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JUL 10 2001

CLOSING REMARKS
DAVID SHAPIRO

As we have said, and as many, including our opponents have agreed, Edmund Burke School has been providing a challenging and humane education to children for 33 years, the last 27 of which have been at the same location on Upton Street.

At this important moment in the school's history, Burke has applied for permission to increase enrollment to a total of 360 students and to create a new facility to allow for sorely needed supports for the academic program, educational environment, and student services, and at the same time to enable the school to make marked improvements to neighborhood parking and traffic.

During on-going conversations with neighbors and the ANC, Burke revised its plan to respond to neighborhood concerns and desires. In their January 8, 2001 letter and concept drawing, Neighbors United for Livable Streets explicitly identified what they called their "central concerns" and presented a plan that would positively address those concerns. In summary, the neighbors asked that the school:
--direct traffic away from Upton Street and take maximum advantage of its Connecticut Avenue location
--remove Burke traffic from Van Ness Street and the public alley between Van Ness and Upton Streets
--confine Burke traffic to the school's property and arterial streets
--provide on-site parking for students and faculty
--retain the landscaped buffer between the school and the residences immediately to its east

The plan that we have presented to the BZA dedicates a full 48% of Burke's new facility to addressing parking and traffic issues, and it incorporates every one of the neighbors' requests.

--The increase in parking spaces made in Burke's plan, from 25 to 75 spaces, does not depend on a management plan. They are concrete and unequivocal. If you allow, the additional 50 spaces will be constructed, their impact will be immediate, and they will be of significant benefit to the neighborhood.
--In the same way, the queuing improvements made in this plan, from 5 to 17 in the morning and from 5 to 19 in the afternoon, are concrete and unequivocal. If you allow, the additional queuing spaces will be constructed, their impact will be immediate, and they will be of significant benefit to the neighborhood.
--In addition, if you allow, Burke will construct an enclosed drop off/pick up loop on its own property. No families will be allowed to drop their children off on Van Ness or Upton Streets or in the public alley, and the changed traffic patterns will be of significant benefit to the neighborhood.

To doubt the benefits for the neighborhood of these improvements is contrary to logic and to the stated desires of NULS as presented in writing and in their own concept plan.

Burke understands that in exceeding the BZA's 1983 student and faculty caps, it lost credibility with many. That is, in part, why it has created a detailed compliance plan, including methods to monitor the school's performance and severe sanctions should the Compliance Committee, the majority of whom are neighbors, find the school to be out of compliance. While Burke has lost credibility with numbers of its neighbors, there is also a strong element of support for Burke's proposal. The BZA has received 84 letters on Burke's behalf, and perhaps even more significant, has received a petition in support of Burke, signed by over 40 immediate neighbors who understand that our plan will have a strong and beneficial effect on neighborhood parking and traffic. Please also remember that Burke has already made important changes in the way that we do business. We have:

1. Relocated where we park our school vans
2. Changed our student parking policies
3. Provided yearly event calendars to our neighbors
4. Terminated the practice of renting out our gym and reduced to zero the number of non-school events on campus, notwithstanding our entitlement to have 3 such events a month, that is, 36 a year
5. Implemented the metro chec program for faculty which has quadrupled faculty metro use
6. Hired police officers to direct and manage traffic flow during morning and after school drop off and pick up

BZA
Case No. 16611
Exhibit No. 209

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16611
EXHIBIT NO.209

Some have described the components of Burke's plan as untested concepts, but is that really accurate? Some have expressed doubt about implementing a successful metro chec program for Burke families, but please remember that our faculty metro chec plan has already had terrific success. Neighbors expressed doubt about our ability to locate authorized shuttle locations, but we already have written authorization for 3 locations: the Van Ness Kiss 'N Ride, 40th and Albemarle Streets and Shoemaker Street, and there are numbers of successful shuttle programs currently operating. Some have expressed doubts about our willingness to keep our word, but with our commitment to rigorous performance standards and severe penalties for non-compliance, the school has more on the line than even its neighbors do. In fact, evidence gives us every reason to believe that Burke's physical and traffic management plans will have great success.

As you know, the idea of a test period has been put forward by the DPW and supported by ANC 3F. Singling out 2 components of the plan for testing out of the context of the complete plan, however, cannot be a valid test and is not likely to produce meaningful results, no matter how successful they are. From the beginning, this has been about parking and traffic. The goal has always been, as Phil Kogan has written, "to limit and reduce the high volume and traffic that flows on these residential streets." And while the shuttle, metro benefit, and compliance plan are essential, constructing the new facility with its garage and private drop off/pick up loop is the lynch pin of the traffic management plan and the true guarantor of dramatically reduced Burke traffic on Van Ness Street, in the public alley, and on Upton Street. Without Burke's garage, increased queuing spaces, and Connecticut Avenue entrance to a private drop off/pick up loop, even a successful shuttle and metro plan would still leave upwards of 100 cars arriving at Burke each day with no option other than to use the public alley and to drop students off on Upton Street. On the other hand, the physical solution embedded in the school's proposal would reduce Upton and Van Ness traffic to a total of 36 cars. Thirty-two of which will not be stopping or dropping students off.

Though people have talked about a test period, the real question is about remedies. The DPW and ANC are not objecting to Burke's expansion if we can substantially improve parking and traffic conditions. Instead of imposing an incomplete test, we ask you to consider the following alternative:

> Allow Burke to construct the new facility with its physical solutions to parking and traffic issues as well as its traffic management and compliance plans as presented, but authorize a cap of only 340 students. If Burke succeeds at meeting its performance standards with an enrollment of 340 for 18 months, the BZA can authorize a further enrollment cap increase to 360. If Burke cannot succeed with 340 students, the BZA—in fact, Burke's own compliance plan—will mandate a decreased enrollment cap. Although an enrollment cap of 340 students presents a financial hardship for Burke, it is the lowest enrollment number that assures bank financing. The school's Board of Trustees and I are willing to expose the school to such a financial risk, however, if it is the only fair and meaningful way to realize our hopes and aspirations for our current and future students.

It is puzzling and disappointing that despite our modifications to accommodate virtually everything that the community has requested, some have simply tuned the progress out and turned the process off. While our neighbors need more parking, more queuing, and less traffic, they want the Board to reject or substantially delay a plan whose improvements will provide just that. I urge the Board to allow Edmund Burke School to make these improvements.