Elizabeth A. Allaben
1321 Jonquil Street, NW
Washington, DC 20012

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March 2, 2000

District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001

16556

Dear Board:

Subject: Request for a temporary zoning adjustment for the Jewish Primary Day School of the National Capital Area

I am writing to urge you to approve the request for a temporary zoning adjustment for the Jewish Primary Day School of the National Capital Area (JPDS). I am a ten year resident of Shepherd Park. Although I do not live immediately adjacent to the proposed sites at Tifereth Israel and Ohev Sholom, I do live within a few blocks. I can certainly understand the concern of the immediate neighbors about the impact of the traffic on their homes, their life, and their work. However, I think that the benefits of permitting JPDS outweigh the costs.

I attended one of the neighborhood meetings concerning this issue and was impressed with the progress that JPDS had made in addressing the concerns of the Shepherd Park neighbors, such as adjusting the start and end times of the school to minimize the conflict with Lowell School and Shepherd Elementary School, developing a traffic plan and a sticker and fine system to assist in enforcing the traffic plan, and offering to establish an Oversight Committee to include members of the community, the school, and the synagogues. Despite some initial stumbling in working with the neighborhood, JPDS has stepped up to the plate, admitted its mistakes, and is moving forward constructively and cooperatively in a very short time.

I also see this as an opportunity for both of the synagogues and the neighborhood to improve their relationships and ultimately the entire community. Some cynics may consider the proposals of JPDS, Tifereth Israel and Ohev Sholom to be just temporary offers or window dressing, but my experience is that often an issue like this can provide the impetus for new ties and renewed commitment to the community, much as happened during the fight against the Silver Spring Mega Mall. Rather than fighting this proposal, I think the neighborhood can work together to use this as an opportunity -- opening the doors of these two buildings to wider community use and tapping our mutual resources for the benefit of the community. Although the school will be here only temporarily, I think that the benefits can continue beyond this.

I recommend that the Board of Zoning Adjustment vote to support the JPDS proposal. I do think that the approval should be contingent on requiring JPDS to adhere to the traffic plan and the change in school times, a specified number of monitors to facilitate traffic flow and loading/unloading, and a sticker system including a $100 fine per instance for those violate the traffic plan.

Sincerely,

E A Allaben

Elizabeth A. Allaben

cc: Rabbi Ethan Seidel, Tifereth Israel
John Young

BZA
Case No. 16556
Exhibit No. 155

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16556
EXHIBIT NO.155