GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jerrily R. Kress
Director, Office of Zoning

FROM: Kenneth G. Laden
Associate Director for Transportation Planning

DATE: May 21, 2001

SUBJECT: Edmund Burke School
BZA Application 16611

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The Department of Public Works has reviewed the Edmund Burke School revised Transportation Management Plan (dated May 15, 2001), the proposed Compliance Plan and the proposed operational plan, as well as the additional material hand delivered from ShawPittman, dated May 16, 2001.

The revised transportation management plan calls for the following **new** transportation management program elements:

- Expand employee and student transit subsidies to encourage additional transit usage (reducing 36 AM and 36 PM vehicle trips per day).
- Provide shuttle bus service from two unspecified locations to the school (reducing 40 AM vehicle trips per day). A drop-off site on Upton Street, in front of the existing school would be limited to shuttle bus drop-off only.
- Develop a special events management plan.
- Encourage drivers to use the Van Ness Metro-rail station as a student drop-off site.
- Parents would be required to sign a pledge to comply with the school's transportation management plan.
- Develop a Transportation Compliance Committee consisting of local residents, school representatives and student parent representatives to monitor the effectiveness of the transportation management plan. The school would videotape traffic operations once a month, and provide warnings and sanctions for parents who do not comply with the traffic management plan.
- If the Compliance Committee determines that for two successive quarters the aggregate of the compliance indicators is unsatisfactory, the Burke School's enrollment cap would be reduced by four students the following admissions cycle.

BZA
Case No. 16611
Exhibit No. 176

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16611
EXHIBIT NO.176

We believe that traffic conditions in the surrounding neighborhood would improve over existing conditions if the School were to successfully implement the various traffic management improvements outlined above. However, we have some concerns about the School's ability to implement all of the proposed traffic mitigation measures, the extent to which these measures would be successful in changing driving patterns, and whether the School will be able to maintain these transportation mitigation measures over the long term.

Our specific concerns are outlined below. The Edmund Burke School provided responses to many of these concerns on May 21, 2001. The School's responses are summarized below in *italics.*

School Operations

- How will the School market the transit subsidies? How will the School guarantee that 36 parents will use the metro subsidy and 40 parents will have their students use the shuttle buses in the morning? How will the Edmund Burke School guarantee this same level of transit subsidy use and shuttle bus use in future years? Will parents continue to have their children use transit or shuttle buses during inclement weather, or when students are running late? *The Edmund Burke School indicated it wouldl coordinate with WMATA on the "marketing" of the transit subsidies. The calculation of the number of students who will utilize the transit subsidies and shuttle bus service are estimates based upon current student usage of mass transit. Actual usage of transit or shuttle buses can only be measured at the School after implementation of these traffic management elements. The School will adjust these two traffic management elements if actual usage does not meet their goals.*

- Where will the shuttle buses pick up the students? Does the School have permission for use of these site(s)? How often and during what times of the day will the shuttle buses operate? *Shuttle locations will be determined in the future following consultation with parents. 2 – 3 shuttle runs from one site north of the School and one site east of the School will be run in the morning, only. The School is coordinating with WMATA about possible use of bus stops as drop off sites..*

- The Department would like to review the special event management plan before BZA issues its order. *For events with less than 100 persons, the School will use the new parking garage at the School. For events with more than 100 persons, the School will offer special parking services (perhaps using shuttle buses) provided by two vendors.*

- Has WMATA agreed to allow the School to use the Van Ness Metrorail "Kiss and Ride" site by the Edmund Burke School? In discussions with staff from the DPW, Office of Mass Transit, the underground "Kiss and Ride" site at the Van Ness Metrorail Station has been discontinued and is now used for parking, while the bus drop-off site at street level is reserved for bus use only. How will the School "promote" the Van Ness Metrorail Station drop-off site? How/where will the School

recommend that the students cross Connecticut Avenue? *The School would use a surface level turn around at the Van Ness Metrorail Station and not the underground "kiss and ride" nor the bus stop. The School indicates that WMATA will allow use of the turn around area so long as parents do not impede bus traffic. Students will be encouraged to use the underground passage from the west side to the east side of Connecticut Avenue.*

2. Carpool Operations

- Will there be a need for stacking space (lay by) for shuttle buses on Upton Street? If so, it must be in front of the existing School. *The School no longer will request a lay by area on Upton Street, since only shuttle buses will use Upton Street.*

- What are the disciplinary sanctions the School will use for parents/students who do not comply with the traffic plan? Is prohibiting a student's future enrollment during the next admission session an effective deterrent, rather than an immediate sanction? What if this is the student's last year of enrollment? *The School is considering financial sanctions and possible dismissal of students for multiple violations of the traffic management plan.*

- Since parents coming from the east will not be allowed to drop off their children on Upton Street, what route will the School recommend they use to gain access to the Connecticut Avenue drop-off point? Will they be encouraged to use Tilden Street? *Parents will be asked to use Tilden Street to access the Connecticut Avenue entrance loop.*

3. Parking Policies

- No comments.

4. Community Issues

- See Compliance Plan comments below.

5. Compliance Plan

- In the Compliance Plan, the monitoring of the six compliance indicators needs to be more frequent than once a month. I would recommend at least once per week. *Compliance monitoring will be mechanized and monitored more frequently.*

- Will the School videotape traffic operations using permanent remote cameras, or have someone standing on the street with a camera. *Video equipment will be installed at the front and alley side of the School.*

- The proposed policy to ensure School compliance with the transportation management plan provides that, "if the Compliance Committee judges that for two successive quarters, the aggregate of the compliance indicators is unsatisfactory Edmund Burke's enrollment cap will be reduced by four students for the following admissions cycle." This policy appears to be somewhat subjective and unlikely to be effective since it only affects next year's enrollment and would only address chronic traffic problems. I'm not sure that an enrollment reduction of only four student in the

following enrollment period for failure to achieve traffic reduction goals is strong enough of a sanction. The sanctions should be more directly tied to the traffic concerns and affect current enrollment, not future enrollment. *Additional financial and dismissal sanctions are being considered. The School feels that a sanction of reducing future enrollment by four students is a significant financial sacrifice by the School.*

- I would like to see a description of how the School will manage visiting buses and parking of the shuttle buses and chartered buses. Visiting buses, charter buses and shuttle buses should not park or unload so as to block traffic on Connecticut Avenue, Van Ness Street, Upton Street or other local streets and alleys. *The School believes that the rear of the School will address most visiting bus needs.*

The following traffic mitigation elements, which were outlined in the Department's May 3, 2001 comments to the Office of Planning, are still applicable, with some modification.

- The Edmund Burke School would need to implement at traffic control plan with approved travel routes and require parents, faculty, students and staff to follow only approved routes. Parents, students, faculty and staff would not be allowed to use the neighborhood alley system to access the School (except to access alley parking behind the existing School). This mitigation measure would be difficult to enforce since there are few sanctions that the city or the School could impose on drivers for failure to follow a recommended travel route.
- The School would need to develop a circulation and parking policy for buses owned or chartered by the School, and buses from visiting Schools which would prohibit their parking on Upton Street, Van Ness Street, Connecticut Avenue (during rush hour) or other nearby residential streets, and prohibit buses from blocking nearby alleys.
- The Department would need to examine existing traffic control signals along the approved travel routes and adjust them, if necessary.
- We are removing the requirement for a traffic signal at Upton Street since the revised transportation plan significantly reduces School related traffic on Upton Street.
- The School would be required to build a parking garage under the proposed School that would be accessed off Connecticut Avenue, NW. The driveway to the garage would need to provide safe two-way access to and from the garage. Vehicles leaving the garage would be limited to making right turn, only, onto Connecticut Avenue.
- The School would be required to construct a student drop-off (and pick-up) site within the proposed School property that would be accessed off Connecticut Avenue and would provide for exit by either Connecticut Avenue (right turn only) or Upton Street.
- If the School prohibits student drop-off on Upton Street, no lay-by area would be required on Upton Street.
- The School would not be required to widen the alley between Upton Street and the entrance to the alley in the rear of the existing School property to 20 feet to allow safe two-way traffic in the alley. Instead, the School would be required to construct a private 20 foot wide drive to allow vehicles leaving the student drop-off area to exit

onto Upton Street and maintain the existing alley width. The private drive and public alley would need to be separated by a physical barrier. Vehicles would not be allowed to use the public alley as a drop-off or pick-up site.

- The School would be required to place traffic aides near the student drop-off site to direct vehicles, and at the intersection of the alley/private driveway with Upton Street to ensure safe turning movement.
- The School would implement policies and programs to reduce to the absolute minimum the number of staff, faculty, students and parents who drive to the School, including Metrochek incentives, shuttle buses from transit stops, and other policies.
- The Department of Public Works would need to review and approve all proposed traffic control plans and proposed physical improvements outlined above before they are implemented and constructed.

Conclusion/Recommendation

The May 16, 2001 Edmund Burke School traffic management plan provides a variety of measures designed to shift current School related traffic to transit and shuttle buses and reduce vehicular travel on local streets. The plan calls the development of a Compliance Committee consisting of local residents, School representatives and parents to monitor the effectiveness of these traffic mitigation measures on neighborhood streets.

However, even with these proposed measures, there is no way, at this time, to determine whether these measures will be effective in the near-term or long-term. Therefore, the Department recommends a one year demonstration of the effectiveness of these proposed transportation mitigation measures before the application is approved. We recognize that the full impact of the proposed transportation measures cannot be measured until the School constructs the new building and access loop, therefore some interim performance measure of effectiveness would need to be developed.