BZA
Case No. 16852
Exhibit No. 306

BY FAX

4907 W Street, NW
Washington, DC 20002

September 26, 2002

D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
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2002 SEP 27 PM 3:17

Mr. Geoffrey Griffis
Chairman
District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW, Second Floor, Room 210
Washington, DC 20001

RE: BZA Order 16852

Dear Chairman Griffis:

My home is lot 3 in Square 1392, within 200 Feet of the proposed site of St. Patrick's Jr. High School. I write in opposition to the establishment of the school.

My family has always lived in the Palisades and I was raised in this neighborhood. I firmly believe the establishment of the Elementary School on Whitehaven Parkway has caused undue burden on the community, especially W Street, and do not wish to have another branch of the school placed within 200 feet of my home. The number of cars that circulates past my home every school day is unbelievable. The community has had to have four-way STOP signs placed at every intersection along W Street and 49th Street because parents do not respect speed limits or residents. There is a considerable difference on the street when St. Patrick's is in session and when the school is closed. It is extremely difficult to exit my driveway in the mornings and the afternoons as parents file past to pick up their children. The numbers of cars passing my home have increased considerably over the past several years and now they are waiting at the top of W Street before moving over to Whitehaven Parkway. I consider this unacceptable school traffic sprawl. The back up and congestion that exists on Whitehaven Parkway and Foxhall Road has spread next door to W Street. Parents approach Whitehaven Parkway via W Street and return home via W Street. It was my understanding that there was to be an improved car pool plan but there is no evidence that any change has occurred since the opening of school at the beginning of September.

I signed the petition opposing the school as did 202 other immediate neighbors because we feel the establishment of a junior high school at the corner of MacArthur and Ashby Street would destroy the quality of life that has always existed in this residential section of the Palisades. There are no facilities on site to support the needs of the jr. high students and the neighbors would be

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recipients of student's pent up energy. It is not unfortunate that most of us are retired or near retirement and long-time residents of this neighborhood. We know our neighbors, their families, our children have grown up together, spend time with them and we enjoy living here. But do not let me paint a false picture. We do have children in this immediate neighborhood and we enjoy their presence just as others enjoyed our children when they were growing up. We are not against schools. We are not against children, but allowing the establishment of a jr. high would not be a complementary or compatible use of that property. St. Patrick's has a long and well established history in this community. The Elementary School has not been a good neighbor on Whitehaven Parkway because of the traffic and congestion it has created and we do not believe it will be a good neighbor at the corner of Ashby Street and MacArthur Boulevard. It has not been honest in its past promises to the community and it has not been forthcoming in its presentation of plans for the jr. high school. It has managed to find loop holes whenever needed and established the jr. high school after assuring the community that it would not do so. School parents have behaved aggressively and made false accusations against their neighbors to promote the establishment of the jr. high school. As a result of its past history and the opposition of the 203 immediate neighbors who signed the petition, the Board of the Palisades Citizens Association voted 11-2 against and ANC 3D voted 5-0 against the establishment of the school.

I ask that the Board of Zoning Adjustment not grant the special exception requested in case #16852 and that St. Patrick's Board of Trustees be encouraged to find a more appropriate location for its jr. high school. The establishment of the school at 4925 MacArthur Boulevard is unfair to the students and is unfair to this community.

Sincerely,

Theresa L. Abernathy

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