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April 10, 2002

Board of Zoning Adjustment
Chairman Geoffrey Griffis
441 4th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20016

Dear Chairman Griffis and Boardmembers,

I am the father of two Saint Patrick's students and have lived in D.C. for the last thirteen years. I also currently serve as vice-chair of the D.C. Public Charter School Board, which since 1997 has authorized the opening of twenty three public charter school campuses that serve nearly 8,000 D.C. students; while this experience significantly informs my opinions, I am writing as a private citizen to express my support for the expansion of Saint Patrick's Episcopal Day School into the building at 4925 MacArthur Boulevard, N.W.

I have attended numerous community and ANC meetings regarding the St. Patrick's proposal. I have listened as opponents stated that the building is inappropriate for a school, and that the "bucolic" nature of the property and environs will be disturbed. I find such arguments to be without merit. By now, as your Board knows, the operation of charter schools in "non-traditional" buildings in our city is well-established. Further, the neighborhood, while pleasant, sits in the flight path of National Airport, on the busy MacArthur Boulevard commuter thoroughfare. It is highly unlikely that St. Patrick's use of the facility would add appreciably to traffic volume or noise at that site.

It is widely understood that a crucial factor in the sustained health of our city will be our ability to attract and retain families, which in turn will depend on our ability to offer a quality education to our children. One of the greatest challenges facing both public and private schools in Washington, however, is the lack of suitable, affordable facilities available for the education of our children. In Northwest D.C., this need is most pronounced at the middle school level.

Many D.C. parents send their children to our excellent local elementary schools, but for a host of reasons opt out of the public schools after sixth grade. This creates extraordinary demand for private schools to serve grades seven through twelve. Saint Patrick's proposes to address this need and to serve our community by extending its program to the seventh and eighth grades. The 4925 MacArthur property presents a unique - and rare – opportunity in an area that offers few affordable alternatives.

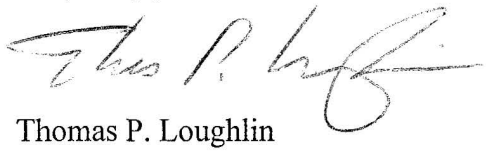
In recent testimony before the D.C. City Council's Committee on Education, I noted that further growth of successful public charter schools in Washington is severely threatened by such schools' inability to secure appropriate, affordable facilities. This city-wide problem also applies to private schools, and is especially pronounced in the

BZA
Case No. 16852
Exhibit No. 226

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16852
EXHIBIT NO.226

high-cost neighborhoods of Northwest D.C. Saint Patrick's proposal to offer a seventh and eighth grade curriculum at 4925 MacArthur Boulevard is a realistic, appropriate and responsible initiative that will address an urgent need in our community - without posing an objectionable impact on the neighborhood.

Very truly yours,



Thomas P. Loughlin