3630 Upton St. NW
Washington, DC 20008
July 5, 2002

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Mr. Geoffrey Griffis, Chairman
Board of Zoning Adjustment
One Judiciary Square
441 Fourth St. NW
Washington, DC

RE: BZA Application No. 16836 (Hearing on July 9, 2002)

Dear Mr. Griffis:

I have been a resident of Upton St., a block from the Washington Home, since 1994. As the mother of two small children, I am increasingly concerned about the traffic on the street, and sometimes have to wait for ten cars to pass before we can safely cross the street. I am unable to attend the July 9 hearing, but I have some concerns about the Home's proposed expansion to include four new hospice beds.

The Washington Home has, by and large, been an asset to the neighborhood, providing health care for the city's citizens while also sharing its shady lawn for games of frisbee or for sledding. Their parking lot is barely visible from the street, and we would like to keep it that way. This is a residential neighborhood, hosting this large institution under a special exception that says it will respect the character of the neighborhood. We rely on zoning rules to keep our neighborhood from becoming a commercial strip. One of the strengths of DC is that it is possible to live in a house with a yard, on a quiet street, within walking distance of city amenities.

While adding four new hospice beds might not seem to jeopardize the neighborhood, I am not convinced that the Washington Home will take steps to minimize traffic or lessen the parking burden. I have been surprised and disappointed to discover that the Home does not police the rules it has: no one gets encouraged to carpool or ride Metro, and the Home's facilities staff told me that no one ever gets ticketed or towed. Furthermore, the Home has painted extra spaces into the parking lot beyond the authorized 75, and it routinely allows cars to block fire lanes. If my dear ones in the Home were in need of an ambulance or fire truck, I'm not sure it could even get to them. And the sad part is that the Home lets people block the fire lanes even when there are dozens of empty, legal parking spaces. I've seen this happen on weekends, in the early morning, and at other quiet times.

Water is a concern as well. Our house is considerably downhill from the Home, and we see a lot of storm water runoff. A dozen times a year, the runoff is so high that it jumps the curb and makes a river on the edge of our lawn. It even ended up in the trunk of my husband's car. So naturally we are concerned about any proposal to pave additional surface in our watershed.

I urge you not to allow the Washington Home to expand without taking care of parking, traffic, and water issues.

If the BZA postpones the decision on the four-bed hospice expansion until September 10, I would like to request an opportunity to speak at that hearing.

Sincerely yours,

Sharon Flank

Cc: CCHE c/o Barbara Beelar

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 16836
Exhibit 60-61

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16836
EXHIBIT NO.61