WESLEY HEIGHTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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OFFICE OF ZONING
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

March 9, 2000

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

Re: Application of the Field School for Use of the Cafritz Estate as a School

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Board:

Wesley Heights is a quiet, upscale residential development of single-family homes in Northwest Washington, DC. Most of the present houses in Wesley Heights were built between 1932 and 1950, and occupy lovingly-tended lots, ranging in size from 5,000 square feet to over an acre, many with large trees and attractive gardens. Virtually all of the streets have sidewalks used by strollers, joggers, bikers, dog walkers and children walking to Horace Mann School, which lies along its northern limit. Traffic in the area is limited, particularly in the morning when left turn access is not permitted from southbound Foxhall Road north of Garfield Street and no access is permitted onto Macomb Street from Nebraska Avenue. Virtually all of the intersections within Wesley Heights have four-way stop signs. Only Garfield and Newark Streets and New Mexico Avenue, where there are traffic lights, invite commuter traffic.

The Wesley Heights Historical Society was established in 1989 in response to perceived overdevelopment that threatened to change the character of our neighborhood. Our members sponsored a zoning overlay that was adopted in 1992 by the city as a means for keeping new building or additions to existing homes to a reasonable level. We continue to be interested in to preserving the peaceful residental character of the neighborhood by seeing to it that existing zoning regulations, as well as the Wesley Heights Overlay District, are followed and enforced and that traffic in our area does not impact negatively on the character of the neighborhood or the quality of life of the immediate neighbors.

The Cafritz Estate lies south and west of the lower end of the Wesley Heights Overlay

BZA
Case No. 16559
Exhibit No. 84

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16559
EXHIBIT NO.84

District and abuts Wesley Heights properties only at the southern end of 44th Street, which runs some ten blocks north to south through the entire length of Wesley Heights. Traffic on 44th Street is local and very light with only a few commuter cars that have made legal right-hand turns onto Dexter and Edmunds Streets from north-bound Foxhall Road.

Lower 44th Street from Forest Lane south has homes only on the west side; to the east lies Glover Archbold Park and to the west is Acclimation Park (also known as Wesley Heights Park) both satellites of Rock Creek Park and under National Park Service administration. The street, which lacks sidewalks from Edmunds Street southward is used for walking, jogging, and park access by local residents as well as those who live in apartments and townhouses in Sutton Place, Westover, Cathedral Heights and Glover Park.

It is the strong contention of the WHHS that the peaceful character of this residential and recreational street should not be changed by commuting or school car-pooling traffic. Accordingly, the Society has joined the neighbors as a party to an agreement with the Field School that they will have no automobile access from or onto 44th Street for twenty-five years or as long as the School or its agents control the Cafritz Estate and use it for educational purposes.

It is further the position of the Society that continual south-bound traffic on Foxhall Road headed into downtown Washington and across Key Bridge, particularly during morning rush hours, not be impeded by vehicles turning into or out of the Field School nor that traffic headed into or out of the School be diverted onto Dexter, Edmunds, Fulton or 49th Streets east or west of Foxhall Road or onto other residential streets in nearby neighborhoods.

As long as these conditions are met by the Field School's plans and testimony submitted to the Board of Zoning Adjustment, the Wesley Heights Historical Society fully supports the School's application and would welcome it as a neighbor willing to enjoy and contribute to the quality of life in our neighborhood.

Sincerely yours,

George E. Watson
President