Re: NCRC Preschool Expansion Case

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By Fax and US Mail

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Mr. Ken Laden
Associate Director
District Department of Transportation
Government of the District of Columbia
2000 14th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Mr. Laden:

We are writing to object in the strongest terms to any proposal to change traffic patterns around the NCRC preschool that would remove parking on Highland Place or make Highland into a one-way street.

To give a brief background to this statement, let us start by saying that at the outset of the NCRC expansion case, we were leaning somewhat toward the NCRC side (Bill, with some notable reservations about increasing the enrollment and Peggy, with far less hesitation about the overall impact). We were both hopeful that NCRC would be able to work successfully with the neighbors to reduce traffic problems. We would have characterized ourselves, on the whole, as supporters of the school.

However, after observing the give-and-take between the parties from the sidelines, we have, quite regretfully, come to the conclusion that NCRC, under its current administration, is not interested in reaching a reasonable compromise with its neighbors. Once the school began to lobby for removal of residents' parking on Highland Place to expand its carpool access, it was as if it is contending that the main purpose of Highland Place is to serve the school; it seems not to matter to the school where the residents' cars would go. We, like many of the homeowners of this area, have only a shared driveway with our neighbor. We already compete for the space in front of our home with many others who have no driveways or who work at the school.

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EXHIBIT NO.134

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Exhibit No. 134

We react to the possibility of these changes with shock; it strikes us as a hostile act against the neighbors. On the other hand, we conjecture that the school may not seriously expect to have these requests granted, but has asked for them in the expectation that the neighbors will immediately object. In that case the school can say, "Well, we tried to advance a plan to alleviate the bottleneck on Highland Place, but the neighbors were against it. They're against anything we propose, and there's no pleasing them."

But that just isn't true. We *have* been pleased to have NCRC as a neighbor, even as it expanded steadily over the years. We sent our own children there. We recognize what a jewel it is. And we want it to continue to be so – in its low-scale, low-key neighborhood setting.

What we don't want is to see any increase in traffic without a plan to channel that traffic that works for the school and does not impose unusual hardships on the people who need to get in and out of their houses. The one-way plan and the removal of parking spaces are just the *opposite* of a workable plan.

Having said all that, let us add that we still have not lost hope of a compromise that might suit both the neighbors and the school. But the first thing the school ought to do is back away from any talk of removing residents' parking spaces or turning Highland Place into a one-way street.

Sincerely,

Peggy Robin & Bill Adler

cc: Board of Zoning Adjustment
ANC 3-C
Cleveland Park Neighbors
Ms. Colleen Smith, Ward 3 Neighborhood Transportation Planner