

JURAJ L. J. AND JULIE BRES SLAVIK  
5264 LOUGHBORO ROAD, NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20016-2634

January 8, 2006

Ms. Carol Mitten, Chair  
District of Columbia Office of Zoning  
Case 05-42 - Sibley Hospital  
441 - 4<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20001

Via Fax: 202-727-6072

Dear Ms. Mitten:

As 37-year residents at 5264 Loughboro Road, NW, we write in opposition to the Sibley Hospital proposed construction of a commercial medical office building. We are deeply troubled by this proposal for several reasons:

- 1. Increased traffic in a residential neighborhood.** Although Loughboro Road is a main thoroughfare, we are a residential neighborhood. The homes in our neighborhood are upscale and expensive; our property taxes are high. The addition of the huge office building is projected to increase traffic flow from between 5 and 7.5 percent - or as many as 4,000 trips - a day and will have a terrible impact on the neighborhood.

The intersection of MacArthur Boulevard and Loughboro Road is already congested and has been the scene of daytime accidents.

Of serious concern to us is Sibley's entrance to the rehabilitation facility and Great Oaks, which is immediately across the street from our home, is out of control. There is a *no left turn* sign there that most drivers ignore, crossing two accelerating downhill lanes and one uphill lane of traffic.

Regular culprits include: heavy 18-wheeler trucks making deliveries of medical supplies and food, Metro Access mini-buses and other multi-passenger vehicles, taxis, cars driven by Sibley staff, clients, and visitors. Over the years we have called Sibley repeatedly with this information and the hospital seems helpless or unwilling to do anything about it. Our concern is that one day there will be an horrific, perhaps fatal, accident.

Further, as these vehicles negotiate the illegal left turn, they often come very close to hitting parked cars in front of our home. This is particularly true of the large delivery trucks. Several years ago, one of these vehicles crashed into our car (parked legally on the street) and totaled it. Fortunately, a staff member saw it and prevented the driver from leaving the scene. Perhaps a solution to this situation would be to make it *enter only*, with the exit elsewhere.

We understand that many drivers cut through adjacent streets to avoid the MacArthur Boulevard, Loughboro Road, and Dalecarlia Parkway area. This is increasingly dangerous due to the lack of sidewalks, the number of pedestrians, and the number of children in the Kent/Briarcliff neighborhood. We further understand that residents on these streets petitioned our ANC for

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relief before the proposed expansion and should the zoning variance be granted, it will cause them greater concern and have a deleterious impact on the quality of life.

A quantum increase in traffic volume will exacerbate these situations.

- 2. On-street parking.** Sibley staff, visitors, and clients routinely park in front of our home with little or no regard to the two-hour limit. Most are Virginia and Maryland residents and those with District license plates do not have Zone 3 parking stickers. They park illegally above our driveway which is a *no parking* zone. They sometimes encroach on our driveway entrance, making it difficult for us to enter/exit. It is our understanding that Sibley has parking areas for these people, but they prefer to avoid paid parking in the Sibley facility.

- 3. Sibley's need to have a medical office building.** The surrounding neighborhoods have large medical office buildings – Spring Valley, Foxhall Square and Friendship Heights.

Several doctors practicing at Sibley doubt that the proposed medical office will attract tenants due to the District's high medical malpractice fees and that Sibley will hire staff doctors to fill this space.

It is our understanding that Sibley's cash situation is good (approximately \$400 million in cash reserves) indicating that it does not depend on this facility to remain financially stable.

- 4. Sibley has not acted in good faith.** Sibley has failed to respond to neighborhood concerns. There have been no studies of cut-through traffic and the impact on the residential quality of the neighborhood. Sibley has refused to meet with the ANC working group and failed to provide information to its neighbors prior to the earlier zoning hearing.

In the past, when Great Oaks was under construction, our homes were blanketed with dust and dirt. Daily, the vehicles delivering building materials and supplies to the site caused traffic problems. Given Sibley's past actions, we have little reason to believe that we will not have a similar situation with the new proposed construction.

Years ago, Sibley committed to having *free* parking and a sledding area on the ground where Great Oaks now stands. Clearly, this commitment was not honored. Sibley has made other such commitments over the years that would have protected the residential aspects of the neighborhood and has chosen to ignore them.

How then, can the residents trust whatever commitments Sibley may make now or in the future?

- 5. Honoring the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) concerns.** We understand that the concerns raised by the DDOT have not been addressed by Sibley. The two major DDOT concerns focused on the Loughboro Road/Dalecarlia Parkway intersection and the impact on neighborhood streets.

We believe that Sibley must address these issues and urge the Zoning Commission to so stipulate. We also urge the DDOT to stand by its recommendations and insist that Sibley comply. To act otherwise would be a great disservice to the resident taxpayers of this area.

- 6. Cost factors.** The citizens of the District of Columbia, through their tax dollars, will pay for the traffic management and infrastructure improvements needed, should Sibley be allowed to undertake this project. This seems unreasonable, especially given the fact that a sizeable number of the people served by the facility are not DC residents.

We have never before opposed Sibley's expansion plans. **We do heartily oppose the introduction of this proposed large scale commercial operation into our already congested residential neighborhood. Allowing a commercial building will set a dangerous precedent for this area of Washington.** There is no benefit to the neighborhood. To the contrary, this project is full of aspects that will irrevocably harm this desirable, residential community and potentially endanger its residents.

We urge the Office of Zoning to insist that Sibley address and meet satisfactorily the concerns of the ANC, *Sibley Neighbors for Responsible Growth* (of which we are members), and the DDOT. Once the amended plan is complete, Sibley should be required to submit it to all interested parties for review, discussion, comment, and perhaps further revision, prior to presenting it to your office.

Thank you for your consideration of our objection to the proposed Sibley expansion.

Sincerely,



Juraj L. J. and Julie Brès Slavik

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