TO THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

RE: APPLICATION NUMBER 16590

My name is Ethel Jeannette Hackney. I own and occupy my home at 7742 16th Street, N.W. in Washington, D. C. I oppose the application for the Washington Ethical Society to operate a nursery school at 7750 16th Street, N. W.

This site is totally unsuited for a school. The school will bring additional traffic and parking to an area which is already over burdened. The 3-6 yearolds will have to be brought to the school and escorted in while a car awaits in the alley. This process will be reversed at the end of the day. The facility therefore needs, but does not have,space where cars can drive in, park or stand and drive out without paralyzing the neighborhood or trapping residents in their garages.

This site fronts on 16th Street, which has no parking or standing during rush hours. It is not on a corner where it could be accessed from from another street, but rather, is between two residences in an R1A neighborhood. Drop-off and pick-up hours can be long and irregular. Unike regular schools which have a stated opening and closing time, this school will offer before and after school care. This makes it highly unlikely that staff will be stationed outside to receive and dismiss students thus shortening the stay of the parents in the alley.

Those of us who live here must park our cars in our garages which are entered from the alley because of parking restrictions on our street. Those who come to render services to us also come to us through the alley. We have been greatly inconvenienced over the years by people utilizing the Ethical Society facility standing and parking in the alley and even parking on our private property. The students from the high school which just closed at this location

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obstructed the alley in the morning, at lunch time and at dismissal time.

Despite the name "Ethical" Society, they have not been particularly good neighbors. Their people parked in the alley with such frequency that the residents asked the city to erect a "No parking" sign. This sign was completely ignored and practically knocked down by cars parking against it. On one occasion when I called the office to complain about cars parked in the alley, the woman who answered the phone said that they had no where else to park, as though that gave them license to violate city parking laws. Many times I have come home, or looked out of my window, to find cars of strangers parked on my private parking pad in my rear yard. When I managed to see some of these trespassors they gave excuses such as this: "I'm teaching or taking a class at the Ethical Society", "I'm going to a program at the Ethical Society" or"I'm picking up my child". None of them seemed to realize that they were out of bounds.

A few years ago a group of neighbors invited Mr. Don Montagna, the leader of the Society, to meet with us to discuss problems with parking, the almost nightly activities which made it difficult for friends visiting us to park near our homes, and loud music late at night. He was asked directly if they rented the facility for parties and he said no. He was asked if they rented it for weddding receptions. Again the answer was no. He said only their members used the facility. Shortly after that meeting I saw an advertisement in the Washington Post Magazine for their wedding services. They are still advertising. I have here copies of the June 18, July 2 and July 9, 2000, of the Post magazine all of which carry ads from the Ethical Society. One can only wonder why they feel the need to contact their members through the Post.

Mr. Montagna has been less than forthcoming in presenting his case to the neighbors and in a message he left on my answering machine. He stated that the nursery school would less of a problem to the community than the teenage highschool students had been. But, that

if this application is denied he would bring another high school since the facility is zoned for a high school. I feel that Mr. Montagna knows that this block is zoned R1A and that school existed as a special exception and that any other school which wants to come there must also go through the zoning process.

We are also told that this school would serve the neighborhood. Well, this block which would be most damaged by the school has not a single child of nursery school age.

Please deny this application. We are inundated with schools. We have the Lowell School in this same square on Kalmia Road and the Jewish Primary Day School coming for a year in the adjacent block. We know that city regulations give churches the right to occupy facilities in any zone as a matter-of-right.Please don't allow these churches to come into our neighborhood and set up schools as a de facto matter-of-right. These schools do not benefit the neighborhood. They only benefit the churches, giving them a source of income from renting their property. None of this income flows to the city in the form of taxes.

All of us on this block are home owners and taxpayers. Please help us to perserve the quality of neighborhood and the value of our property. Don't allow this area to become a dumping ground for every school looking for a home.

With this statement I am also presenting signed statements from neighbors on this block.