



Montgomery County Planning Board
2425 Reedie Drive, 14th Floor
Wheaton, MD 20902

Dear Chair Harris and Members of the Planning Board,

The Montgomery County Sports Advisory Committee (SAC) supports Montgomery Parks' recently released draft Athletic Field Use Permit Policy. We applaud Montgomery Parks for producing a thoughtful policy that responds to longstanding scheduling pressures while seeking to balance competing needs for and equitable access to limited athletic field space.

We recognize the challenge that Montgomery Parks faces in reconciling high demand, limited supply, and diverse stakeholder needs. The field system serves athletes of all ages, organized sports programs, informal groups, and community organizations. By codifying priorities and processes, the proposal reduces ambiguity, limits conflict and helps increase access across neighborhoods and demographics.

The proposal demonstrates clear strengths: it prioritizes equitable access across users, improves transparency in allocation and scheduling, and offers a structured approach to balancing youth leagues, adult recreation, and community events. The plan also reflects a practical understanding of both how fields are used and the long-term maintenance needs that preserve these assets for all residents.

No plan is perfect, and the proposed roster requirement for permitting raises some concerns for the committee. Montgomery Parks should consider the intent of this requirement as well as the storage and use of the roster data collected and make any needed adjustments to the draft policy. Montgomery Parks should be empowered to adjust the policy as needed to make it manageable within existing staff capacity and budgetary constraints. Granting Parks the flexibility to refine implementation details, timeline, and administrative procedures, while maintaining the core principles of equity and transparency, will help ensure the policy is practical, responsive, and sustainable over time.

We urge the Planning Board to adopt the draft Athletic Field Use Permit Policy. Doing so will provide much-needed clarity and consistency for Montgomery Parks and users alike, support responsible stewardship of county facilities, and help sustain vibrant, safe, and more equitable recreational opportunities for Montgomery County residents.

Sincerely,

Tom Cove

Tom Cove
Chair, Montgomery County Sports Advisory Committee