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OFFICE OF ZONING
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

March 7, 2000

Ms. Sheila B. Reid
Chair, Board of Zoning and Adjustment
District of Columbia
One Judiciary Square Building
441 Fourth Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Application # 16556

Dear Ms. Reid:

I am writing in strong support of the application of the Jewish Primary Day School to have temporary quarters for three years at the two neighboring synagogues on 16th Street N.W.--Tifereth Israel at 7701 16th Street and Ohev Sholom Talmud Torah at 7712 16th Street.

Although my wife and I do not live in Shepherd Park, we are members of one of the synagogues, Tifereth Israel, where we have belonged since 1978. We have been residents of the District since 1966. Our three children all went to D.C. public schools and graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School. Our home is at 3141 Aberfoyle Place N.W.

As you may know, our synagogue took a stand in the 1960s that we would not relocate into the Maryland suburbs at a time when some other synagogues in the 16th Street area were doing so. In 1998, when our synagogue had decided it had to make major renovations or else move, we once again committed ourselves to remain in our building and improve it rather than leave the District. Therefore, we feel especially close to the Jewish Primary Day School. This school, which is serving 180 students, half of whom are from the District, has likewise decided to make its permanent home in our city. It is the only school of its kind in the District.

BZA
Case No. _____
Exhibit No. 207

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16556
EXHIBIT NO.207

Aside from the important role this school plays in the life of its students, their families and the wider Jewish community, this school is a good thing for the future wellbeing of the District. A top-quality Jewish day school in the District will ensure that the families currently using the school will stay in the city. When newcomers arrive in this area and want to put their children in Jewish day schools, they will be able to choose the District instead of automatically heading for the suburbs. As for families already living in the suburbs who are educating their children in Jewish day schools, this gives them a choice as well and could attract more of these families to move into the District.

We hope the Board of Zoning and Adjustment will find that this temporary arrangement will be compatible with the neighborhood and that the continued presence of this school in the District will be a great asset for the entire city.

Sincerely yours,

Richard D. Siegel

Richard D. Siegel

cc: Honorable Charlene Drew Jarvis, Council Member, Ward 4
Honorable Harold Brazil, Council Member at Large
Honorable David Catania, Council Member at Large
Honorable Phil Mendelson, Council Member at Large
Honorable Carol Schwartz, Council Member at Large
Mr. Joseph H. Hairston, Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4A
Mr. Andrew Altman, Office of Planning