November 7, 2002

Geoffrey Griffis, Chair,
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Griffis,

I am unable to testify because of my work schedule, but I would like to offer personal experience that seems to be relevant to Application #16852. The property I co-own shares a boundary with a National Park Service facility that is leased to a non-profit organization, Discovery Creek. When I purchased the property in 1992, the building use was listed as a library, with plans to make it a museum for children. Neither library nor museum use for DC schoolchildren seemed a problem. However, noise is a very real problem. The properties adjacent to the proposed school will face daily intrusions by a greater number of schoolchildren.

The small, outside area used for Discovery Creek activities is 10 feet from my house. If at home, I am always very aware when the facility is in use. The high-pitched voices carry well above the level of street noise from the boulevard. The area is often used to allow the children a snack and to let off steam, in addition to educational activities that often include howling like animals or chorus responses to questions. When the children are allowed recess at the rear area, especially a busload, the noise can be especially disturbing, because it can include children screaming at one another as they play. When Discovery Creek caters birthday parties, a popular weekend and after-school activity, noise is a terrible problem.

There is also incidental property damage to consider. The groups that come to the facility during the weekdays range in size from carloads to busloads. The buses park on the street, near or in front of the house to load and unload. Exhaust fumes come directly into the house from idling buses. The cars park in front of the house to unload, and grass hasn't grown in the treebox area since Discovery Creek opened. The area has been both seeded and sodded, to no avail. A child pulled down stones from my retaining wall, luckily no one was injured. My car has been damaged three times, once while I was in it. No one stopped or left a note.

I invite the zoning board to visit the Discovery Creek site when it is in use to observe firsthand the noise and traffic problems as tangible evidence, on a smaller scale, of what the owners of the adjacent. properties to the proposed school site will experience. I hope that the zoning laws can protect my neighbors from a very real threat to both the value of their properties and their enjoyment of their homes.

Sincerely,

Kathryn B. Taylor

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Case No. 16852
Exhibit No. 337

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16852
EXHIBIT NO.337