THE PALISADES CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

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16852

TESTIMONY OF ERIK S. GAULL
PRESIDENT, PALISADES CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
BEFORE THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT

April 16, 2002

Good Afternoon, Chairman Griffis and members of the Board. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

My name is Erik Gaull, and I am the President of the Palisades Citizens Association (PCA). The PCA represents over 1,200 households and businesses in an area of Northwest D.C. roughly bounded by the Potomac River, the District-Maryland Line, Loughboro Road, and Foxhall Road. We are a diverse and engaged neighborhood, and not surprisingly, the PCA is an active and vibrant citizens association.

The PCA took about three months to review and consider the St. Patrick's proposal from the time the school first approached the Association with it plans. It is safe to say that this has been the most contentious issue with which I have had to deal since becoming President of the PCA. I have received numerous letters and e-mails both supporting and opposing the St. Patrick's plan.

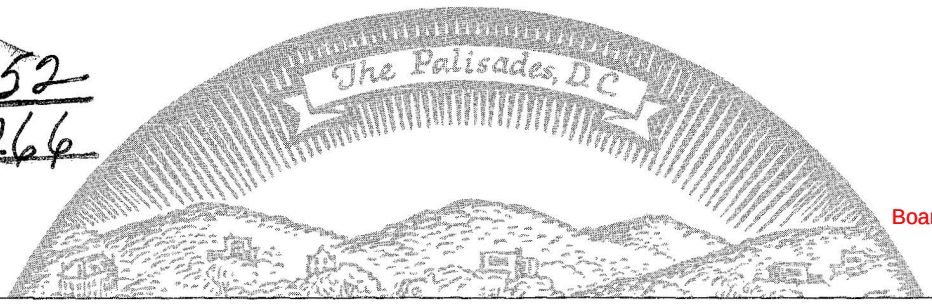
On April 2, approximately 300 people turned out for our monthly general membership meeting for the vote that would ultimately decide the PCA's official position on this Application. Speakers gave informed and impassioned speeches on both sides of the debate.

The Palisades Citizens Association voted 124 to 41 to support St. Patrick's Application. With that vote, the Association requests that the Board take the PCA's position into account when making its decision on the Application.

I would like to address a concern that I have heard voiced on a number of occasions since the Association's vote on April 2. That is the incorrect assertion that somehow the PCA vote is not truly reflective of its membership's sentiments – that St. Patrick's "packed" the meeting and got numerous new members to join for the sole purpose of swaying the vote. In fact, the Association received only 35 new applications, and the idea that the votes in favor of the St. Patrick's Application came solely from new members is simply not supported by the three-to-one vote margin (even if one were to concede that all 35 new members were St. Patrick's proponents). The outcome was a function of the democratic process, pure and simple. The Palisades Citizens Association spoke clearly on April 2, and I am here to represent its position on the matter.

I am available to answer any questions you might have. Thank you for your time.

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Case No. 16852
Exhibit No. 266



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D.C. BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16852
EXHIBIT NO.266