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

February 6, 2003

Re: BZA Application No. 16970 - The National Child Research Center - Friends of NCRC - Letter of Support

Dear Members of the Board of Zoning Adjustment:
I am writing this letter to evidence my total and unequivocal support for NCRC's application to the D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment BZA Application No. 16970. My house is located at 3418 Porter Street, NW and I have been a resident in the Cleveland Park neighborhood for six years.

I would like to address the concerns voiced by many of my neighbors that the expansion proposed by NCRC will do irrepreparable harm to what is a "residential neighborhood," First, I should point out that all neighborhoods are, in part, residential (what other kind of neighborhood is there) but when a neighborhood is purely residential, it becomes a mono-culture, stagnant and ultimately devoid of the vitality that makes urban living a joy. My training and my work as an architect and urban designer have convinced me that certain aspects of "authentic" neighborhoods are inviolate. Among them, that they contain a mix of uses, not merely residences to which one can walk. These uses are diverse enough so as to included places to work, shop, pray, and yes even go to school.

While the structure of such neighborhoods often involves an allocation of these non-residential uses along major corridors, traditional cities, had a much finer grain than that presented to us by the Cleveland Park grid. Schools, shops and the like were mixed much more into the fabric of residences.

Some might argue that such a paradigm was appropriate that was in an age when walking was the predominate transportation mode, before kids were dropped off at their pre-schools by motorized vehicles.
Well experience has shown NCRC to be sensitive to neighbor's concerns and I believe that a traffic managment plan devised by them in consultation with the immediate neighbors will prove prove more than acceptable.

Now I'd like to address some concerns not always voiced by my neighbors. We suffer from a shortage of excellent pre-schools and day care facilities. All of them are at capacity with long waiting lists. Most of them in the area are based in religious institutions. I've sent my two older kids to one of those. But there are probably a large number of families who prefer a secular institution, in general, and the kind of opportunities provided by NCRC in particular.

Ineed this institution is a valuable asset to the Cleveland Park neighborhood. The leadership of NCRC has always been willing to listen to and address neighbors' concerns. Their playground facilities, which are substantially better than those provided by my the D.C. Depatment of Recreation, are available to neighborhood residents to use i after its programs have ended during the week and on weekends.

I want the members of the Board of Zoning Adjustment to be aware that there are many members of the community like myself that fully support NCRC and its application. For all of these reasons I ask that the BZA approve Application No. 16970.

Sincerely

Neal I. Payton, AIA

BZA
Case No. 16970
Exhibit No. 163

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16970
EXHIBIT NO.163