To Members of the New Canaan P&Z Commission,

We are writing as residents of 568 Frogtown Road, the property directly across the street from 579 Frogtown Road – once owned by George and Kathie Moore, purchased by New Canaan Country School (NCCS) to facilitate construction of its new athletic facility – with the facility visible to our property (1). We are responding to a letter from NCCS attorney Stephen Finn dated April 15, regarding an “Application to Modify Condition of Existing Special Permit for New Canaan Country School.”

With regret, we are writing to inform the Commission that the lighting from the interior of the athletic facility, shining through the glassed-in portion near its ceiling, is quite glaring after dark from both the first and second stories of our home – including our kitchen; home office; play/study room; and glassed-in library where we frequently entertain. (We are attaching photos (2) to offer some indication of the situation, and any member of the Commission is cordially invited to visit our home to experience the situation for him- or herself.) The construction plastic that currently wraps the windows seems to soften the light somewhat; we are concerned that when it is removed, the problem will be exacerbated.

We have always been glad to be neighbors to both Country School (where our children have attended since 2011) and the Winter Club. We want to be good neighbors; the problem with this light, however, is that every evening, our home feels like it is now located in much more of a “mixed use” area than the darker suburban location into which we thought we had purchased.

During the construction period, we have tried to be understanding of the other bright lights that were at the top of the building and visible from our home (as well as construction-related noise before 7am), as we have realized those conditions would be temporary. The bright lights shining from within the building, however, are permanent – and most annoying after sunset in winter, when trees are bare.
Given these facts, we believe that the light streaming from the athletic center constitutes a nuisance, and we respectfully request that the Application to Modify Condition of Existing Special Permit with the Town of New Canaan Planning and Zoning Commission with regard to the new athletic facility, located at New Canaan Country School, 635 Frogtown Road, New Canaan, CT, be denied. At a minimum the lighting specifications set forth in the Special Permit, as it currently exists, are acceptable to all, and the Special Permit should stand as is.

In the alternative, we respectfully request that the Town of New Canaan conduct its own investigation, rather than simply accepting applicant’s representation and warranty that “black out shades” are not necessary, and that “no measurable light” would occur beyond the property line. We believe an independent arbiter is justified in this circumstance, not one retained by the party seeking the modification.

Please feel free to let us know if you have any questions. Thank you very much.

Jack and Carol Liebau
568 Frogtown Rd.
New Canaan, CT
(203) 801-3990

[1] In addition to Mrs. Moore’s objections to NCCS’s Special Permit and Site Plan Applications, the P&Z Commission file for the gym construction project should contain documents from us dating from April 2018 (via letter and email) expressing concerns about the lighting and traffic implications of this project (we would be glad to provide copies upon request).

[2] Photo #1298 is second story, eastern-most corner of house, study/playroom. This room currently has no interior curtains or shutters. Photo #1301 is first floor, western-most corner of house, glassed-in library (no interior curtains or shutters). Photo #1338 is second floor home office, center of house. Photo #1340 is entry to kitchen.