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Mr. Geoffrey Griffis
Chairman
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW
Washington DC 20001

RE: BZA Application No. 16852, St. Patrick's School

Mr. Griffis:

I have lived in the Palisades since 1995, have two young children, and I am on the board of the Palisades Citizens Association, so I have attended numerous PCA board and general membership meetings on this subject.

The Palisades is a wonderful residential neighborhood with a good public school, many pedestrian commercial opportunities, proximity to downtown DC, and a strong embrace of recreation and the environment. We also have significant expansion problems, including traffic on MacArthur Boulevard and new, large construction on small lots. As a result, the community tends to oppose expansion.

In the end, however, we all benefit from smart growth. A commercial building on MacArthur near Arizona Avenue was refaced not long ago despite objection for any additional development from the community. Now many neighbors enjoy being able to walk to Starbuck's and the video store.

Sibley Hospital needed a zoning variance to expand its oncology capabilities, which immediate neighbors opposed for fear of increased traffic and more construction on the site. However, in the wake of DC General closing and Columbia Hospital for Women deteriorating, Sibley has picked up the slack and improved its capacity and menu of services, to the betterment of our entire community.

BZA
Case No. 16852
Exhibit No. 231

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16852
EXHIBIT NO.231

An access path to the Capital Crescent Trail at Manning Place and Potomac Avenue was upgraded to the disappointment of some immediate neighbors, but it has not drawn additional out-of-boundary car traffic and now provides a safer entry point to the Trail.

Key Elementary School was one of the first DC public schools to modernize. The construction caused problems for many immediate neighbors. Next year, however, Key School children will be in larger, state-of-the-art facilities and the school will be able to address the ever-enlarging student population by adding classes per grade, where needed.

This is the same situation facing St. Patrick's – more students needing good educational choices. St. Patrick's students would benefit from the school's expansion into Grades 7 and 8, but so might Key School students who need to prepare for Wilson High School or a different private institution.

In the end, my husband Peter and I support St. Patrick's proposed middle school because we value the existing Victorian structure and green space, we commend St. Patrick's for negotiating with the immediate neighbors on their concerns, and, in general, we support the type of high-quality education that St. Patrick's provides to its students.

Sincerely,

Julie Scott

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