3522 Davenport Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008
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BZA 16611

To whom it may concern:

This is a letter regarding the proposed expansion of the Edmund Burke School.

I was a teacher at Burke from 1980-89. In the years from 1983-86, the school doubled in physical size and in enrollment, providing growing pains for everyone involved. We teachers worked in trailers and taught classes in locker rooms. Neighbors were inundated with a larger, more affluent student community, many of whom chose to drive themselves, and only themselves, to school every day, thus clogging the nearby streets. The administrators at the time were overwhelmed. The construction was at times noisy and dusty.

I cannot speak to the noise and dust that may result from another expansion of Burke, but I can compare the readiness and thoughtfulness that this new administration has brought to this effort. The school community, led by head David Shapiro and assistant head Walter Ailes, has made great strides in the last year in relieving the neighborhood of the stress of parking and traffic. The students have vastly increased their car pooling and their voluntary use of Metro. Students and staff who even have a zone 3 permit are obeying the spirit of the parking restriction. In other words, they are not parking in zoned areas for more than two hours.

The result is a quieter, calmer neighborhood. The question may then arise: once a permit for building is granted, will the voluntary habits of the school community lessen somewhat? I do not think so, simply because I believe in this administration. As a professional tutor who contracts with parents to work with their students at Burke, I have observed David Shapiro and Walter Ailes from the inside out on a number of matters, and I believe their organization and their word is such that the neighbors of Edmund Burke can work with the school and certainly not suffer anywhere near the headaches of fifteen years ago.

Disclaimer: I am friends with the prior administrators of Burke but not with the present ones, Messrs. Shapiro and Ailes. I contract no business with the Edmund Burke School and have not done so, beyond several hundred dollars worth, for many years.

Sincerely,

Paul K. Penniman

BZA
Case No. 16611
Exhibit No. 137

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16611
EXHIBIT NO.137