 4.17.5(a)(1) and (2), and may modify the maximum height of poles supporting outdoor luminaires lighting athletic facilities under subsection 4.17.5(a)(3), in the following circumstances:***
 3. ***Upon finding that the maximum permitted height of a pole supporting an outdoor luminaire lighting an athletic facility under the applicable district regulations would prevent the luminaire from providing sufficient illumination of the facility for its safe use, as determined by the recommended practices adopted by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America for that type of facility and activity or other evidence if a recommended practice is not applicable.***

The applicant has provided an explanation as to why light poles at thirty-five (35) feet in height will not provide sufficient safe lighting for players and still comply with full-cutoff and spillover regulations. The applicant's materials reference the recommended practices adopted by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America for that type of facility and activity. Lower fixtures create more glare for players and become a safety issue. Poles at seventy (70) feet in height allow for proper aiming angles and keep glare down while providing enough light to the field.

- b. Prior to considering a request to modify or waive, five days' written notice shall be provided to the owner, owner's agent or occupant of each abutting lot or parcel and each parcel immediately across the street or road from the lot or parcel which is the subject of the request. The written notice shall identify the nature of the request and the date and time the Board of Supervisors will consider the request.***

Notice was mailed to abutting property owners on May 19, 2023, and no objections have been received to date.

- c. The Board of Supervisors may impose conditions on such a modification or waiver which it deems appropriate to further the purposes of these outdoor lighting regulations.***

Staff has recommended conditions of approval that would limit the height of light poles to seventy (70) feet and require adherence to the proposed lighting plan provided by the applicant.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the special exception for the proposed height increase to seventy (70) feet. Staff recommends that the Board adopt the attached Resolution (Attachment E) to approve the special exception with the following recommended conditions:

1. The maximum permissible height of the poles supporting outdoor luminaires at the athletic facility is seventy (70) feet.
2. All outdoor lighting must meet the specifications, or equivalent, included on the plans titled "St. Anne's-Belfield School Multiuse" prepared by Musco Lighting and dated October 20, 2022.