2847 Hurst Terrace NW
Washington DC 20016
September 7, 2002

Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W., Suite 210
Washington DC 20001

Re: Special Exception Application Number 16915

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a 27 year resident of Hurst Terrace and write in opposition to the extension of the special exception being sought at 2828 Hurst Terrace.

Over the years I have been a neighbor and a friend of the applicant, Ms. Allan. My youngest child attended the original play school at 2828 Hurst Terrace in the early 1980's. At that time the school was operated out of her basement along with about 10 other children, almost all of whom lived in the immediate neighborhood and were walked to the school by a parent. Eighteen years ago, when Ms. Allan came before this Board to ask for her first special exception to build an addition and get a license to run a school, I testified that the school was not a problem for the neighbors. That was then because most children were walked and our street was lightly traversed.

Were she applying for the first time today, I would not support the school because of how significantly the nature of the school and neighborhood has changed over the years. Especially hurtful to me is the plan to sell the school business in the near future, leave the neighborhood and leave those of us still on the block with this major business that so badly affects our quality of life. I feel this plan is a major betrayal of the support we initially gave the school and our tolerance for it over many years despite the negative impact it has on the block. By selling the school to someone new, she is attempting to take advantage of the neighbors' longtime goodwill in order to make a profit for herself, while at the same time leaving those of us who supported her over the years with an inappropriate business on our block. It makes all of us regret having never opposed the school or voiced longstanding complaints we have had with the school for many years. Our goodwill and tolerance for the school should not be used as a basis for continuing it now just because it has been in our neighborhood for so many years.

The school has become a problem because of the large number of students, almost all of whom are driven to the school. Once the school expanded from the basement to the new addition our traffic problems began with cars lined up usually to the end of the block at Garfield Street for drop off and pick up. This has resulted in problems for everyone on the block by blocking driveways and denying access to parking in front of our homes or having our parked cars blocked. For example, on several occasions, I have been unable to return to my home and park in front of my house because of these lines. Ms. Allan

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indicates in her application that construction at Key School in recent years has created the problem. But, these lines existed for years and years before the construction began two years ago. Key School has never been the problem because the cars park and line up in front of Key School, not our homes as does the traffic at Barbara's School. Hurst Terrace has parking on both sides of the street and with the large size vehicles today it is almost impossible to have two way traffic at times. She puts out orange cones every weekday morning to save parking spots in front of her home and that of her next door neighbor. It is public parking on our street and some of us who have home businesses wonder if we indeed could put out cones to reserve the spaces in front of our homes for our one client at a time.

Letters in support of the school laud its quality and the need for this kind of facility. The opponents do not question these points. But, we strongly feel that the school is much too large for a small residential street like Hurst Terrace. Given the demand for this kind of facility and the waiting list at the school, it makes sense that now a new partner is coming into the business, it should be relocated to an appropriate facility in a neighborhood not zoned R-1.

While we do not quarrel with the quality of the school alluded to in the letters of support, you should be aware of misstatements in some of the letters -- all of whom do not live in the immediate Hurst Terrace neighborhood and virtually none who know us. Some of these letters characterize the residents of Hurst Terrace as being retirees with an anti-children bias, or persons who have moved into the neighborhood recently aware of the presence of this school. The fact is that only one person on Hurst Terrace is retired -- a 95 year old woman. Five homes have school age children and four persons are educators who work with school age children, which belies any suggestion of an anti-children bias. Four residents have bought homes on the block recently, and three had no idea there was a private school operating on the street and only learned about it when they observed the line of cars everyday on the block.

In conclusion, I urge you to deny the pending application and help us return our block to the type of quiet neighborhood that neighborhoods zoned R-1 are envisioned to be.

Sincerely,

Sherry Rich

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