September 15, 2002

D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street N.W. Suite 210
Washington, D.C. 2001

Re: BZA Case #16915

I am writing in opposition to the application of Barbara Allan for a special exception at 2828 Hurst Terrace NW, BZA Case #16915. I am opposed to continued operation of the child development center because it has outgrown what can reasonably be expected for neighbors to absorb on this small residential block.

Child development centers of this magnitude throughout D.C. do not operate in R1 zoned neighborhoods. Those child development centers that do operate in single family homes are normally restricted to 4 to 6 students. This is understandably the case because residents should be able to have confidence that the integrity of their property will be protected by the zoning regulations and process.

It is totally inappropriate for an individual to receive a temporary "special exemption" which soon takes on a life of its own and then is used by the holder to secure greater profit upon the sale of the property because of what is tantamount to "downgrading" of the zoning. This special exception was accommodated by neighbors because of a personal concern for Mrs. Allen, who at the time of its origination appealed to local neighbors as a recently divorced, a single parent who needed to support herself. It was always expected that the facility would revert back to a single family home when Mrs. Allen ceased to operate it for the benefit of herself and family. There was never a thought that this school would go on in perpetuity, nor that the good will of the neighbors would in the end be capitalized on for profit.

Conditions in the neighborhood have changed dramatically over the past few years creating a cumulative negative impact by the school on this small residentially zoned block, so that now it is sometimes unhealthy and unsafe for those who live here. The child development center has no off street parking for its employees, visitors or parents. This, combines with residents' parking needs, those of teachers, staff and parents of Key School, and overflow of employees and patron vehicles from MacArthur Boulevard restaurants, to cause unsafe congestion where there is sometimes only room for single lane traffic to pass.

While one doesn't hope to experience a major emergency on a regular basis, the criticality of the traffic problems on our block hit a personal cord with me on February 27th of this year. I called 911 because my husband was experiencing internal bleeding and was going into shock. He needed immediate medical attention but the emergency vehicles could barely make their way through the congestion on Hurst Terrace that trying morning.

Hurst Terrace is a small residential street which has felt the impact of many changes since well before the last renewal application (we don't recall receiving a notice the last time the special exception was being considered for renewal.) Not least among those changes is the increased traffic from Arizona Avenue and MacArthur Boulevard. Many more vehicles now use our block as a short cut or to by-pass traffic congestion. In addition, increased commercial activity, including office buildings, restaurants and other retail businesses along MacArthur Boulevard bring more supply trucks, workers and patrons. The newest development project, a half block from Hurst Terrace, is a restaurant which touts that it will have seating for 40 patrons. It has a total of 5 parking spaces.

BZA
Case No. 16915
Exhibit No. 85

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16915
EXHIBIT NO.85

When my daughter attended Key School, which is located along Hurst Terrace, it enrolled about 175 students. It's recent renovation will accommodate about 325 students. Families dropping off and picking up students each day, visitors, employees, and other service vehicles will add considerably more traffic to this block, which is having greater and greater difficulty absorbing it. The parking lot is not sufficient to cover all that will be needed by the school.

Increased traffic and higher demand for street parking have negatively impacted the residential, safety and environmental qualities of Hurst Terrace. The elaborate traffic plan recently presented by Mrs. Allan is a testament to this and to the school's contribution to this problem. Some techniques to address neighbor objections have been use of orange street cones, traffic officers, walkie talkies, drop-off and pick-up schedules, and mandates to circle the block. All these practices indicate that the school's enrollment is too large to operate in this single family home, with no off-street parking on this small residential street which cannot continue to absorb the increasing levels of traffic, congestion, fumes and parking competition. Further, enforcement of this elaborate plan will unfairly fall onto the neighbors.

For all the above reasons I am asking that you deny renewal of the special exception requested by Barabra Allen for the property at 2828 Hurst Terrace NW.

Sincerely,

Lynn Kauffman

Lynn Kauffman
2836 Hurst Terrace NW
Washington, D.C. 20016