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July 10, 2001, Board of Zoning Adjustments Hearing

My name is Carol Woodard, 3003 Van Ness Street NW, and I have been a resident of the Van Ness South apartments for 31 years. During that time I have witnessed first-hand the distressing changes in the traffic load in our neighborhood -- what with Howard University Law School taking over a quiet little girls' school; the Consulate apartment building being built, taking away the school's parking lot; the first expansion of Burke School; the Levine School's entry on the scene; embassies being built east and west of Connecticut Avenue; increased activity at the Hillwood Museum; and the recent construction of the Howard University Law School Library. All of this has created what is presently at times an intolerable traffic burden on our residential streets and alleys, resulting in many near crashes and real accidents on Van Ness Street. Our residents frequently are not even able to get in or out of our Van Ness South garage because of the traffic. It is not safe to cross Van Ness Street. I am frequently amazed that the Burke students aren't run down crossing Van Ness Street at lunch time at the alley which is supposed to be one way but which has become two way -- or, for that matter, that I'm not run down when I go out.

On May 19th, I attended the Mayor's Strategic Neighborhood Planning Community Workshop at UDC where Mayor Williams spoke, as did Mr. Andrew Altman, head of the Office of Planning. In our smaller breakout sessions, it was determined by vote that the number one issue needing to be resolved for our neighborhood Cluster 10/12 (which encompasses the area from Chevy Chase

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through the Van Ness area) is traffic and parking. That should tell you something significant about how our citizens feel about the Connecticut Avenue and side streets overload and traffic delays.

Our neighborhood is fed up with this unmanageable traffic. We live on narrow streets with parking permitted on both sides, for the most part. It is my understanding that Burke School still wants Van Ness Street to be used for the buses which transport its students to/from various athletic events, etc. For the life of me I cannot understand why Van Ness Street should be expected to accommodate Burke School's overloading traffic and buses. This is not right, and it should not be permitted.

I am opposed to the proposed expansion of Burke School because of the insurmountable traffic problems. How can you fit a size 10 foot into a size 4 shoe? You can't. I ask that you not grant Burke School's petition that will add further congestion to our street which even now cannot handle the traffic loads imposed on it.