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OFFICE OF ZONING
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Sheila B. Reid, Chair
Board of Zoning Appeals
414 Fourth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20012

Re: Application #16556, Jewish Primary Day School

Dear Ms. Reid:

I urge the Board to approve the Jewish Primary Day School's zoning application.

I am a life-long D.C. resident, and attended neighboring Shepherd Elementary School on Kalmia Road at one time. Even though I do not have children attending JPDS, I feel strongly that the school's temporary relocation to the Tiffereth Israel/Ohev Shalom location is extremely important to the District of Columbia, and is an appropriate use of the properties.

Schools – both public and private – play a central role in the District's ability to attract and retain families as D.C. residents. JPDS provides a high-quality education, and it is the *only* school in the District of Columbia that provides a combined program of general education and Judaic studies. Although JPDS is a small institution, with an enrollment under 200 students, the school's continued presence within the city makes it possible for families who want this type of educational program for their children to live and stay in the District. This is extraordinarily important from a community development standpoint, helping to maintain a diverse and stable community of middle-class residents. Without schools like JPDS in the District, our city will continue to lose families, who make such an important contribution to the life of the city.

While I sympathize with the concerns of the Shepherd Park neighbors near 16th and Jonquil Streets who feel that they will inconvenienced by the temporary relocation of JPDS, the use of the two synagogues as an interim site for JPDS is reasonable and in the best interest of the community as a whole. I attended one of the community presentations sponsored by the school, and was impressed with the serious effort that has been made to address the neighbors' concerns with parking and traffic control. These and other mitigating measures that have been proposed by JPDS are sufficient to merit approval of the application by BZA. Frankly, the nature of urban living requires all of us to make compromises. After all, churches and synagogues are property owners, too, and it is neither fair nor realistic for the community to expect that these facilities should be restricted from hosting compatible occupancies like the JPDS. Tiffereth Israel and Ohev Shalom have been well-established institutions at this location for decades, and the current neighbors in Shepherd Park bought their homes with full knowledge that these large buildings on 16th Street would be devoted to institutional use.

A city that does not support schools is a city that does not support families. I urge the approval of the JPDS zoning application.

BZA
Case No. 16556
Exhibit No. 245

Paul Greenberg

cc: Council Members Drew Jarvis, Mendelsohn, Catania, Schwartz, Brazil, Evans; Chairman Linda Cropp; Andrew Altman; Joseph Hairston

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16556
EXHIBIT NO.245