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February 10, 2000

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VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

Ms. Jerrily R. Kress, FAIA
Director
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W.
Suite 210
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Application of Jewish Primary Day School of the Nation's Capital for Special Exception Under Section 206

Dear Ms. Kress:

This is in response to your letter of January 27, 2000, giving notice of a public hearing by the Board of Zoning Adjustment ("Board") to consider the above-referenced application by the Jewish Primary Day School of the Nation's Capital ("JPDS") for a special exception to establish a private school for 215 students and 32 teachers. For the reasons set forth below, as a long-time resident of 1615 Juniper Street, N.W., I vigorously oppose the granting of any special exception.

As the Board is well aware, the environment of the neighborhood in question has significantly deteriorated over at least the past decade by reason of the fact that what was once a residential area has been transformed into an area of excessive public use. The immediate area has two large and very active schools, the Lowell School and the British school, (formerly the Gallaudet

BZA
Case No. 16556
Exhibit No. 24

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16556
EXHIBIT NO.24

campus) which operate within two blocks of the proposed JPDS school. Then there is the Sheppard Elementary School within one block of the proposed JPDS school. There is also the day school operated by Tifereth Israel. In addition to these activities there are the activities of the two synagogues, Tifereth Israel and Ohev Shalom, respectively located at 7701 and 7712 16th Street, the latter of which has demonstrated over the years a consistent and conspicuous disregard of its obligations to its neighbors. This includes persistent parking problems, including blocking the residents' garages that front on the alley between Jonquil and Juniper streets. I also note that both synagogues have made it a practice to never consult with their neighbors prior to seeking an expansion of their activities. Finally, there are the constant activities of the Washington Ethical Society, and public gatherings at the Hanafi Muslim group house which are located on either side of the synagogue at 7712 16th Street. Hence, in a several square block area, there are hundreds, if not over one thousand, students, coupled with hundreds of members of the various congregations and groups, all of whom adversely impact the quality of living conditions of the residents on a daily basis.

While the residents continue to pay excessive property taxes for non-existent services by the District, the District apparently seems intent upon destroying what little is left of the unique residential character of this neighborhood and lowering the market value of its homes by allowing unfettered growth in public uses and activities. The Board must recognize that our neighborhood has been over-saturated with school, secular and non-secular activities by a number of unrelated groups. That being the case, it is incumbent upon the Board to finally exercise some restraint and judgment. Accordingly, I respectfully request the Board to deny the application in question. In the event that the Board fails to properly exercise its discretion, please be advised that judicial intervention and resolution will be sought.

Very truly yours,

Louis S. Mastriani

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