

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE ZONING COMMISSION
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**REGARDING GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY'S
PELHAM REPLACEMENT PROJECT
ON THE MOUNT VERNON CAMPUS**

**PETER A. BARRETT, HEAD OF SCHOOL
ST. PATRICK'S EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL**

July 2, 2007

My name is Peter Barrett. I am Head of School at St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School, located at 4700 Whitehaven Parkway, NW, directly across the street from George Washington University's Mount Vernon Campus. St. Patrick's enrolls 440 students in Nursery School through Grade 6 on our Whitehaven Campus and another 50 students in Grades 7 and 8 on our nearby MacArthur Campus. You have received, in GW's Prehearing Statement, a copy of the agreement reached between GW and St. Patrick's School concerning construction management and post-construction operations concerns we expressed with respect to the Pelham Replacement Project some time ago. That agreement reflects a series of meetings between representatives of GW and St. Patrick's across a number of weeks. Evident at all points along the way was GW's determination to fit the construction and ongoing operations of their important Pelham project into the existing operations of St. Patrick's School. Recognizing that determination as well as the agreement we were able to reach, I am pleased to speak in support of GW's Pelham Replacement Project.

While residents of the Berkeley Terrace neighborhood might beg to differ, I would submit to you that the GW neighbor that will experience the greatest impacts during the construction and post-construction phases of this

project—and noise and traffic, for sure—is St. Patrick’s School. The new access road from Whitehaven Parkway to the Pelham site is located directly across from St. Patrick’s School. Therefore, the construction of that access road, in particularly tight quarters; its use by construction traffic during the Pelham project itself; and its subsequent use once the project is completed will occur right in the midst of our ongoing operations, including the District-approved carpool initiative that brings our 490 students to school each morning and sends them home each afternoon.

The mouth of that access road is located just to the east of the crosswalk used by hundreds of students each day to attend physical education classes in the gymnasium or on the playing field and to enjoy morning or afternoon recess on the playground. So while I am concerned about the smooth and orderly functioning of our carpool and other operations, my deeper concerns are for the safety of those hundreds of children who shouldn’t be sharing Whitehaven Parkway with significant construction traffic or, for that matter, post-construction traffic. In truth, I have fewer concerns about the use of the access road once the project is complete, as long as the use of that access road remains as described in the agreement included in the Prehearing Statement—and I am confident that GW will work to maintain the stated use. Those fewer concerns are reflected in the fact that “Exhibit A—Construction Management Issues” is about three times longer than “Exhibit B—Post-Construction Traffic and Operations Issues.”

Because you have that Prehearing Statement before you, there is no need for me to dwell on my particular construction management concerns.

Representatives of GW have heard me out and responded thoughtfully to those concerns. Our agreement sets out GW's intention to minimize adverse impacts on weekday activities at St. Patrick's and to limit construction-related activities during times that would substantially interfere, because of construction noise or traffic, with special events at St. Patrick's. Further, our agreement would prohibit queuing of construction vehicles on Whitehaven Parkway at particular times, prizes the effective management of construction traffic at all times, and calls for the arrival and departure of construction traffic in a manner that would keep that traffic away from the heavily used crosswalk between the two halves of St. Patrick's campus located on opposite sides of Whitehaven Parkway. The agreement also provides for a GW employee to serve as the so-called Project Traffic Representative to resolve any immediate or persistent traffic issues and values ongoing communication between GW and St. Patrick's across the life of the project.

With this agreement part of GW's submission, I am pleased to testify in support of the Pelham Replacement Project. I appreciate GW's close attention to St. Patrick's expressed concerns and look forward to continuing our work together as neighbors.