D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
2003 MAY -2 PM 2:58

Date: May 1, 2003

To: Andrew Altman
Director, Office of Planning

Re: Supplemental Report dated April 14, 2003 by Kenneth Laden
BZA app. #16970 - NCRC, 3209 Highland Place NW, Lot 30 Square 2072
Special Exception

Dear Mr. Altman,

As an adjoining neighbor to NCRC, I was relieved to learn that the first traffic report acknowledges what all of us neighbors know. The traffic created by NCRC's current enrollment creates unsafe and troublesome traffic situations every day the school is open. Now, Associate Director Laden suggests that making the two-way section of Highland Place into a one-way street is the most likely remedy to easing some of this condition. In fact regarding the increased traffic due to NCRC's projection of 10 new students and 10 new staff as a result of the proposed expansion, he says, "...we do not anticipate that the resulting increase in traffic would significantly worsen traffic conditions in the neighborhood."

How his opinion shifted without reasonable merit causes great concern. To address this, this response will speak to his most current position. His letter starts by listing five of the reasons DDOT did not support the application in February. I will list each and address the ramifications of his proposal accordingly.

1. "Traffic and pedestrian safety at the intersection of 34th and Newark Streets"

Though Mr. Laden says, "The Department will address our transportation safety concerns at 34th Street and Newark as a separate transportation safety improvement", they are actually connected as the proposed plan **makes the intersection more dangerous.** Currently traffic can enter our Highland Place from the west via Newark or the block of Highland Place between 33rd Place and 34th Street. Since making the remaining section of Highland one-way in the other direction it **encourages traffic to enter solely through Newark** to reach the beginning of Highland and turn in.

2. "Unsafe traffic patterns when westbound thru-traffic is forced to use the eastbound thru-lane to avoid the school's 'carpool' lane.

Eastbound traffic would not face westbound traffic when the queuing line is clogging Highland. The proposal only partially addresses the unsafe traffic patterns caused by the school's queuing lane blocking the street, as **westbound cars will continue to pass on the left where there is pedestrian activity and no sidewalk.**

BZA
Case No. 16970
Exhibit No. 149

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16970
EXHIBIT NO.149

3. "Illegal parking on Highland Place, including blocking of neighbors' driveways and double parking of vehicles in the drop-off and pick-up 'carpool' line."

This proposal does **nothing to address these issues.**

4. "Cars making illegal U-turns and ignoring stop signs"

Ignoring stop signs will continue. Regarding U-turns Mr. Laden neglects to consider that the plan again **shifts the problem.** U-turns would drastically increase in 33rd Place. We get traffic for other reasons, people looking for parking to go to the commercial section of Connecticut, tradespeople, guests, etc. All of us who live by 33rd Place have watched cars head north on it only to discover that it is a dead end. If implemented, cars traveling north on 33rd Place would lose the option to turn east onto Highland and but instead would have to **make a U-turn on 33rd Place** to get back to Newark.
Also, cars parked on the north side of Newark between Highland and 33rd can now turn unto Highland, turn east unto Newark and down the hill to Connecticut Ave. Once implemented, this place would **increase U-turns at the intersection of 33rd Place and Newark** for those cars avoiding 34th Street traffic. This will happen most frequently during rush hours.

5. "Traffic congestion during peak drop-off and pick-up periods"

Since this plan actually gives a nod to increasing the traffic thru enrollment and staff, the trade off of not having eastbound seems limited at best.

In conclusion, Mr. Laden has publicly commented on pressure from both sides of this issue. Since his agency does not have the authority to decrease enrollment, hence, traffic, he cannot alleviate the situation. His options have neither the full support of the applicant nor opponents. They do not solve the problems. In fact he laments that this option's disadvantage "is that it places the burden solely upon the residents of Highland Place."

By what standard does a childcare center which has solely created the safety problem, operating by special exception in a residential neighborhood, get an engineering "solution" which fails to solve the problem and solely burdens the residents?

I applaud Mr. Laden's efforts. It is apparent his has spent much time and thought on this matter. However, his forwarded suggestion fails notably.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best wishes,

Linda Badami
3207 Highland Place NW
Washington DC 20008

cc:
Mr. Geoffrey Griffis
Ms. Jerrily Kress
Mr. Kenneth Laden
Ms. Kathy Patterson
Ms. Nancy MacWood
Mr. John Welsh
Mr. Anthony Williams

Fax transmission

To: Mr. Geoffrey Griffis

From: Linda Badami - return fax 244-2725

Date: May 2, 2003

Pages including cover sheet: 4

Message:

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2003 MAY -2 PM 2:57