

Residents appeal approval of Key School athletic fields project

Community members say school isn't doing enough to mitigate traffic problems

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Some Annapolis-area residents are appealing the county's approval of a project that would convert a golf course into The Key School athletic fields.

Annapolis Roads Property Owners Association representatives said Key School

officials aren't doing enough to alleviate the anticipated increase in traffic from the project, according to documents filed in October with the Anne Arundel County Board of Appeals.

In September, the county's Office of Planning and Zoning approved the school's plan to build three sports fields, a baseball diamond, tennis courts, a pool and a walking trail. The facility would be called Key School Fusco Athletic Park, in honor of Kristin and Jack Fusco, who have children at the school, and their family foundation.

To relieve congestion from increased traffic, school officials agreed to widen a

portion of Carrollton Road, add turn lanes and a pedestrian walkway.

But the president of the association, Tom Bodor, said the road project doesn't adequately address the community's safety concerns. He declined to share specific safety concerns because of the pending case.

The Board of Appeals will hold public hearings on the case from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Jan. 12 and 26 at the Arundel Center in Annapolis.

Irfan Latimer, a spokeswoman for Key, said the school's plans to accommodate increased traffic were approved by the See **KEY SCHOOL**, page A6

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county and sufficiently address community concerns.

Bodor said the group met numerous times with school and county officials to discuss traffic concerns, but are dissatisfied with the results of those meetings.

"This community has a long history of protecting itself," Bodor said. He said the golf course is the "centerpiece of the community."

The group has fought the project since it was proposed a few years ago, arguing the founding documents for the residential community don't allow for the property to be used as athletic fields. Last year, an

appeals court upheld a Circuit Court opinion that allowed the school to build the fields and courts.

The Key School purchased the golf course in 2013 for \$1.5 million. About half of the former course would be preserved for the walking trail.

School officials said without a sufficient number of local athletic fields, student-athletes have to travel as far as north county for practices and games. The majority of Key School students participate in sports, officials said.

Bodor said residents from Annapolis Roads will speak at the public hearings about the traffic issue. He said the opposition to the plans is rooted in a community desire to preserve its quiet nature.

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