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April 15, 2002

Chairman Geoffry Griffis
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W.
2nd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: BZA Application No. 16852
St. Patrick's School
4925 McArthur Blvd, N.W.

Dear Chairman Griffis:

The purpose of this letter is to express our support for the 7th and 8th grade expansion of St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School at 4925 MacArthur Blvd.

We are residents of the Foxhall/Palisades neighborhoods. We have lived in this area for the last 15 years and have lived in the District for the last 25 years. We have a child in second grade at St. Patrick's.

We attended a number of neighborhood discussions and ANC meetings on St. Patrick's use of the MacArthur street location. You are no doubt familiar with the usage in environmental matters of the concept of NIMBY ("Not in My Back Yard"). The use and extension of this concept to include trying to block the use and preservation of an existing commercial facility for the worthy use of two elementary grades for one of the most reputable schools in the District is truly unfortunate. The notion that a few vocal neighbors can sway the ANC 3D while the vast majority of those in the Palisades support the school is indeed regrettable.

The thought that those more immediate neighbors are more concerned with possibly hearing the sounds of children at recess or are more concerned with whether a school bus takes more than 30 seconds to unload students than concerned with the lack of high quality educational facilities in the District and in this area is so unfortunate.

St Patrick's serves our community in a myriad of important and beneficial ways. Foremost, St. Patrick's provides its elementary students (both those who can pay tuition and its many scholarship students) with a wonderful educational opportunity. In addition, the church and the

BZA
Case No. 16852
Exhibit No. 222

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16852
EXHIBIT NO.222

school serve as magnets of activities and for socially conscious causes, ranging from cub scouts to senior citizens to preparing food for SOME.

Putting a maximum of 60 St. Patrick's students at 4925 MacArthur is a beneficial and appropriate use of that location. St. Patrick's has been an exemplary neighbor since 1956 in the Foxhall/Palisades neighborhoods. The two-grade expansion will not adversely affect those who offer nothing more than to say "Not in My Back Yard."

Thank you for your consideration. We urge the BZA for grant the special use exemption for St. Patrick's.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen K. Gardner