

Docket Item # 7  
SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2003-0107

Planning Commission Meeting  
January 6, 2004

**ISSUE:** Consideration of a request to amend the existing special use permit #98-0049 for the Cameron Station West Park to add an electronic scoreboard to its Armistead Boothe Park ballfield.

**APPLICANT:** City of Alexandria, Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

**LOCATION:** 520 Cameron Station Boulevard (Parcel Address: 5400 Edsall Road)

**ZONE:** CDD-9/Coordinated Development District

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## **I. DISCUSSION**

### REQUEST

Consideration of a request to amend the existing special use permit for the Armistead Boothe Park to add an electronic scoreboard structure to its ballfield.

Section 9-201 (A) of the zoning ordinance allows ballpark signs only with a special use permit.

### SITE DESCRIPTION

Located on the western edge of the Cameron Station property, the Boothe Park is ten acres in size and can be accessed from Cameron Station Boulevard.

### SURROUNDING USES

The Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School is immediately adjacent to the Armistead Boothe Park. Residential townhouse developments are located further north across Cameron Station Boulevard and will be built immediately to the west as part of Phase VII of the Cameron Station development. Warehouses and wholesale businesses are located east of the subject site, and train tracks abut the ballfield on the south side.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

On September 12, 1998, City Council granted development special use permit #98-0049 for a city park located within the Cameron Station development project. Since opening to the public in September 2000, Armistead L. Boothe Park has become a major asset to the City's park inventory. In order to expand the facility's use, the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities proposes to upgrade the ballfield in several ways.

Existing facilities: Facilities at the park include three lighted tennis/basket ball courts, volleyball courts, horseshoe pits, a children's playground area with equipment, and lighted softball field with a marked youth soccer field in the outfield.

Proposed amenity: This application is for an electronic scoreboard as shown in the attachment. The proposed scoreboard is 7 feet high, 28 feet wide, 6 inches deep and is mounted on polls for a total height of 15 feet. It will be located on the eastern edge of the Armistead L. Boothe Park ballfield as illustrated in the attached map. The scoreboard's face will be directed westwards and will not be visible from the residential units located to the far north across Cameron Station Boulevard.

Scope and context of the proposal: The scoreboard is part of a ballfield upgrade that ACPS (Alexandria City Public Schools) is required to provide in order to make it a field for girl's sports that is comparable to facilities provided for boys' teams. Eugene Simpson Stadium Park ballfield located at 500 Monroe Avenue is being used for the highschool's boys ball teams. Currently, the City does not have another field available for play with the same amenities for the girls' team. Additional amenities that are part of the ballfield's upgrade but do not require a special use permit and

subsequently are not part of this application include a fenced area to be used as a batting cage, a covered team bench, and a small storage building. The proposed amenities will bring the Armistead L. Boothe Park ballfield up to the standards set at the Eugene Simpson Stadium Park.

Utilization of ballfield: The field is used primarily evenings and weekends by youth and adult sport teams. Children attending the Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School use the park for physical education classes and recess during the school day. During the spring and fall sport seasons most of the afternoons are occupied by highschool teams. The applicant does not expect a significant increase in the number of people that use the park site/ball field as a result of the proposed scoreboard addition.

Staff: According to the applicant, each organization that uses the field (ACPS, RPCA/Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities, ASA/Alexandria Soccer Association, etc.) provides the necessary staff, including teachers and coaches, for its respective events. The field is maintained by RPCA.

Hours of operation: The ballfield is open seven days a week with the following schedule:

Monday -Friday	8:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.	Tucker Students
Monday -Friday	4:30 P.M. - 6:30 P.M.	Highschool Students
Monday -Friday	6:30 A.M. -10:00 P.M.	Adult Teams
Weekends	Daytime (varies)	ASA & other youth teams

Noise: The applicant states that the current noise level is reasonable and not likely to change. RPCA and/or ACPS staff are assigned to work at games and events and to monitor and control noise. ASA provides its own supervision when using the field.

Trash: In addition to collecting trash during games and events, staff removes trash on a daily basis. The applicant indicates that sufficient trash cans are available and that signs and staff will enforce appropriate disposal of trash. Staff does not expect an increase in trash as a result of this application.

Parking: The proposed addition of a scoreboard does not impact parking. A total of 72 spaces, including four handicapped spaces, are provided on-site.

#### ZONING/MASTER PLAN

The subject property is located in the CDD-9/Coordinated Development District-Cameron Station zone. The proposed addition to the ballpark is consistent with the Landmark/Van Dorn Small Area Plan chapter of the Master Plan which designates the property for uses consistent with the Cameron Station CDD and encourages the development of public open space and recreation as part of an integrated community.

## **II. STAFF ANALYSIS**

Staff has no objection to the request for a scoreboard for the Armistead Boothe Park ballfield and believes it will be an added feature for this active recreation area. The size of the scoreboard is not excessive and it is appropriately positioned next to existing light poles and directed towards the west end of the park, away from residential areas. No visual obstruction for surrounding uses is anticipated.

The applicant notes that ACPS is currently scheduling presentations on this project with local civic associations and community groups.

Staff has included a staff note that references the existing special use permit and site plan and states the compliance with their conditions.

Staff recommends approval of the special use permit.

## **III. RECOMMENDED PERMIT CONDITIONS**

Staff recommends **approval** subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances.

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### **Staff Note:**

Conditions of existing special use permit and site plan for the development of the Cameron Station West Park (SUP #98-0049, SIT #96-019) are complied with.

In accordance with section 11-506(c) of the zoning ordinance, construction or operation shall be commenced and diligently and substantially pursued within 18 months of the date of granting of a special use permit by City Council or the special use permit shall become void.

**STAFF:** Eileen P. Fogarty, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning;  
Barbara Ross, Deputy Director;  
Bettina Irps, Urban Planner.

**IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS**

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F - finding

Transportation & Environmental Services:

F-1 No T&ES objection or recommendations.

Code Enforcement:

C-1 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Building Code (USBC).

C-2 A construction permit is required for the proposed project.

Police Department:

F-1 Concur.

Health Department:

F-1 No comment.