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Washington, D.C. 20008

March 6, 2000

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF ZONING
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Ms. Sheila Cross Reid, Chair
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 Fourth St. NW, Suite 210 A
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Application No. 16556
Jewish Primary Day School of the Nation's Capital

Dear Ms. Reid:

We are writing to urge grant of the above-referenced application of the Jewish Primary Day School of the Nation's Capital ("JPDS") for temporary occupancy of 7701 and 7712 Sixteenth Street, N.W. Our family has lived in the District of Columbia on the 2900 block of Garfield Terrace for over the past ten years. The Maret School, a private institution that offers instruction to children from Kindergarten to the twelfth grade, is one block from our home. Although we are unaware of Maret's precise enrollment, there is no doubt that it is substantial multiple of the 180 students who currently attend JPDS.

Many of the older Maret students drive daily to school, parking either on Garfield Street (the only street intersecting Garfield Terrace) or on Garfield Terrace itself. Other children are dropped off by their parents (or their car pool) at the school's main entrance on Cathedral Street, or take metrorail to Woodley Park and walk up Garfield Street to the school's back entrance. Despite the additional vehicular and pedestrian traffic generated by the school, and despite the use of our limited on-street parking spaces, Maret is known on Garfield Terrace as a good neighbor and a good citizen, because the school administration is sensitive to and often anticipates the neighborhood's legitimate concerns. Moreover, as a neighborhood, we know that our city's future success is inextricably linked to the primary and secondary education our schools provide today. As a result, relations between Maret and adjacent residents are excellent.

We are confident that the JPDS administration, faculty, support staff and Board of Directors will also succeed in resolving any concerns that residents in the vicinity of 7701 and 7712 Sixteenth Street may have about the presence of private elementary school students at these sites. As you know, JPDS, at great expense and sacrifice, has hired an experienced and highly regarded traffic planner to devise plans and programs to ensure that drop-off and pick-up at the two sites will cause minimal or no disruption to existing vehicular and pedestrian traffic flows. JPDS has also proposed establishing working groups comprising representatives from the school and the neighborhood to

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analyze and resolve any problems that may arise. Equally important, maintaining excellent relations with neighbors is a central tenet of the Jewish faith, and is regularly taught to JPDS students at all levels. For this reason, the commitment by the JPDS administration, faculty and Board of Directors to make this school's entrance into the local community succeed is so much more than an expression of narrow self-interest, but is a real example of putting religious teachings of JPDS's curriculum into every day practice.

Today, the District of Coumbia has one, and only one, private Jewish day school. JPDS thus makes a significant contribution to DC's multicultural identity and to the many efforts to achieve racial and ethnic harmony in this very diverse city. That contribution may evaporate if the above-referenced application is denied and JPDS is deprived of a home for the September 2000 school year. Therefore, we support and urge you to support and approve the above-referenced application for temporary occupancy at 7701 and 7712 Sixteenth Street, NW. We also urge you to expedite this particular BZA decision, so that the school can open on time in September.

Your attention to this matter is sincerely appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Jerome K. Blask

Anna N. Blask