3212 Newark Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008
June 15, 2003

Mr. Geoffrey Griffis
Chairman, Board of Zoning Adjustment
441- 4th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

D.C. BOARD OF ZONING
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Dear Mr. Griffis:

I write in opposition to the plans of the National Child Research Center (NCRC) to expand. Any expansion will have an adverse effect on the neighborhood and will add to the existing problems of traffic congestion and parking.

I also oppose the likely recommendation of the Department of Transportation to make Highland Place one-way; that will result in taking away public parking spaces on Highland Place and increase traffic on adjoining streets. It will also result in a dangerous situation on Newark Street between Ashley Terrace and 33rd Place, as residents who come down Newark Street from 34th Street and wish to park on Newark will be forced to turn around for parking by turning into driveways and backing out onto Newark Street.

I oppose both the expansion construction plans--which appear to more than double the size of the school--and the proposed increase in the number of students and staff. I am a teacher and a parent, and know that even at the nursery school level no school has or needs a 1:1 adult/student ratio as the personnel expansion plans apparently propose adding. (If ten more staff or faculty are added, ten more cars will also need to park on neighborhood streets.)

The current problems from the NCRC high traffic volume which already exists will only be increased--illegal parking and a high volume of traffic on narrow streets. Furthermore, making a public street one way and eliminating public parking spaces to accommodate the changing activities of a private business serving a limited clientele is neither fair nor good public policy.

I am also distressed by my recent experience. I needed to unload groceries from my car opposite my house on Newark Street, but could not find any parking spaces on Newark between 34th Street and Highland Place, or on Highland Place or 33rd Place, apparently because NCRC was having an event for parents. When I asked someone from NCRC who was "directing" traffic in front of the school about what was going on and said I couldn't find a parking space, this person responded: "Don't you have a driveway?"

BZA
Case No. 16970
Exhibit No. 201

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16970
EXHIBIT NO.201

I have always supported the work of NCRC and its long and distinguished contributions to early childhood education. However, the present expansion plans will have a detrimental and unsupportable adverse effect on the neighborhood, and I oppose the expansion request. I urge the Board of Zoning Adjustment to deny the NCRC application for expansion.

Sincerely,

Susan Hammond

Susan Webb Hammond

cc: Mayor Anthony Williams
Council Member Kathy Patterson
ANC Commissioner Nancy Macwood, ANC 3C09