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September 29, 2002

Goeffrey Griffis, Chairman
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW Room 210
Washington, DC 20001

Re: BZA Order 16852

Dear Chairman Griffis:

I have been assured by friends more knowledgeable than I that writing this letter is a waste of time as the BZA never rules for neighborhood homeowners against an institution such as a church or a school. However, I was very favorably impressed by the interest and questions from members of the Board at a hearing I recently attended. I have understood that the reason any city has a BZA is to protect and preserve the characteristics of residential neighborhoods. For this reason, I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed expansion of the St. Patrick's school into a quiet residential neighborhood in which most of the residents have lived for twenty or thirty years.

As those of us opposed to the use of an old house for a school building have been accused of not liking children, I feel I must note that I have two children of my own. Also I have worked professionally as a pediatrician then as an adolescent psychiatrist for almost fifty years. A number of children have grown up in this neighborhood without any complaints from me or any neighbors. Acceptance of children is not the issue.

The concern I and other neighbors have is that the neighborhood streets are narrow and were not designed for the load of traffic they already must handle. There are no sidewalks or even lane markers on 49th Street or Ashby Street After five years of petitions we finally were able to obtain stop signs at intersections. However, those of us who live here exit driveways in the morning or walk to the homes of friends or to neighborhood stores at significant risk of injury from cars which continue to drive at unsafe speeds Another school will increase this traffic.

Do taxpaying residents have no rights to protect their neighborhoods? If the BZA has a responsibility to ensure the maintenance of the characteristics of existing residential neighborhoods, surely you must vote against the expansion of St. Patrick's school into an old house on a quiet residential street when more suitable space already is available near the present St Patrick's school buildings on Whitehaven Parkway...

Thank you for your consideration of the questions raised in this letter.

Sincerely,

Nancy Stone

BZA
Case No. 16852
Exhibit No. 307

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16852
EXHIBIT NO.307