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May 5, 2003

Mr. Geoffrey Griffis, Chairman
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W.
Second Floor
Washington DC 20001

Via Fax: 202-727-6072

Re: BZA Application # 16970

To the Board:

I am writing in support of the National Child Research Center Application for improvements to the facility located at 3209 Highland Place in Northwest Washington, DC.

I believe that the institution, which has been an important resource for the neighborhood for over 70 years, requires this expansion in order to best serve its mission, the children of the neighborhood and the children of the region for the years to come. Indeed, many of those in opposition have already had the opportunity to take advantage of the cutting edge pre-school learning which takes place at NCRC, and I believe that this opportunity should remain viable for future generations to enjoy.

We live across the street from the school on Ordway Street, and are able to witness the staff operation of the traffic line every morning. As this seems to be the primary concern of the opposition, I can testify that based on my first hand observations it is clear that the school takes great care to ensure as safe and orderly drop off and pick-up as possible during each period. The current procedures, while not perfect do not bother me because 1) it is simply well within what I would consider to be acceptable, 2) it is a school that has been here a lot longer than I have, and 3) I chose to live here. Indeed, improved signage and traffic calming measures, as well as improved curbing and sidewalks, which I understand may be part of a planned 2004 Ordway Street renovation will help tremendously. Living in the heart of Washington, D.C., the Cleveland Park neighborhood experiences Uptown Theater and restaurant traffic, Metro parking and similar aspects of urban living. However, I would take any of those "consequences" over the alternatives of commuting from the suburbs, c

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elsewhere. I suspect that most Cleveland Park residents chose to live in the neighborhood understanding these conditions.

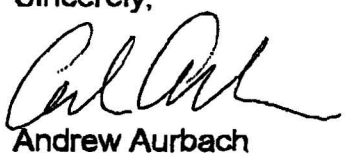
While there have been fruitless attempts at mediation, one of the proposals put forth by the opposition is to simply have the school reduce the number of students. While reducing current enrollment would minimize the number of students on campus (in total), it will not change the ability of the institution to meet cutting edge educational practices for pre-school education. Accommodating the facility to modern 21st century educational practices will. This is why the proposed expansion is required, to provide the best opportunity for the children who attend.

I hope future Cleveland Parkers and city residents don't pine for the day a quality nursery school resides in the neighborhood, because this one won't be viable in the long term without these improvements.

My son (age 1) attends a daycare facility which goes through pre-kindergarten. That institution has the kinds of space and facility that NCRC needs. As a result, I cannot see why I would switch him from where he is to NCRC even though I have to drive him every morning and evening, rather than simply walk him across the street. I suspect that as other institutions catch up and surpass NCRC, NCRC will suffer greatly.

I firmly believe that a good community rests on its institutions. NCRC is one of those in our neighborhood, which is why I (and most of the people who live outside of a 200 foot radius from the school) generally support their efforts to improve to continue to be a model school for the future under best practices of balanced growth.

Sincerely,



Andrew Aurbach