WILLIAM W. and KEL GINSBERG
382 LIVINGSTON STREET
NEW HAVEN, CT 06511

September 22, 2002

Ms. Nancy MacWood
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3-C
2737 Devonshire Place, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Ms. MacWood:

We write to provide comments with respect to the consideration by ANC 3-C of matters pertaining to the proposed expansion of the facilities of the National Child Research Center on Highland Place and Ordway Street in Cleveland Park.

From June of 1994 until August of 2000, we owned and lived with our two children in the house at 3079 Ordway Street, NW, which is directly across Ordway Street from the rear of the NCRC facilities. During these six years, we dealt on two occasions with regulatory matters pertaining to NCRC's facilities. In addition, of course, as immediate neighbors we dealt on a daily basis with the presence of NCRC – its children, its administrators, its parking issues and its central physical presence at the heart of the neighborhood that we came to love.

When we moved to Washington, DC in the Summer of 1994, we were immediately confronted with construction: NCRC was building playground and deck improvements directly across the street from our new house. We were astonished to learn that the Ordway Street neighbors had had little communication from NCRC as to what was planned. As we got involved, we were even more astonished to learn that there had been no public process associated with the project because NCRC had neither applied for nor received any permits for the improvements then under construction.

A series of meetings between NCRC and the Ordway Street neighbors ensued, at the first of which an NCRC board member frankly acknowledged that the school had always thought of Highland Place as its neighborhood and had never even thought to consult the neighbors on Ordway Street as to its plans. At that time, faced with the need for permits for a project already constructed, NCRC was eager to make amends for this oversight. Indeed, NCRC subsequently agreed to all of the requests of the Ordway Street neighbors, and six immediate neighbors including ourselves eventually supported NCRC's permit applications before the Historic Preservation Review Board in December of 1994.

We recount this history in detail to illustrate a point that may be important to your consideration of the matters before you: in 1994, NCRC had no communication with and gave no consideration to the views of the Ordway Street neighbors until forced to do so by a public process that it had sought to avoid.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16970
EXHIBIT NO.209A2

In 1997-8, NCRC did proactively seek to inform its neighbors when it sought a new Certificate of Occupancy. It was represented to us that this action was sought to conform NCRC's Certificate of Occupancy to its Child Care Permit, which had previously been issued for 120 children. We do not recall any meetings or other interaction with the neighbors at that time. NCRC did represent, by letter of April 8, 1998 (copy attached), that this new Certificate of Occupancy was "completely a paper matter and *in no way are we planning to increase the size of our facility*" (emphasis added). It is thus no surprise that NCRC's neighbors would today feel misled by the current proposal for a substantial expansion of the NCRC facilities.

We do recall, however, that in 1998 NCRC instituted changes to its parking procedures in an attempt to improve what had long been a dangerous and inconvenient situation on Ordway Street. We were pleased at this initiative, as during drop-off and pick-up we had not infrequently experienced traffic tie-ups on Ordway Street and cars blocking our driveway, and we had often witnessed children being loaded and unloaded in the middle of a busy street. Our recollection is, however, that these changes did little to improve a set of problems that persisted at least until we moved away in the Summer of 2000. We would urge that the ANC 3-C require that NCRC address the difficult NCRC-related traffic safety and parking issues on Ordway Street before giving any consideration to expansion of NCRC facilities.

Finally, we would like to address the larger issues before the ANC 3-C in this matter. In our six years there, we found the area of Cleveland Park in the immediate vicinity of NCRC to be a uniquely wonderful place to live. Its historic and residential character and its hilly and wooded landscape near but high above adjacent commercial areas made it so. To preserve this unique community requires a vigilant and careful balancing of new construction with historic buildings and of institutional expansion with residential uses. We would also urge the ANC 3-C to be very protective of the unique and potentially fragile character of Cleveland Park in your consideration of the appropriateness of the proposed NCRC expansion.

In summary, our view is that recent history demonstrates that NCRC has viewed the concerns of its Ordway Street neighbors as an afterthought, has provided assurances that have proven to be misleading and has failed to deal with important day-to-day neighborhood concerns. We request that the ANC 3-C consider this history as you consider the current NCRC applications pending before you.

With appreciation for your consideration of these perspectives,

Sincerely yours,

William W. Ginsberg Ellen 'Kel' Ginsberg

Barbara Brinton Haas
3200 Highland Place NW
Washington, DC 20008

September 14, 2002

Ms. Nancy MacWood, Chair
ANC 3C
2737 Devonshire Place, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Ms. MacWood:

We have lived at 3200 Highland Place NW (south side of the street, within 200 feet of the NCRC property line) for approximately 18 years.

In 1997 and 1998 we participated with a group of neighbors to address -- with NCRC representatives -- problems resulting from NCRC traffic which were negatively impacting Highland Place NW, 33rd Street, and Ordway.

In the five or so years leading up to our activities in 1998, traffic problems had been steadily increasing. Parents, caregivers, and school bus drivers were blocking our driveway. The drivers were double parking while waiting to drop off or pick up students, sometimes for 20 – 30 minutes. When we asked these drivers to move to allow us to get out of the driveway, we were verbally abused and treated rudely. One driver left her car directly blocking our driveway and announced "don't worry, I'll be right back" as she went to the school office. As we are sure you will hear from other neighbors, there were numerous additional problems which we will leave for those who are more directly impacted to describe.

The neighbors – in a good faith effort – approached NCRC to try to resolve the problems. We were assured that our concerns would be addressed during our meetings with the NCRC director and board members. We participated in several meetings at NCRC to air the issues. With others, I attended ANC meetings and testified at a BZA hearing (April 1, 1998) in order to have my concerns placed in an official record. All of us who testified were assured by NCRC that the situation would be addressed and that they wanted to be good neighbors. We expected them to live up to their commitment to us including – among other things - sanctions to deter errant drivers (i.e., I suggested fines which could be put into a scholarship fund).

To date, 4 years later, all we've seen are some large white lines painted on Highland Place where drivers are supposed to stop in order to prevent blocking driveways (often ignored), and a dozen or so ugly orange traffic cones which are put on the street each morning and left out until the end of the day (also often ignored). Copies of notices/reminders about "rules" which have been sent home from NCRC with the

children have been sent to us. There have been some additional changes made by the school for pick up times, but overall we have had no relief.

We love having the school near our home, however, what was created to be a school for neighborhood children, appears to be evolving into a big business. We have no problem with NCRC's desire to continue to expand, but Highland Place is an inappropriate location for what they want to do.

NCRC now plans to double the size of their physical facilities. We are being told that they don't plan to significantly expand the student body but their presentations are inconsistent and contradictory. What is their mandate? Why should they be allowed to expand and further negatively impact the neighborhood?

The proposed expansion is not for the accommodation of local neighborhood children, is not for social benefit to the community, and does not provide any unique services. Rather, it appears to be for increased profit and influence - at the expense of the historic and architectural integrity of the community, and with further traffic, congestion and risk to the children as well as the neighbors.

There is virtually no support for this project in the neighborhood even though many of the families previously supported the school and sent their children there. This is due to the track record of unfulfilled promises and assurances, with a continuing lack of consistency or candor in our efforts to negotiate with them.

We are adamantly opposed to any expansion of any existing buildings, we are adamantly opposed to any new facilities being constructed on the NCRC property, and we are adamantly opposed to any expansion of the student body

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Barbara B. Haas

Stephen S. Haas

cc John Welsh

3430 34th Place NW
Washington, D.C. 20016

May 28, 2003

Andrew Altman
Director; Office of Planning
801 North Capital Street, SE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Altman,

I am writing in opposition to the building and expansion plans of the National Child Research Center on Highland Place, N.W., and to the proposed one-way plan for Highland Place. I would like you to consider the following:

While NCRC has occupied its premises on Highland Place for at least seven decades, for most of that period it operated a school with half or less than half of the students now enrolled. The smaller number of students were readily accommodated in the existing house and secondary outbuildings, and the traffic incidental to the school was tolerated by the neighbors.

I do not know exactly when the school began to expand its enrollment. But I do know that from the early 1990s onward, relations between the school board and the neighbors deteriorated in consequence of school plans for accommodating a larger number of students. A truce of sorts occurred when the school announced to the city in 1998, in response to questions raised by concerned neighbors, that it had no plans to expand beyond the size it had reached at that time. But neighbors continued to express rising objections to increased traffic on narrow Highland Place, and interference with residential parking, and sought cooperation from the school, to little practical effect.

That truce ended abruptly last year when NCRC announced plans to build a structure on its lot that is clearly a second principal building, to add classrooms and teachers, and to increase enrollment by up to 8 percent. The current board is well aware of the near unanimous opposition of the neighborhood, but has pushed ahead regardless.

Particularly in light of the Transportation Department's finding of hazardous traffic conditions on Highland Place this year, I find it astonishing that the school's principal argument for doubling available space has been that its existing facilities are too small for its present enrollment. In short, they are saying NCRC has outgrown its present facilities.

NCRC has outgrown its site because of past decisions taken by the school's governing board. The board should not now ask the city to allow it to rectify the consequences of these decisions at the expense of the neighbors' quiet enjoyment of their properties.

NCRC has a ready remedy for its present overcrowding. It can reduce enrollment, obviating the need for two more classrooms, to a level consistent with what can be accommodated in its existing facilities, which can be updated and altered to provide a better use of available space. I believe a more modest building plan would be welcomed

and supported by the neighbors, and a reduced enrollment would alleviate the dangerous traffic conditions on Highland Place without need for further city action.

But the school has made it clear it will not consider downsizing as long as it believes that the city will as a matter of right concede the expansion is has already undertaken, allow it to build to reduce the overcrowding that its own admissions policies have created, and make Highland Place one way. The city can do so only by trampling on the rights of the neighbors.

The school's Highland Place location places it on a narrow lane built long ago to accommodate a small number of large residences, one of which the school now occupies. Part of the charm of Highland Place, and of its economic value as a desirable address, lies in the fact that Highland Place is not built to accommodate heavy traffic and is not an artery for through traffic. The school at its present size, much less its proposed size, already threatens this value, as the Transportation Department's report demonstrates. I believe the residents of Highland and 33rd Place are fully within their rights when they observe that making Highland Place one way would impose various external costs on them, and that they ought to be able to rely on the proper use of the city's zoning power to shield them from these externalities – as well as from the excessive traffic they are already forced to endure because of the school's unconstrained increase in enrollment over the past two decades (made worse, I might add, by the modern parent's preference for SUVs over family cars.)

As long as the school insists on pushing the envelope of its use of the Highland Place property against the wishes of most neighbors, I do not believe that this is conflict is susceptible to mediation. I believe the Office of Planning can facilitate a resolution of this conflict only by finding that the school's present plans -- and the DOT's proposed one-way plan – are inconsistent with the residential character of the Highland Place setting in the Cleveland Park Historic District and with the spirit of the city's zoning laws.

Yours truly

Andrew Hamilton

3430 34th Place NW
Washington, D.C. 20016

February 1, 2003

Nancy MacWood,
Chair, ANC3C
George Idelson
President, Cleveland Park Citizens Association
Newman T. Halverson,
President, Cleveland Park Historical Society

By e-mail

Dear Ms. MacWood, Mr. Idelson and Mr. Halvorson,

I am writing to record my firm opposition to the proposal by the National Child Research Center to construct new buildings on its Highland Place property and an addition and to expand its daytime population. I hope you will make my letter a part of your public record on this issue, and that you will convey it to the appropriate city authorities.

I do not believe NCRC has presented persuasive reasons for its proposed expansion, and I do believe the views of adjacent neighbors should be given the greater weight as you consider the NCRC application.

NCRC says it needs more space to accommodate its existing enrollment. It also says that the creation of the needed additional space will open up room for some additional students. But the primary reason it has given for the proposal is to gain additional meeting space and to reduce class size, which it currently considers to be too large.

The neighbors oppose the plan, citing the burden of existing, let alone additional, traffic on Highland Place, Newark Street, 33rd Place and Ordway Street, and the permanent change in the character of the NCRC property that would result from the school's plans. The proposal, in their view, would change the property from one with a residential character consistent with the surrounding neighborhood to one of a clearly institutional character. While it is conceivable that the existing property might some day revert to residential use, the neighbors rightly fear that the proposed changes would lock in institutional uses, and also allow a much denser daytime population for the property than the neighborhood is zoned, or the streets are designed, to accommodate.

While I respect the desire of the NCRC board to maximize the economic use of their property, I firmly believe that the school is not entitled to automatic acceptance of its plans. It occupies the Highland Place property under a special exception to the prevailing residential zoning, which requires the city to pass on the appropriateness of the nonconforming use.

I believe that NCRC has already expanded enrollment beyond the appropriate limits for the existing physical plant in its residential setting. The evidence for this is the school's own argument for its proposal: that its facilities are crowded and that there are more students per teacher than is desirable. The NCRC proposal, accordingly, roughly

doubles the available floor space on the property, and adds two classrooms, in order to accommodate only 10 to 14 more students.

Clearly the school is overusing the available facility and benefiting financially by doing so. A desire by the school to compensate for the overcrowding it has invited does not justify the considerable externalities the NCRC proposal would impose upon the neighborhood.

There is some question whether the school is in compliance with its earlier undertakings to the Board of Zoning Adjustment. But, occupancy permits notwithstanding, the school itself tells us it is already overusing the existing facilities. It should be encouraged to downsize if it wants to reduce crowding and increase the quality of the education it offers, or to move to another location if it wants to maintain or expand its enrollment and staff.

NCRC says it has operated a school on Highland Place for 75 years and is a nationally recognized institution. Neither of these assertions conveys an entitlement to expand on its present site. For much of the period during which the school has occupied the Highland Place property the enrollment was considerably smaller than it is today. An application to the BZA in 1963 cited an enrollment of 70 students. (That application, for an expansion to 80 students, was denied.) Today enrollment exceeds 170.

Also for much of this period the school maintained tree-shaded, grassy playgrounds in keeping with the residential landscaping of adjacent properties. In 1994 the school made major changes to the character of the landscaping without obtaining city permission. Numerous mature trees were cut down and today's mulch-covered playground and equipment were installed, presumably to accommodate the school's increased enrollment. The large playground, with its chain-link fence, is, frankly, an aesthetic eyesore in a neighborhood of picket fences and well-kept gardens.

These landscape changes have given the property a more institutional character than it previously had, one that is clearly inappropriate to the residential setting within which the school voluntarily operates.

NCRC's proposed changes to the property would further degrade its residential appearance and future adaptability, to the detriment of the neighborhood. It would increase traffic and affect property values for neighbors on Highland Place, Ashley Terrace, 33rd Place and Ordway. The city should not have allowed the 1994 alterations to the property. It certainly should reject the proposed new changes.

Among the elements of the NCRC plan, I think it is conceivable that some enlargement of the main building of the school could be made acceptable to neighbors. Physical changes on a modest scale would permit the school to create a desired meeting room, modernize classrooms and adjust its enrollment and staff objectives to fit available space without further altering the residential character of the property. As the NCRC plan stands today, however, I believe it should be categorically rejected.

Yours truly,

Andrew Hamilton
aham@erols.com

David S. Hammond, Esq.
3212 Newark St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008
(202) 362-6912 • dhammondmail@aol.com

May16, 2003

16970

Geoffrey Griffis
Chairman, Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001

cc: Colleen Smith, DOT
Mayor Tony Williams
Council Member Kathy Patterson
ANC Commissioner Nancy Macwood, ANC 3C09

2003 MAY 17 PM 3:10
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
RECEIVED

Dear Geoffrey Griffis:

I write to express my opposition to the DOT's proposal that Highland Place, N.W. might be made a one-way street. I live on Newark Street between Highland Place and 33rd Place, and I believe that making Highland Place one-way from Newark to 33rd may simply shift the impact of NCRC traffic from the street in front of the school, to 33rd Place and to Newark Street. Moreover, I am deeply uneasy with the idea of making a public street one-way to accommodate the changing activities of a private business serving a limited clientele.

As Colleen Smith at the DOT very helpfully explained to me, DOT has submitted to the BZA four options for addressing traffic and safety concerns on Highland Place. I dislike the idea of taking away public parking spaces on Highland Place to accommodate NCRC's impact on the neighborhood, and I dislike even more the idea of making Highland one-way. The District of Columbia only very rarely designates a street as one-way, and the extraordinary nature of this suggestion may show that narrow, winding Highland Place has already reached the limits of its uniquely restricted capacity. The neighborhood deserves a fairer, more creative plan for managing traffic, one in which NCRC can also make a contribution to mitigating the impact of their own traffic. And if NCRC's traffic cannot be handled without placing new limits on the use of public streets, perhaps a cap on NCRC's enrollment, either self-imposed or imposed by the BZA, is indeed the solution.

Alternatively, NCRC and the BZA and DOT could reach farther for more creative solutions to the traffic jams on Highland Place. Shifting more of NCRC's pickup and drop-off traffic to the Ordway Street side of the property seems like a good place to start. With Ordway scheduled for rebuilding next year, this is the perfect opportunity for NCRC to dedicate a semicircular piece of its own property along Ordway Street to a new driveway to handle its own pickup/drop-off traffic, or even, perhaps, to create a new driveway entrance on Ordway, with a driveway that would connect through to a driveway entrance on Highland Place. A connecting driveway through the NCRC property could

BZA
Case No. 16970
Exhibit No. 183

be gated and fenced to allow dual use as a paved playground, and then as a driveway, at different times of day. This would probably mean the permanent loss of parking spaces on Ordway Street, something Ordway residents will surely dislike, but it would at least spread NCRC's impact more evenly among its neighbors.

Of course, it would be great to take a portion of that impact out of the immediate neighborhood entirely. I imagine NCRC is unenthusiastic about running a shuttle bus, but don't other children of NCRC age, at least the older ones, ride buses to and from school? The buildings, grounds, driveways and parking lots of the National Cathedral suggest themselves as an obvious nearby and safe place for the older NCRC students to be picked up and dropped off.

I am sure that NCRC and the city can think of other creative ways to disperse the impact NCRC's growth is having on streets that were not designed to handle concentrated masses of motorized traffic.

Whatever your decision, please don't make Highland Place one-way. It simply would not be fair to restrict use of this public roadway to meet the needs of a private business, and the neighborhood's narrow streets would still be called on to absorb the concentrated impact of traffic that will always appear all at once, at certain times of each school day. And if all parties are willing to compromise and think creatively, making Highland Place one-way isn't necessary, either.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours Truly,

David S. Hammond

David S. Hammond

September 20, 2002

Nancy MacWood
Chairman of ANC 3C
2737 Devonshire Place NW
Washington, DC 20008
namacwood@aol.com

John Welsh
Single-Member District Representative of ANC 3C
2737 Devonshire Place NW
Washington, DC 20008
oxbo@starpower.net

Dear Ms. MacWood and Mr. Welsh:

Our family has lived in Cleveland Park for 32 years. We have seen the community evolve from a quiet neighborhood to one that has become much nosier and busier given the growth of the city. Reno Road became a thru-way for those coming into the city to work. Our streets have become full of large trucks servicing the many establishments which have come to the area and going to the Giant on Wisconsin Avenue. The metro came and brought us growth on Connecticut. Many large developers sought to make money by trying to build on McLean Gardens, Tregaron and the Park and Shop area of Connecticut Avenue, but the people who live in Cleveland Park worked long and hard to keep this area a neighborhood and a viable community which is valuable to Washington DC in the families and residents it brings to the city.

I am writing to you in regards to National Child Research Center's (NCRC) proposal for growth. They now want to expand their class room space by adding onto their historic building and adding other buildings to their less than one acre property. Those additions would create an entirely different school in the middle of a totally residential neighborhood and one that is also historical. The school will be too large: too many buildings on the property; too large an enrollment, with increased school hours each day, and with many more cars bringing and picking up children in several daily sessions (before school care, morning session, after noon session, and after school care). NCRC has existed for many years with their present buildings and campus and has historically attracted a balanced ratio of families sending their children there from the neighborhood, from Washington DC and from surrounding areas.

I know NCRC well as Alexa, our daughter, attended the school in the early 70's, I did substitute teaching at the school during that time. I was on the

Board of Directors for four years and I was on the committee to find candidates for a new director. The Board chose Emily Mac Cormack to be head of the school. Among the many reasons Emily was chosen was her expertise with children; her abilities to financially manage an institution (she had been Director of the Brick School in NYC); she was able to attract families and have a strong enrollment; and she viewed NCRC a school with a beautiful historical property, good facilities and that the school had very good relations with the neighbors and with the other private schools in the city. Emily's tenure continued all of this.

Since Emily retired, NCRC's Board of Directors and the school have not had as good relations with the neighbors. They have been evasive and somewhat secretive in some of the actions they have taken, such as asking for an increase of enrollment to 120 students, even though the city certified their classroom space for a smaller number. The school still sends out letters to neighbors advising them of the beginning of school and of large events they will hold on weekends. But this type of communication, though very nice and appropriate, is not as important as the communications to the neighbors about the important actions the school already took in enrollment and plans to take on their expansion. These have not been communicated well and are usually last minute. Now they are trying to rush the approval process through ARC, ANC and BZA to thwart the neighbors. They have been evasive about their school's larger enrollments, which were against regulations during one point in their recent history; and about the buildings they plan to build - what they look like, what the square footage will be of both their new buildings, what square footage would be left in playground space, and the additions to their historical main classroom. At the recent ARC meeting, where NCRC presented the school building plans, they were addressed questions from the audience. They did not answer some, skirted around others and to others said they did not have the answers with them and took so long in trying to figure out dimensions, that the ARC said there was no more time and that NCRC must bring that information to the upcoming ANC meeting. The architect also said the drawings were "only conceptual". The drawings presented at the ARC were very different from the ones given out in the spring. No drawings were given out to the neighbors at the ARC meeting, so it was difficult to grasp the entirety of their plans. It was interesting to note that the architect seemed to have borrowed from what The National Cathedral School (NCS) did and buried the NCRC building so as to make it look smaller. Possibly this was done, because NCS was successful in expanding their school and their architectural plan passed the ARC, ANC and BZA. NCS, unlike NCRC, has much more land on which to put such a structure.

Looking at NCRC's largest proposed new building from Ordway street, it has both a two story above ground section they call "the carriage house" and an attached one story building whose front is a stone wall with a door and windows in it, the back being buried in the hill on the other side and the

top a playground. The total structure looks squeezed in and stretched out along Ordway street. The architect kept saying at the ARC presentation that half of the building would be underground. Yet the drawings portrayed a building that would be one story on Ordway Street, which makes it two stories above the street level if one takes into consideration the hillside. Also the architect did not have the fence drawn on the plans which will need to be around the top of the one story building which is to be a playground. That fence will make the building/playground section of the new building even taller from Ordway and for the homes next to and across the street from NCRC. These homes will look into the building and into the air-conditioning and other mechanics which are to be in the roof of the building, which also may be noisy day and night. When you look at the NCRC property from Ordway, as the architect and school are now portraying what they would build, it looks like a jumble of odd buildings running along the property line. There is a Tutor building/Carriage House (no architecture in the immediate neighborhood is similar to what they plan), with a long stone wall one story high containing a door and windows (not Tutor style), and then a small space between this structure and the 50's two story "playhouse" which rises tall from the hillside and has yet different building materials. Since NCRC is going to put an addition on the back of the large historic building where the major portion of their classrooms are, one will also be able to see that building from Ordway with it's new long all glassed enclosed in porch. Also one will also be able to see the new large two story "bike shed" that will be right on the property line. It will become as someone said, a campus with many assorted styles of buildings and structures. It will no longer be an attractive property with a lovely old building and playground in the heart of the most historic area of Cleveland Park.

I have been told that Susan Piggott, the present Director of NCRC, when accepting that position, told the Board that she expected to expand the school. She apparently came in wanting to change the school. It appears that the school no longer wants to serve many in the neighborhood or even Washington DC, but instead draw many of their students from Virginia and Maryland, from families who want their students to then go onto Washington DC private schools.

It is important to note that NCRC's property is located on a windy, narrow cul de sac, Highland Place. Most schools in the city and most of the private schools are located on major streets (Wisconsin Avenue, Reno Road, Cathedral Avenue etc) where there is good access and egress and plenty of room for the many cars of teachers, administration, other staff and parents. This is not the case at NCRC. The roads leading to the school are small and built for neighborhood traffic only. Many children live on the street. Many other children from the neighborhood visit those children and all of them play there. Those children also walk to and from other schools in the neighborhood using Highland Place and surrounding streets at the same time NCRC parents

are driving their children on Cleveland Park Streets, on Highland Place and on Ordway to drop off and to pick up their children. While the school is in session many children walk to the Cleveland Park Club near NCRC. Many neighbors walk back and forth from their houses, walk their dogs, and also walk to the Cleveland Park Club. Cleveland Park is a place where neighbors know each other, walk to each other's homes, to stores on the avenues, and as I said their children walk to schools and to visit each other. Every time a school or a non profit in Cleveland Park wants to add or enlarge buildings on the property they already own or wants to buy property to put up buildings, the community is eroded.

Right now many parents in the greater Washington area are clamoring to get into private elementary, middle schools and high schools in Washington. NCRC is a "feeder" school to such schools. It appears that NCRC wants to become bigger so that they can attract more of these families. But it is at the expense of quality of life for those in the neighborhood when NCRC sets such goals for themselves and when they do not take into consideration the surrounding neighborhood.. NCRC no longer has many parents from the neighborhood on their Board of Directors, the teachers do not live in the area, and most of the children do not live in Cleveland Park or even the surrounding neighborhoods. If NCRC believes that it is extremely important for them to expand for their incoming children and families, then they should sell their historic property and find a suitable property to build the larger premier state of the art nursery school, which will admit children who whose parents want them to go onto the area's private schools. With the sale of the Cleveland Park property and what they want to spend developing their present location, NCRC should be able to find something elsewhere which to meet their needs. Lowell St. moved from Cleveland Park in order to expand, as have other schools.

I regret that NCRC is no longer a compatible neighbor and that they feel they must overbuild the property they have. Please vote no to what NCRC is presenting to the ANC.

Sincerely,

Nancy G. Harter.

Peter A. & Susan B. Hornbostel
3030 Newark Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20008

June 9, 2003

Mr. Geoffrey Griffis
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 - 4th Street, N.W. #201
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Case 16970

Dear Mr. Griffis:

I am writing in support of my Cleveland Park neighbors who are opposing the expansion project of NCRC. I have lived in the neighborhood for 33 years, and the traffic increase over that period is readily apparent. Traffic on Newark Street and Highland Place is already reaching unsafe levels. The NCRC project can only make the problem worse.

For a number of years the average age of the population of Cleveland Park seemed to be gradually increasing. I am happy to see that in the last several years, a number of younger families with children have moved into the neighborhood. The increased traffic on Newark Street (which provides access to Highland Place) clearly poses a threat to the children now living there. Their homes were bought by their parents on the assumption that the traffic levels would remain essentially as they were. The increased traffic that would be generated by the NCRC expansion clearly would make this untrue.

I understand that many of the children attending NCRC come from outside the District. A change in zoning to benefit the wealthy families outside the District who send their children to NCRC, while increasing the risk to children who live and play in the neighborhood, seems to me unconscionable. As part of the District of Columbia government, is it not your obligation to look out first for the safety of the District residents and their children?

I also object to the proposed NCRC project as a taxpayer. As you are undoubtedly aware, properties on Newark Street and Highland Place have, over the years, appreciated enormously in value. As a result, our tax bills have similarly increased. I have no doubt that at some point in the near future, the traffic level on Newark and Highland will reach the point where it begins to impact on demand for houses located there. Reduced demand will, of course, reduce property values, and accordingly reduce property tax receipts to the District. There is no corresponding increase in tax receipts from NCRC: to the best of my knowledge, NCRC does not pay property taxes. In sum, the NCRC proposal may advance the short term financial interests of the school. But in the medium to long run, it does so at the expense of property tax receipts of the District of Columbia.

Very sincerely yours,

Peter A. Hornbostel by WRG

Peter A. Hornbostel

Steven R. Hunsicker
3083 Ordway St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 364-0425

May 5, 2003

Andrew Altman
Director
District of Columbia Office of Planning
801 North Capitol St., N.W., Suite 4000
Washington, D.C. 20002

Re: BZA Application No. 16970
National Child Research Center ("NCRC")

Dear Mr. Altman:

I was surprised to learn from Nancy MacWood, Chair-ANC 3-C, that you had not received many letters in opposition to the NCRC expansion proposal. In fact, many neighbors have written to the ANC and government agencies to express their opposition to NCRC's proposal. I understood that those letters had been made available to you through our ANC. I have summarized the reasons for my opposition below. My views are typical of the views of the more than 100 households that are the most directly affected by NCRC's aggressive expansion plans and that have expressed opposition to NCRC's plans.

I have lived at 3083 Ordway St., N.W., directly across the street from the entrance to NCRC, for approximately 15 years. I strongly oppose NCRC's proposal to double its existing facilities to create an "NCRC campus" in what is now a residential neighborhood. My opposition is primarily based on two factors: (1) NCRC already imposes significant and dangerous adverse impacts on its neighborhood, which would only be increased by NCRC's expansion; and (2) I have learned by painful experience that I cannot trust "commitments" to mitigate its adverse impacts that NCRC periodically makes to the neighborhood.

1. Existing Dangerous and Otherwise Objectionable Impacts To The Neighborhood.

NCRC asks that BZA disregard the existing dangerous conditions that DDOT has found to exist (see DDOT February 5, 2003 Memorandum), and disregard the fact that these existing conditions are directly caused by NCRC's growth beyond any enrollment level previously considered at any time by DDOT or BZA. In 1998, DDOT evaluated and approved an NCRC application for 108 students, later amended to 120 students and 28 staff. NCRC's application was approved by Order No. 16307, which included certain conditions, including:

2. The Maximum Number of Children Shall Not Exceed 120.
3. The Maximum Number of Teachers and Support Staff Shall Not Exceed 28.

See BZA Summary Order, Final Date of June 17, 1998, in BZA Application No. 16307.

NCRC has simply ignored these conditions to the point that it now has an enrollment of 171 students and a full time equivalent staff of 32. NCRC has thereby irresponsibly grown well beyond the populations that DDOT and BZA evaluated for safety considerations in 1998, or at any time prior to 1998.

NCRC has expressed at least three incredible responses to the claim that it exceeds the maximum number of children and staff imposed as conditions to its 1998 approval:

First, NCRC says these conditions do not count because they were not reproduced in subsequent orders issued in BZA Application No. 16307. In fact, while the final order added additional traffic conditions, it did not indicate any intent to change or repeal the caps on the numbers of children or staff. See BZA Summary Order Upon Rehearing, Final Date of March 3, 1999, in BZA Application No. 16307. It is undeniable that traffic congestion was the focus of the 1998 proceedings. If BZA intended to replace the caps specified by its earlier order with a traffic mitigation plan, rather than to supplement the caps with a traffic mitigation plan, it certainly would have said so.

Second, NCRC claims that "the maximum number of children shall not exceed 120," should be read with the additional words, "the maximum number of children at any one time shall not exceed 120." The practical effect that NCRC claims is that while there may be a limit on occupancy at any one time, there is no limit on enrollment. Thus, NCRC claims that it would be entitled to have 2 or 3 different populations of 120 children visiting the school on any given day in morning, mid-day and afternoon sessions, or a total enrollment of 240 or 360 children that could visit the school on a daily basis. This interpretation, however, ignores the plain meaning of the words and the fact that traffic congestion – the focus of the 1998 proceedings – is much more directly affected by a cap on enrollment rather than by an occupancy limitation, as this example demonstrates.

Third, NCRC claims that the neighbors should have known that the reference to a maximum number of 120 children referred to occupancy not enrollment because NCRC at the time had an enrollment well in excess of 120.

The answer to all of this is reflected in the February 5, 2003 DDOT Memorandum in this proceeding.

The February 5, 2003 DDOT Memorandum makes clear that DDOT (as well as the neighbors) clearly understood in 1998 the NCRC application for 108 children (later amended to 120) as referring to enrollment, not occupancy. That is why the February 5, 2003 DDOT Memorandum states "[t]he current staff level is 32 and enrollment totals 171" students and concludes: "The applicant exceeds the maximum enrollment and staff levels approved in BZA No. 16307." The fact is that the dangerous conditions identified by the February 5, 2003 DDOT Memorandum are directly caused by NCRC's expansion in children and staff populations that far exceed any enrollment level that has ever been reviewed or authorized by BZA or DDOT.

For this reason, it is totally unacceptable for NCRC to argue that a modest increase in enrollment above the existing unapproved number of 171 to 185 will not cause significant incremental dangerous and otherwise adverse impacts. NCRC cannot be given a "pass" or otherwise rewarded as to the existing dangerous condition it has created by (a) irresponsible growth beyond any level ever reviewed by DDOT or BZA for safety conditions; and (b) misleading DDOT and BZA as to enrollment numbers in 1998 in a successful effort to frustrate meaningful DDOT and BZA review. What kind of message would this send as to BZA review and enforcement?

The simple fact is that NCRC's existing size imposes dangerous and otherwise objectionable impacts on the neighborhood, as the DDOT's February 5 Memorandum properly recognizes. The DDOT Memorandum addresses dangerous conditions at a particular location on Highland Place, but dangerous conditions also exist on Newark St. and Ordway St., including the dangerous intersections of those streets and 34th St., N.W., as the DDOT Memorandum also recognized. Any effort to mitigate traffic conditions at one Highland Place location that moves portions of existing and expansion NCRC traffic to other sections of Highland Place, or to other streets, simply "rearranges the deck chairs" to increase existing adverse impacts elsewhere on our narrow streets. In particular, NCRC should not be heard to promise or pretend to solve the existing traffic problems by directing traffic off of Highland Place onto Ordway St. after the expansion proposal is implemented. If that were an effective solution, it could be employed to deal with existing conditions without waiting for the NCRC expansion. In any event, no one should pretend that a supposed solution to the existing traffic problems lies in bringing more traffic to the neighborhood.

2. NCRC Does Not Honor its Commitments.

What about NCRC's supposed commitment to limit enrollment increases to 10 students, and otherwise to employ a traffic mitigation plan that will reduce the existing adverse impacts of traffic congestion? As a threshold matter, it is illogical and naive (or irresponsible) to pretend that existing traffic problems can be solved upon implementation of an expansion proposal when NCRC's existing size is already correctly identified as causing dangerous traffic conditions that previous traffic mitigation plans have failed to address in any meaningful way. I would be surprised and disappointed to learn that the Office of Planning had ever recommended that a significant school expansion proposal be approved after receiving an assessment from DDOT that existing traffic congestion caused by the school created dangerous conditions.

Moreover, in my experience, the unfortunate truth is that NCRC is happy to make empty promises and commitments to suit its regulatory purposes of the day, but equally willing to ignore or explain away these commitments in the future when that suits NCRC's purposes.

The commitments NCRC made in 1998, now ignored, is an obvious example[1], but not the only example. NCRC also seeks to abandon a 1994 agreement with its Ordway St. neighbors. In 1994, NCRC cut down many mature trees and started extensive construction and renovations to existing buildings without first obtaining necessary regulatory permits or consulting its neighbors. NCRC's work constitutes work that it knew or should have known would likely not be approved in a historic district such as Cleveland Park.

After the city issued a stop work order, NCRC curtailed its plans and agreed to install permanent landscaping along Ordway St. as part of a resolution of the controversy. Now NCRC wants to destroy that landscaping, cut down more trees and ignore its 1994 agreement in order to construct new institutional buildings along Ordway St.

Finally, I must comment on the two alternative approaches offered with respect to NCRC's expansion proposal in your recent memorandum to the BZA. Each of the proposed approaches mentioned as potentially dealing with existing adverse impacts – NCRC's proposed Transportation Management Plan, pursuant to which additional on-street parking is restricted for NCRC's use, and the "engineering solution" favored by NCRC, pursuant to which Highland Pl. becomes a one-way street – would cause significant additional adverse impacts on the neighborhood in order to address existing dangerous and otherwise objectionable conditions that NCRC has caused by its irresponsible growth. In other words, NCRC favors additional adverse impacts on the neighborhood to mitigate the dangerous and otherwise objectionable conditions that its irresponsible growth has already created and to accommodate further expansion! Under each approach, our streets become less and less neighborhood streets, and more and more driveways and parking lots dedicated to the service of NCRC's increasingly grandiose vision of its "mission". This turns the intent and purpose of zoning regulation on its head. If NCRC cannot demonstrate that it has in fact mitigated the existing dangerous conditions caused by current children and staff populations without imposing additional adverse impacts on the neighborhood, not just promised again to do so, then the proper option for mitigating existing dangerous conditions is to reduce or at least freeze NCRC's existing population of children and staff. Today, as a practical matter, that can only be accomplished to a limited extent by a denial of the NCRC expansion proposal.

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[1] In April 1998, in order to avoid neighborhood opposition to its application for a special exception in BZA Application No. 16307, NCRC promised the neighbors that "in no way are we planning to increase the size of our facility nor the size of our student body."

For all these reasons, I strongly oppose the NCRC expansion application and I urge the Office of Planning to oppose the NCRC expansion proposal as well.

Very truly yours,

/s/

Steven R. Hunsicker

Steven R. Hunsicker
3083 Ordway St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 364-0425

September 19, 2002

Ms. Nancy MacWood
Chair -- Advisory Neighborhood Commission
3-C
2737 Devonshire Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005

Re: National Child Research Center ("NCRC")

Dear Ms. MacWood:

I have lived on Ordway St. for over 20 years. For approximately 13 years, I have lived in my home at 3083 Ordway St., N.W., across the street from NCRC. Because of the location of my home, I have a real appreciation of the importance of NCRC to the neighborhood, including the value of the NCRC open space. I also have real experience with the adverse impacts of traffic and parking congestion that have plagued NCRC's nearby neighbors to an increasing extent over the recent years.

I am strongly opposed to NCRC's proposed expansion as inconsistent with the historic preservation of the residential site and neighborhood. In addition, the dramatic expansion proposed by NCRC would exacerbate existing adverse impacts of traffic and parking congestion.

Moreover, as set forth in further detail below, the NCRC proposal is inconsistent with commitments made by NCRC to the ANC in 1998 and with conditions recommended by ANC to the Board of Zoning Adjustments ("BZA") and subsequently incorporated in the BZA special exception granted to NCRC. NCRC has failed to comply with its commitments to the ANC as well as the conditions incorporated by the 1998 BZA special exception. Approval of the NCRC expansion proposal essentially would reward NCRC for its non-compliance, and would send a counterproductive message that there is little if any need to comply with commitments made to the ANC and neighbors or with conditions imposed by the BZA.

I have attached the following relevant materials from NCRC's 1998 special exception proceedings to this letter for your reference:

1. BZA Decision Date: January 21, 1998, Summary Order of the BZA on NCRC Application;

2. List of owners of property within 200 feet of the NCRC notified of public BZA hearing;

3. ANC March 25, 1998 report to BZA regarding the application of NCRC for a special exception and variance;

4. April 1, 1998 transcript of the public hearing before the BZA;

5. ANC April 29, 1998 letter to BZA setting forth NCRC's developed traffic and parking mitigation plan for inclusion as conditions to the BZA special exception; and

6. BZA Decision Date: May 6, 1998, Summary Order Upon Rehearing.

I apologize for the resulting length of this submission, but I believe a clear understanding of the 1998 proceedings is important to an evaluation of the NCRC expansion proposal that has been presented to the ANC. The 1998 proceedings, and an experience with NCRC in 1994, demonstrate that NCRC has failed to honor the spirit or the letter of its commitments to the ANC and the neighbors, the conditions to its zoning authorizations, and, in the 1994 instance described immediately below, any obligation to seek prior authorization before undertaking significant construction on its site. Consequently, many of the neighbors, including myself, simply do not believe that NCRC will live up to any undertaking to mitigate the adverse impacts of its proposed expansion. In this respect, NCRC's actions have spoken louder than its words.

I was first involved with NCRC expansion issues in 1994. In summer 1994, NCRC initiated significant construction on its existing playhouse and playground area, including the cutting down of many mature trees, and the construction of a large deck and concrete pad, all without benefit of regulatory permits or substantial prior consultations with neighbors. As I recall, not until NCRC received a stop work order from the city did it evidence any meaningful willingness to acknowledge the resulting controversy or to discuss a resolution with the neighbors. At that point, facing enforcement action and unable to proceed with its plans, NCRC agreed to abandon certain features of its plans, including the retention of a driveway off of Ordway St. that was being used for access to the construction site. NCRC also agreed to install permanent landscaping along Ordway St., including trees and bushes that have since matured. In return, the neighbors agreed not to push for further remedial or enforcement action by the city.

Although NCRC has not shared the details of its current expansion proposal, the sketches I have seen indicate that NCRC wants to do away with this landscaping and replace the neighbors' view from Ordway St. with a large new institutional building on the northwest portion of the site along Ordway St. This new building appears to be two or three times the size

of nearby residences on Ordway St. Further, the new building would be connected visually with the existing playhouse by a wall along Ordway St. with a fence required on top to protect the children from falling over the wall. Consequently, the street level view of the NCRC site would be altered from open space to a solid, sizable wall of institutional construction. In effect, the site would be transformed from residential in character to a permanent institutional campus. These aspects of the NCRC expansion proposal, as well as the construction of any new driveway or drop-off lane that NCRC may again have in mind as part of its expansion, would be inconsistent with its 1994 agreement with the neighbors, contrary to the residential nature of the neighborhood, and contrary to the preservation of precious open space in the Cleveland Park historical area. As evidenced by the April 1, 1998 transcript of the public hearing on NCRC's special exception application, after the 1994 experience, NCRC recognized that the construction of a driveway would "interfere with both the historic and residential character of the remainder of the property since it would require taking down trees." See attachment 4 at p.19. The same significant interference with both the historic and residential character of the property that NCRC threatened in 1994 and recognized in 1998 will result if NCRC goes forward with its expansion project.

I also am familiar with NCRC's special exception proceeding before the BZA in 1998. At the time, NCRC described the matter before the BZA as merely a "technical matter." NCRC took the position that it needed the BZA special use exception to comport with its existing license to operate a childcare facility, and represented to the BZA that it was not intending to do any construction whatsoever or to increase the number of children or staff. See attachment 4 at pp.10-12. NCRC made similar representations at the time to the ANC and the neighbors. NCRC represented to the ANC that it "is not intending to do any construction, nor is it intending to increase the number of students from its current enrollment or to change its operation in any other way." See attachment 3 at p. 1. These commitments, as well the active and positive participation of the ANC, reduced the apparent need at the time for neighbor opposition at the BZA. I also note, however, that the list of owners notified of the public hearing at the BZA does not include certain of NCRC's closest neighbors, including the Beckners and Taylors on Highland Place. See attachment 2.

NCRC's commitments to no new construction or increases in the numbers of children or staff were important because it was recognized at the time that traffic and parking congestion was already having an adverse impact on the neighborhood. Despite NCRC's assurances of no foreseeable growth, neighbors, ANC and the BZA were concerned that the existing traffic congestion needed to be addressed. Accordingly, the following steps were taken:

First, the BZA placed a cap on NCRC enrollment by specifying a condition that "the maximum number of children shall not exceed 120." See attachment 1 at p. 2. It should be noted that this condition was not a reference to the number of children that could occupy the

building at one time, i.e., it was not a certificate of occupancy that is determined by other agencies based on square footage of buildings and other factors. Rather, it is reference to enrollment, which is more directly related to the traffic and parking impacts that were matters of concern to the BZA.[1] Current NCRC enrollment is well in excess of the maximum number of children specified by the BZA as a condition to NCRC's special exception and would increase under its proposed expansion.

Second, the BZA concurred with ANC's recommendation of a required traffic and parking mitigation plan to be developed and implemented by NCRC. As recognized by the ANC's April 29, 1998 letter to the BZA, the BZA required the development of such a plan by NCRC working with ANC and the neighbors before the Board issued its final decision. See Attachment 5.

Third, the NCRC, in consultations with neighbors and the ANC, developed a list of conditions that would comprise its mitigation plan. Those conditions are set forth in the ANC's April 29, 1998 letter to the BZA. See Attachment 5. The ANC conditions specify several traffic and mitigation steps to be implemented by NCRC. The final condition recommended by the ANC letter states:

> "8. The special exception will be limited to an initial period of eight years. This will enable neighbors to testify on the efficacy of those measures, should adverse impacts resume."

The purpose of this condition was further explained by the ANC's April 29 letter:

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[1] Any argument that "the maximum number of children" refers to a maximum occupancy at any one time, rather than a cap on enrollment, makes no sense. The concern of the ANC, neighbors and the BZA over increasing traffic impacts (see transcript of BZA hearing, attachment 4, at pp. 24-29) are much more meaningfully addressed by an enrollment cap rather than a limit on occupancy at any given time. Increasing traffic impacts would not be addressed by a condition that could be construed as permitting multiple populations of 120 young children during the day, e.g., in separate morning, mid-day or afternoon sessions. This is not to say that NCRC currently enrolls 360 children (the actual current enrollment is reportedly about 170) or that NCRC secretly intends to enroll 360 students in its expanded facility. The point is that given the concern about increasing traffic impacts in 1998, it is not credible to suggest that when BZA set a maximum limit of 120 children, it intended to specify a condition that could be construed as allowing the potential additional traffic and parking congestion of multiple populations of up to 120 children, so long as there were no more than 120 children in occupancy at one time.

> This is a compromise [from the 5 year term recommended by the ANC's March 25, 1998 report] the school can live with: on the one hand NCRC does not want to have to go through the expense of another hearing (a hefty filing fee plus legal representation); on the other hand neighbors want the ability to ensure a reconsideration of these conditions should problems reoccur. See attachment 5 at p.3.

The BZA adopted these conditions in its decision dated May 6, 1998, including the condition that "Approval shall be for **EIGHT (8) YEARS.**" See Attachment 6.

In sum, NCRC undertook an obligation to operate under the 1998 special exception pursuant to several conditions, including a limitation on the maximum number of students, intended to mitigate the adverse traffic and parking problems that were already affecting the neighborhood. During that period, NCRC represented that it planned no new construction, no enrollment increase and no change in its method of operation. And, after no more than 8 years, if NCRC had not meaningfully addressed the adverse impacts that had already been experienced ("should adverse impacts resume"), it faced the potential modification of its special exception or the conditions thereto, including the potential reduction of the maximum number of students allowed below the 120 maximum specified in 1998.

The present significance of the 1998 proceedings action is clear: NCRC should not be allowed to eliminate the 8 year term of the 1998 special exception, including the neighbors' ability to reconsider the conditions to the special exception, and to disregard its commitment to no new construction, increase in enrollment or change in operations. At a minimum, NCRC must first demonstrate that it has complied with the 1998 conditions and that the adverse impacts of traffic and parking congestion identified in 1998 have in fact been mitigated and have not resumed.

NCRC cannot meet this burden. Prior to the development of its expansion plan, and the recognition that it would again face the neighbors, ANC and the BZA, NCRC made little or no effort to comply with many of the conditions of the BZA order that comprise the traffic mitigation plan that NCRC itself developed. Only now do we observe notices to parents concerning traffic and parking policies, and NCRC staff monitoring drop-off and pick-up points. Moreover, there is no dispute that NCRC's current enrollment exceeds the 120 maximum specified by the BZA. In any event, the adverse impacts of traffic and parking congestion have not been mitigated since 1998. In fact, the impacts have gotten worse, notwithstanding any recent efforts of NCRC to act like it has addressed the issue. It is simply beyond dispute that NCRC has failed to comply with conditions of the 1998 BZA order and that the adverse impacts

addressed by the ANC and the BZA in 1998 have not merely "resumed" they have continued unabated and have increased.

For all the reasons indicated above, the NCRC expansion project is inconsistent with the historical and residential character of the neighborhood and would further increase the adverse impacts of traffic and parking congestion that the neighborhood has experienced since 1998. NCRC also has failed to comply with its commitments to the ANC and the neighbors and the conditions to the 1998 special exception. Consequently, I urge the ANC to recommend that the NCRC expansion project be denied.

Very truly yours,

Steven R. Hunsicker

Attachments

Ms. Nancy MacWood
3-C Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner
3417 Woodley Road
Washington, DC 20008

September 18, 2002

Dear Ms. MacWood,

We hardly know where to begin our observations about NCRC.

Our most intimate contact with the school ended in 1977 when our children "graduated" and went off to kindergarten. In those days and for many years afterwards we were very happy to have the school **across the street from our house.** We enjoyed seeing neighbors as they walked the children to school and hearing the cheerful voices in the playground during the middle of the day.

That, however, has now changed. We see very few walkers and lots of cars. The traffic problems on both Highland and Ordway have now reached chronically irritating proportions. The potential for disruption occurs several times daily (8:30-9:00am, 11:30-12:00m, 12:30pm, 3:30-3:45pm, and 5:00pm). Now, because the school day has been extended to include before and after school care, the voices in the playground are more numerous and are heard all day long.

Numbers and size of vehicles are the root of the traffic problem. The number of students and extended hours of operation are at the root of the noise problem.

Since we can not tell parents what kind of car to drive, or where they can park, or what qualifies as an emergency, or that we don't care if they are late to work, we can only ask that the numbers not be increased.

In 1998, the history of which I am sure you know, we were too trusting and now we have a serious problem. A neighborhood rebellion, in fact. It's sad, because we used to have good relations with the school.

Zoning laws should protect a residential neighborhood from being overrun by institutional building and expansion. Especially a neighborhood with a preservation designation. There is no convertibility to residential in a school building, and allowing it to go up would make the protection promised under the zoning exception meaningless.

Please do not support the expansion of NCRC.

Sincerely,

3224 Highland Place
Washington, DC 20008

William K. and Dandridge L. Ince

Laine Shakerdge Kaufman
3230 Highland Place, NW
Washington, DC 20008
202-362-6812

May 7, 2003

Mr. Geoffrey Griffis
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW Suite 201
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Case 16970 Sq. 2072 Lot 30
NCRC's proposed expansion

Dear Mr. Griffis,

Our family lives directly across the street from NCRC's playground on Highland Place, and were very fortunate to have our sons, now ages 7 1/2 and 9, attend the school for five consecutive years. It's a wonderful school, one that truly *lives* its mission statement. We love the school, the staff does an excellent job teaching, and my husband and I were very involved.

With that said, I am *strongly* in opposition to NCRC's expansion plans which propose to more than double their square footage, and increase the number of cars by about 30 per day, for *now*.

1. Traffic, parking and safety issues:
Highland Place is a quaint, narrow street, with a dangerous, sharp, blind curve in the middle of it, directly in front of NCRC's entrance. Thirty-third Place, is parents' only means of egress from the carpool line, to Newark Street which leads to 34th Street (Reno Road). Thirty-third Place is a narrow street, which has parking on both sides of the street, thus allowing only one line of moving traffic. So, it's essentially a one way street that changes directions, depending on the direction of the first driver that approaches either end. It's hectic and crazy during school hours. The line up of cars on Newark Street, to turn onto 34th Street in the mornings in particular, extends half way down the block, with long waits because it's well known that the corner of 34th and Newark is treacherous.

Other factors that contribute to the traffic and parking problems:

1. There is NO street parking on the south side of Highland Place, the side we live on, and there is no sidewalk. When my children step off our property, they step right into the street. (See attached photo)
2. We do not have a driveway of our own. Because of the vintage of the houses on our street, we share a driveway with our next door neighbor. The driveway we share is only large enough to park one car. If I happen to come home during one

of NCRC's four drop off or pick up times each day, and there is no street parking, which frequently occurs, the driveway may or may not be available to me. (See attached Photo.)

3. Highland Place does not have an alley for trash pickup. Once a week, on a school day, my shared driveway is taken up with trash cans and cannot be used by either of us.

Our traffic consultant indicates that approximately 50% of on-street parking is already generated by NCRC, so NCRC's proposal to increase traffic and/or eliminate street parking on Highland Place for their own use is abhorrent. If NCRC gets its way, there will be no parking available anywhere near our house, for our own cars. That is simply unacceptable.

NCRC has created the existing dangerous conditions by irresponsibly growing beyond any level reviewed by DDOT or approved by BZA. Worse, NCRC misled DDOT and BZA as to its actual enrollment in 1998, when meaningful consideration could have been given to the actual traffic and parking impacts to the neighborhood. Since the 1963 BZA order that denied NCRC's application to expand enrollment from 70 to 80 (as one neighbor recalls), NCRC's enrollment has increased some 250% without meaningful review by DDOT or approval by BZA.

The traffic management plan NCRC implemented this past year simply shifted the increased congestion from 33rd and Highland to the eastern end of Highland, where parents routinely block driveways. The plan did not mitigate the volume of traffic, nor the problems.

Why would we reward NCRC's clear disregard for the BZA order, and the arrogance with which they're ignoring their violations, (and their representations upon which the order was based, of "no new construction planned...no enrollment increases planned...") with more concessions from neighbors? NCRC should first resolve their violations, and mitigate the problems caused by those violations. Anything different is unacceptable.

2. Proposed enrollment increase

There are approximately 168 families each academic year, and 37 staff people. Allowing for some walkers, and some car poolers, that means there are approximately 153 cars, driving on our narrow Highland Place, or Ordway Street, and/or trying to park every week day, twice a day. NCRC proposes 10 more students and 6 more staff—*for now*. That will add approximately 15 additional cars, twice a day—again, allowing for carpooling and an occasional walker—and not counting additional part time staff who come and go—to the narrow streets that make up the heart of Cleveland Park's Historic District.

It is impossible to imagine that NCRC, in proposing to more than double its physical space and create a school campus, essentially, is not going to gradually add, or try to add, more and more students and staff. Each student, each staff person, each additional conference the school holds, each additional event they host, will exacerbate the traffic, parking and safety issues which are already barely tolerable.

Thank you for considering the viewpoint of the *effected* residents.

NCRC's proposed plan will be completely detrimental to the residents of Cleveland Park, and to the nature and the core of the Cleveland Park Historical District. Please vote against it.

Sincerely,

Laine Shakerdge Kaufman



***Typical shared driveway on Highland Place.**

***No sidewalk in front of my house. When my children step off our property they must step right into the street and oncoming traffic.**

September 17, 2002

Nancy McWood
Chair, ANC 3C

Re: NCRC's proposed expansion

Dear Ms. Wood,

Our family lives directly across the street from NCRC's playground on Highland Place, and were very fortunate to have our sons, now ages 7 and 8, attend the school for five consecutive years. It's a wonderful school, one that truly *lives* its mission statement. We love the school, the staff does an excellent job teaching, and my husband and I were very involved.

With that said, I am *strongly* in opposition to NCRC's expansion plans which propose to more than double their square footage, and increase the number of cars by about 40 per day, for *now*.

1. Traffic, parking and safety issues:
Highland Place is a quaint, narrow street, with a dangerous blind curve in the middle of it, directly in front of NCRC's entrance. Thirty-third Place, is parents' means of egress to Newark Street which leads to34th Street (Reno Road). It is a narrow street which has parking on both sides of the street, thus allowing only one line of moving traffic. So, it's essentially a one way street that changes directions, depending on the direction of the first driver that approaches either end. It's hectic and crazy during school hours. The line up of cars on Newark Street, to turn onto 34th Street in the mornings in particular, extends half way down the block, with long waits because it's well known that the corner of 34th and Newark is treacherous.

2. Proposed enrollment increase
There are approximately 168 families each academic year, and 37 staff people. Allowing for some walkers, and some car poolers, that means there are approximately 153 cars, driving on our narrow Highland Place, or Ordway Street, and/or trying to park every week day. NCRC proposes 15 more students and 6 more staff—for now. That will add approximately 20 additional cars, twice a day—again, allowing for carpooling and an occasional walker—and not counting additional part time staff who come and go—to the narrow streets that make up the heart of Cleveland Park's Historic District.

It is impossible to imagine that NCRC, in proposing to more than double its physical space and create a school campus, essentially, is not going to gradually add more and more students and staff, and exacerbate the traffic, parking and safety issues which are already barely tolerable.

This proposed plan will be completely detrimental to the residents of Cleveland Park, and to the nature of the Cleveland Park Historical District. Please vote against it.

Sincerely,

Laine Shakerdge Kaufman

3120 Newark Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

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May 6, 2003

Mr. Geoffrey Griffiths
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th St, NW Suite 201
Washington, DC. 20001
RE: Case 16970 Square 2072 lot 30

Dear Mr. Griffiths:

As residents of Newark Street we would like to state our opposition to the construction plan of the National Childhood Research Center and to their request for the zoning variance, which would allow them to illegally increase their enrollment.

Being part of an historic district is a privilege which carries responsibilities, and at time sacrifices. Everyone who lives in Cleveland Park is limited in what they can do with their property by historic guidelines and zoning regulations. It is a price we willingly pay for the good of the neighborhood. NCRC Seems to want the privilege of being here without the responsibility.

The DOT proposal of turning Highland Place into a one-way street is not a viable solution. Granting the variance and allowing NCRC to proceed with its expansion without regard to its neighbors, would set a dangerous precedent with consequences for the entire city of Washington.

Sincerely,
Johnathan and Royal Kennedy Rodgers

May 4, 2003

Geoffrey Griffis, Chair
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street NW, Suite 201
Washington, DC 20001

Dan Taglierini, Director
Ken Laden, Associate Director
DC Department of Transportation
2000 14th Street NW, 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20009

Andrew Altman
Office of Planning
801 N. Capitol Street NE, Suite 4000
Washington, DC 20002

Gentlemen,

As a longtime resident of Cleveland Park, I have been active in local community affairs for decades. As you know, residents of Cleveland Park, like those in many neighborhoods all over DC, appreciate the character of their residential neighborhood, and go to a lot of trouble to maintain it. One exemplary characteristic of Cleveland Park that we particularly value is the balance that exists among the various land uses here: quiet neighborhood streets coexist in close proximity to vibrant, low-scale commerce on Connecticut and Wisconsin Avenues, and to some very prominent institutional uses, like the Washington Cathedral and several public and private schools.

Maintaining this balance is not easy, and it is particularly precarious now with the proposal by NCRC to expand. DDOT has determined that this school's operations are dangerous on Highland Place and that the only way to make it viable is to dramatically alter the residents' vehicular access.

If zoning regulations mean anything, there should be no question about their purpose: in residential neighborhoods, no non-residential use should be allowed that interferes with the residents' quiet enjoyment of their homes. Exceptions that BZA or the Zoning Commission might grant for a non-conforming use must be subject to this test. DDOT has clearly determined that NCRC's operation violates this standard. To try to remedy the defect by burdening the homeowners would be a clear violation of the intent and requirements of zoning regulations.

This community struggles with many institutional and commercial uses which threaten its fundamental residential character. City agencies have become more supportive of our efforts in recent years to prohibit commercial and institutional activities which violate zoning limitations and detrimentally affect our community. For example, the ANC3c and other community groups have worked diligently with the Cathedral, with DDOT and with other City agencies to find ways to lessen the impact of Cathedral activities on our neighborhood. Rather than limiting residential access on Highland Place, DDOT's determination should be recognized as proof that NCRC's operations now, and as proposed, are in clear violation of existing zoning regulations. If NCRC wants to expand, it should be encouraged to do so somewhere else, and only where its impact has no detrimental effect.

Sincerely,

Margaret Lenzner

Henry P. Little
1336 Shrader Street
San Francisco, CA 94117
(415)753-0503 home
(415)281-0406 office
hlittle@tnc.org

Sent by FAX (202)442-7638

May 5, 2003

Andrew Altman
Director
District of Columbia Office of Planning
801 North Capitol Street, NE, Suite 4000
Washington, DC 20002

Re: National Child Research Center's Application for Special Exception and Variance

Dear Mr. Altman:

It is my understanding that you told the chair of our ANC, Nancy MacWood, that you had not received many letters from the Cleveland Park community opposing NCRC's proposed enormous expansion. As the owner since 1982 of a home immediately adjacent to NCRC on Ordway Street, I am writing you to express my strong opposition to NCRC's expansion.

I thought that perhaps the best way of conveying the reasons for my opposition would be to send you a portion of the letter I sent to NCRC's Director, Susan Piggott, in September of last year. I quote from that letter (in italics):

September 6, 2002

Dear Ms. Piggott:

My name is Henry Little, and my wife Lydia Mendoza and I own the house immediately adjacent to NCRC at 3220 Ordway Street, where we lived from 1984 until 1998 and where we intend to return to live within the next few years. Currently the house is rented.

My reason for writing pertains to NCRC's plans for the expansion of its facilities. While Lydia and I currently live in San Francisco, we have been following as best we can from afar the

discussions members of the Cleveland Park community have been having with you and other officials of NCRC. Given our current understanding of NCRC's plans, my wife and I very strongly oppose NCRC's proposed expansion.

Our reasons for opposing NCRC's plans are several. First, we believe that with enlarged enrollment at NCRC the traffic on Ordway Street, a street where the NCRC-related traffic problems historically have been considerable, would increase significantly, causing even greater safety and noise challenges. Second, we believe that the scale of the proposed expansion is completely at odds with the historic, neighborhood character of Cleveland Park, a historically significant residential community.

We understand and appreciate the mission of NCRC, a school which our youngest son Christopher Little attended in 1984-1985 and which has been an important, valued member of the Cleveland Park community, as it has been of the broader Washington, D.C. community. What we find so objectionable, however, is not only NCRC's expansion plans themselves, but also the approach NCRC has taken in pursuing its expansion plans, both currently and in the early 1990s.

I recognize that you were not part of the school when in the early 1990s (I believe) the terrace and new play structures were constructed adjacent to the Playhouse. What I recall about that phase of NCRC's expansion was that it was undertaken without NCRC first having secured the requisite permits, and without any significant consultation with its neighbors. It was only after Kel Ginsberg, who then lived across the street from NCRC on Ordway Steet, my wife and I, and other of NCRC's neighbors objected to the lack of landscaping, and the like, that NCRC both took its neighbors' interests and concerns into account and secured the needed permits.

Similarly, what appears to be happening, again, is that, without taking into account sufficiently the community's concerns NCRC is proceeding apace with expansion plans which if implemented will have enormous deleterious impacts on the Cleveland Park community. It's one thing to convey the impression one is listening. It's another to hear what others are saying. Our sense is that, while pretending to listen, NCRC's representatives are not hearing what the vast majority of the members of the Cleveland Park community, particularly its closest neighbors, are saying, which is: our neighborhood, our community, our safety, is important to us, and we insist that NCRC factor into its plans these values adequately.

I have worked for a non-profit organization, The Nature Conservancy, for nearly thirty years, and Lydia has worked for non-profit health clinics serving Latino families for almost twenty years. We both understand the importance of realigning an organization's programs and plans to more effectively pursue its mission. We commend NCRC for endeavoring to enhance its efficacy in pursuit of its highly important mission. Indeed, if NCRC's strategic vision calls for greatly increasing the number of children it serves, then expanded facilities might well be necessary. What does not follow so logically is expanding those facilities on Highland Place and Ordway Street in Cleveland Park. If NCRC deems it absolutely essential to expand it facilities in pursuit of its mission, I would urge NCRC to look to another locale, where such an expansion could be accommodated more appropriately...

In closing, I would like to note that one of the greatest challenges those of us working in the conservation field have faced over the past quarter century has been explosive rural sprawl, particularly in the American west, which has fragmented and otherwise despoiled so many of our country's signature wild landscapes. It is precisely because these landscapes are so beautiful, so biologically rich, so pristine that we are drawn to them, only to spoil them with our affection and attention. Similarly, Cleveland Park, a vibrant residential community of great architectural and natural beauty, is one of our nation's signature national historic districts. The very reasons that make Cleveland Park so special, to the NCRC community as well as to Cleveland Park's residents, should not be the reasons which lead to its despoliation. I understand why NCRC would wish to remain in Cleveland Park. However, if NCRC absolutely needs to expand greatly, then expand greatly it should–elsewhere. NCRC, I believe, has an obligation, indeed a responsibility, not just to its mission, but also to the community within which it is situated. That obligation, that responsibility, requires NCRC, while vigorously pursuing its mission, to respect the Cleveland Park community's values and sense of place as well.

Mr. Altman, since writing Ms. Piggott eight months ago, I have written numerous letters, including ones to members of the ANC and to the Bureau of Zoning Adjustment. Moreover, I flew to Washington, D.C. from San Francisco specifically to attend a BZA hearing.

Others have pointed out to you that NCRC already is not in compliance with its current special exception, due to its over-enrollment, and that an expansion of NCRC would have many very serious deleterious consequences on one of Washington's most unique neighborhood—the Cleveland Park National Historic District.

I would hope that the District of Columbia Office of Planning would recommend rejection of NCRC's application for expansion, and in the process demonstrate the Washington, D.C. government's commitment to protecting highly important values of the District's citizenry. To do otherwise would raise serious questions about the Office of Planning's stewardship of the District's land use planning process, in my judgement.

Sincerely,

Henry P. Little

Henry P. Little
1336 Shrader Street
San Francisco, CA 94117
(415)753-0503 home
(415)281-0406 office
hlittle@tnc.org

September 19, 2002

Ms. Nancy MacWood
Chairperson of ANC 3C
2737 Devonshire Place, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20008

and,

Mr. John Welsh
Member, ANC 3C
2737 Devonshire Place, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20008

Subject: National Child Research Center (NCRC) proposed expansion

Dear Ms. MacWood and Mr. Welsh:

I am enclosing for your review a letter I sent earlier this month to Susan Piggott, the Director of NCRC, expressing my wife's and my strong opposition to NCRC's proposed expansion. As I mentioned in my letter, we lived immediately adjacent to NCRC on Ordway Street for 14 years, and we intend to return to our home there in the not too distant future.

NCRC's proposed expansion would greatly compromise many of the qualities which make Cleveland Park one of the nation's premier national historic districts. We applaud NCRC's mission--indeed in 1984-1995 our youngest son attended the school. However, we strongly oppose NCRC's current direction, which suggests a seemingly blind insensitivity as to the impact its expansion will have on the historic Cleveland Park neighborhood. The conversion of the school, currently comprised of a lovely historic home and adjacent "playhouse" and wooded playground, into a campus complex consisting of four buildings, would despoil both the historical and architectural context within which NCRC currently is situated. NCRC's expansion plans, if indeed essential to the furtherance of its important educational mission, suggest to me that NCRC would be better served by moving is facilities to a locale more suitable for such an ambitious, expanding enterprise.

In addition to the inappropriate nature of NCRC's proposed expansion from historic and architectural standpoints, greatly enlarged NCRC buildings inevitably mean greatly increased enrollment, with concomitant increases in traffic congestion, safety hazards, physical damage to nearby residential properties, and noise. My wife and I know firsthand how significantly NCRC's ever growing level of activities over the years we lived there increasingly impacted, in a negative manner, the neighboring Cleveland Park community's historic and residential qualities. Laudable though NCRC's educational mission is, my wife and I do not believe NCRC's proposed expansion would serve the community well. It is for this and the other reasons mentioned above that my wife and I ask you, as Chairperson and member of ANC 3C respectively, to oppose NCRC's proposed expansion.

Respectfully yours,

Henry P. Little

cc: Bruce Beckner, 3225 Highland Place, N. W., Washington, D.C. 20008

Henry P. Little
1336 Shrader Street
San Francisco, CA 94117
(415)753-0503 home
(415)281-0406 office
hlittle@tnc.org

September 6, 2002

Ms. Susan Piggott
Director
National Child Research Center
3209 Highland Place, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008-3299

Dear Ms. Piggott:

My name is Henry Little, and my wife Lydia Mendoza and I own the house immediately adjacent to NCRC at 3220 Ordway Street, where we lived from 1984 until 1998 and where we intend to return to live within the next few years. Currently the house is rented.

My reason for writing pertains to NCRC's plans for the expansion of its facilities. While Lydia and I currently live in San Francisco, we have been following as best we can from afar the discussions members of the Cleveland Park community have been having with you and other officials of NCRC. Given our current understanding of NCRC's plans, my wife and I very strongly oppose NCRC's proposed expansion.

Our reasons for opposing NCRC's plans are several. First, we believe that with enlarged enrollment at NCRC the traffic on Ordway Street, a street where the NCRC-related traffic problems historically have been considerable, would increase significantly, causing even greater safety and noise challenges. Second, we believe that the scale of the proposed expansion is completely at odds with the historic, neighborhood character of Cleveland Park, a historically significant residential community.

We understand and appreciate the mission of NCRC, a school which our youngest son Christopher Little attended in 1984-1985 and which has been an important, valued member of the Cleveland Park community, as it has been of the broader Washington, D.C. community. What we find so objectionable, however, is not only NCRC's expansion plans themselves, but also the approach NCRC has taken in pursuing its expansion plans, both currently and in the early 1990s.

I recognize that you were not part of the school when in the early 1990s (I believe) the terrace and new play structures were constructed adjacent to the Playhouse. What I recall about that phase of NCRC's expansion was that it was undertaken without NCRC first having secured the requisite permits, and without any significant consultation with its neighbors. It was only after Kel Ginsberg, who then lived across the street from NCRC on Ordway Steet, my wife and I, and other of NCRC's neighbors objected to the lack of landscaping, and the like, that NCRC both took its neighbors' interests and concerns into account and secured the needed permits.

Similarly, what appears to be happening, again, is that, without taking into account sufficiently the community's concerns NCRC is proceeding apace with expansion plans which if implemented will have enormous deleterious impacts on the Cleveland Park community. It's one thing to convey the impression one is listening. It's another to hear what others are saying. Our sense is that, while pretending to listen, NCRC's representatives are not hearing what the vast majority of the members of the Cleveland Park community, particularly its closest neighbors, are saying, which is: our neighborhood, our community, our safety, is important to us, and we insist that NCRC factor into its plans these values adequately.

I have worked for a non-profit organization, The Nature Conservancy, for nearly thirty years, and Lydia has worked for non-profit health clinics serving Latino families for almost twenty years. We both understand the importance of realigning an organization's programs and plans to more effectively pursue its mission. We commend NCRC for endeavoring to enhance its efficacy in pursuit of its highly important mission. Indeed, if NCRC's strategic vision calls for greatly increasing the number of children it serves, then expanded facilities might well be necessary. What does not follow so logically is expanding those facilities on Highland Place and Ordway Street in Cleveland Park. If NCRC deems it absolutely essential to expand it facilities in pursuit of its mission, I would urge NCRC to look to another locale, where such an expansion could be accommodated more appropriately .

As an adjacent landowner, my wife and I ask that NCRC provide use with:

1. Its complete drawings for the proposed expansion illustrating, among other things, the visual impact the expansion would have on its Ordway Street and Highland Place neighbors.

2. A clear reasoning as to why NCRC could not relocate to a new site which could more appropriately accommodate an enlarged NCRC facility.

3. A notice of upcoming hearings, meetings, and the like, at which NCRC will discuss its expansion plans both to the Cleveland Park community, and to the necessary permitting agencies from which it must secure approval before proceeding with its building plans.

In closing, I would like to note that one of the greatest challenges those of us working in the conservation field have faced over the past quarter century has been explosive rural sprawl, particularly in the American west, which has fragmented and otherwise despoiled so many of our country's signature wild landscapes. It is precisely because these landscapes are so beautiful, so

biologically rich, so pristine that we are drawn to them, only to spoil them with our affection and attention. Similarly, Cleveland Park, a vibrant residential community of great architectural and natural beauty, is one of our nation's signature national historic districts. The very reasons that make Cleveland Park so special, to the NCRC community as well as to Cleveland Park's residents, should not be the reasons which lead to its despoliation. I understand why NCRC would wish to remain in Cleveland Park. However, if NCRC absolutely needs to expand greatly, then expand greatly it should--elsewhere. NCRC, I believe, has an obligation, indeed a responsibility, not just to its mission, but also to the community within which it is situated. That obligation, that responsibility, requires NCRC, while vigorously pursuing its mission, to respect the Cleveland Park community's values and sense of place as well.

Sincerely,

Henry P. Little

cc: Bruce Beckner

Geoffrey Griffis
Board of Zoning adjustment
441 4th Street
Suit 201
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. Griffis:

I write in support of my neighbors, who are opposing the expansion plans of NCRC. Our family has had the pleasure of living on Newark Street in Cleveland Park for 35 years. We have worked hard to keep the quiet stable community sense of the neighborhood. It has worked well, as we have had many of the same neighbors over those 30 years.

NCRC, a school in a residence, has been an important part of our neighborhood. Our children went there. It has been a good neighbor.

NCRC's enrollment and building expansion plans, however, are inconsistent with this residential neighborhood and not the acts of a good neighbor. There is no way to handle the increased traffic that NCRC's planned expansion will create without unfairly burdening the nearby community. Basic changes to the existing traffic pattern, such as requiring Highland Place to be one way, or putting a traffic light at Newark and 34th Street, will only make matters worse. There will be more cars going faster.

If NCRC has decided for its own education or business purposes that it must expand, then it should move elsewhere, as other schools have done when their needs or desires outgrow their current space or neighborhood. More preferably, NCRC

will decide, as it has for so many years, to carry out its educational mission at or near its current enrollment in premises compatible with the neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter, I am

Very truly yours,



William E. McDaniels
2952 Newark St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

cc: Suzie Taylor
3301 Highland Place
Washington, D.C. 20008

3053 Ordway St NW
Washington DC 20008 325
Since 1942

Andrew Altman
Dir of Office of Planning
801 N. Capitol St. NE
Washington, DC 20002

May 2, 20003

Dear Mr Altman:

AS someone who lives near the NCPC, I urge you to take a stand against their exspansion, 90% of the students come one to a large car, One third are from Maryland and Virginia The Dept. of Transportation has said there is one good solution to the traffic problems with the school at their present enrollment. It is a dangerous situation now. Only a small school can fit into a residential neighborhood with narrow winding streets, and leave us with a true feeling of neighborhood, as well as the safety that the Dept. of Transportation would be happy with. They have not held to any caps on enrollment, but are always looking for exceptions, higher caps and building exspansion.

Respectfully,
Joann C McLaughlin

Joann C. McLaughlin
3053 Ordway Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008-3255

202-362-3053

I urge the Cleveland Park Historical Society to oppose the expansion of the NCRC as not compatible with being an Historic District, where the naturally curving narrow streets with the contours of the land are not suitable for a large amount of traffic. In contrast the boundaries of the Historic District, are on main avenues with commercial buildings.

The school is an exception in a residential neighborhood, and should remain small in size of buildings and enrollment, in order to keep the "neighborhood feeling." Numerous times they have expanded far beyond the limits that they should have kept, and even legally agreed to. Surely they should not be able to expand further. Open spaces and protection of trees are part of the Historic District, including for the environment of the students and the neighbors. Many trees have already been destroyed. The rest should be kept. The view for the neighbors will be restricted by new buildings and be too close to some. As I understand it, even NCRC's newest building plans would still include a room that could be used for large meetings, even if it is not presently designated for that.

The traffic and parking patterns are already a very serious problem on the surrounding streets. This is a critical moment to address the problem. A further increase in building and enrollment would make it even worse. I would hate to hear people say in the future, "I wish I had known it would be so bad. I would have opposed the expansion!"

The school might be able to avoid the ever growing problem of expansion by slowly decreasing the enrollment, and instead of adding buildings, find creative ways to adapt the inside space they already have to meet their needs and goals.

3053 Ordway Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008
October 18, 2002

Ms. Nancy MacWood, Chair
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3 – C
2737 Devonshire Place, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Ms. MacWood:

Regarding the National Child Research Center (NCRC), 3053 Ordway Street, NW became the address of my parents and me, at age 7, – sixty years ago. My concern is that the NCRC and my neighborhood have yet to reach a mutual understanding on coexistence. Back to my pre-teen years, the number of students and the expansion of building on the property have always been an issue. In addition, tuition expenses were out of the reach of many of our neighbors when I was a child - as they remain today.

As I recollect it, the school has always pledged that there would be no expansion in our residential neighborhood. Still, the school has obviously expanded over my six decades here, always with promises of "this far and no further." It has reached the point that currently some school functionaries are said to have floated the idea of a "cap" on enrollment. Somewhere there must be a record of how often over the years these "caps" have been proposed and then gotten around. Would the latest supposed "cap" be the last before my hundredth birthday? Having watched school buildings and enrollment grow to their present state in my neighborhood, I'm skeptical.

Parking problems are already critical in the general neighborhood and could later worsen to the point that even emergency vehicles could have difficult access. There are other problems that NCRC's latest proposed expansion presents both to our neighborhood and the School's children. As proposed, it would allow for less usable space in fresh air for the children to play, (some would be relegated to below ground without sunlight) and, in one version, it would add a large structure that would not fit in with houses on Ordway Street because of its size and institutional grotesquery. Trees already cut down on Ordway Street- which were supposed to have been replaced- would be joined by those to be displaced by such a building.

NCRC is a good school and while I value it as such, I am absolutely opposed to any larger enrollment for it, any new structure on it, including any grandiose "convention venue" within it, having watched Topsy grow as it has over my past sixty years ~~decades~~ across the street from it.

Sincerely,

Joann C. McLaughlin (202) 362-3053 (home)

16970

Jack and Faye Moskowitz
3306 Highland Pl. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008-3233
Phone: 202 363 8628
April 28,2003

D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
RECEIVED
2003 APR 30 PM 3:26

Mr. Geoffrey Griffis
Board of Zoning Adjustment
Washington, D.C.
Re: Case 16970; Square 2072 Lot 30

Our objections to the National Child Research Center's request for a zoning change to accommodate an increased enrollment were made clear in the attached letter sent to the Board on February 2nd. We now have been informed that the Department of transportation wishes to change Highland place from 34th St. to 33rd Pl. to one way. This suggestion is ridiculous.

We have lived on Highland Pl. for 41 years. Our kids grew up playing in the street. There was never any problem with traffic until NCRC illegally expanded their enrollment. There is no problem except when the school is starting or letting out. Attempting to solve this problem by changing the traffic pattern will only exacerbate it. The congestion and dangerous situation at the intersections of Highland PL. and 33rd Pl. at Newark Street will become even more dangerous. The DOT could better spend their time by policing these intersections at school drop off times to catch the parents or their servants (many of whom are not DC residents) not coming to a complete stop at these intersections.

Finally, it is outrageous for DOT to propose a traffic change on a small residential street that has existed for over a half a century when the residents are happy with the existing situation and oppose the change. It is further unconscionable to do this to aid the zoning request of a non-residential facility.

Jack Moskowitz

Faye Moskowitz

Cc. Andrew Altman, Director of Planning, Mayor Williams and Councilwomen Kathy Patterson

BZA
Case No. 16970
Exhibit No. 147

Faye and Jack Moskowitz
3306 Highland Pl. NW
Washington, DC 20008-3233
Phone: 202 363 8628

February 2, 2003

To the District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment:

Re Application of National Child Research Center: 11 DCMR 3106.2

We the undersigned owners of the property at 3306 Highland Pl. N.W., situated within 4 houses from the applicant's property, object to the granting of the National Child Research Center's request for the following reasons.

1. The increase enrollment envisioned by the application will intensify an already intolerable traffic and parking congestion on Highland Place, a narrow two-block lane. At present pedestrians on the street are endangered during the four-drop off and pick up times at the school.
2. Though school personal maintain some control of traffic on Highland Place in front of the school, there is no enforcement at the intersections at Newark Street where hurried and anxious parents consistently run the stop signs.
3. The Intersection of Newark and 34th street has become increasingly dangerous and almost impossible to traverse in the morning rush hour and when the school lets out. There are three schools, John Eaton, the National Cathedral Schools and NCRC starting and dismissing about the same time. The traffic created by the parents picking up and dropping off their children has made 34th street a dangerous place to drive and an intolerable situation for a residential neighborhood.

May 2, 2003

Mr. Andrew Altman:
Director, Office of Planning
801 North Capitol Street
Suite 4000
Washington DC 20002

Dear Mr. Altman:

Thank you for attending the DOT meeting yesterday. I hope that you were given a more detailed description and understanding of the problems that the "Cleveland Park Neighbors" have been trying to articulate.

The BZA hearing is not scheduled until Tuesday, May 6th. There is still time for you as Director of the Office of Planning to support the "Cleveland Park Neighbors" and to recommend denial of NCRC'S expansion.

My husband, Douglas L. Namian joins me in this request.

Thank you,

Esther C Namian

Esther C. Namian
3312 Newark Street NW

Subj:	**nomination of Ruth Ann Miller**
Date:	5/1/2003 6:17:47 PM Eastern Standard Time
From:	EstherNamian
To:	kpatterson@dccouncil.washington.dc.us

My husband, Douglas, and I have lived at 3312 Newark Street, N.W. for over 35 years. We both would like to thank you for your support to the neighborhood in opposition to the NCRC proposed expansion.

We ask your help now in opposing the Ruth Ann Miller nomination to the BZA.

Please vote "NO" to the confirmation of Ruth Ann Miller.

Thank you,

Esther & Doug Namian

Sept. 20, 2002

Ms. Nancy MacWood
Chair, ANC 3C
2737 Devonshire Pl. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

Dear Ms. MacWood:

This letter is a request for your prompt and firm rejection of the National Child Research Center's proposed expansion plans. I live in and own the house next door to NCRC to the East of the school. I feel very fortunate to live in this neighborhood and value it deeply.

Together with Newark Street, 33rd Place, and Ashley Terrace, Highland Place is the heart of the Cleveland Park residential historic district. The area loosely bounded by these streets embraces a noteworthy concentration of old and notable houses within the historic residential district. No doubt this is why a photograph of an unusual old home across the street on Highland Place was chosen to promote the Smithsonian Resident Associates Cleveland Park Walking Tour: the fall schedule just arrived in my mail a few days ago.

Yet the special quality of this residential district is not about grandness. As a neighborhood we enjoy a diversity of turn of the century architectural styles and variations in scale from home to home. What is shared and alike is that each and every antique structure is a home – beloved and lived in.

The fact that these gracious old structures are still homes means that the neighborhood is stunningly quiet, an oasis in a busy city. The magical quality of this area is further drawn by the old growth of trees and shrubs preserved and nurtured along with the homes. I have often observed first time or infrequent visitors to the neighborhood expressing visible or audible awe at finding themselves here.

The city preserves and protects this quiet historic residential district for its natural beauty, exceptional architectural history, and residential character. I believe that NCRC's proposed plan to transform their "home" into a four building institutional campus is in flagrant violation of the laws and intentions that create and protect this historic neighborhood.

When I bought the house at 3207 Highland Place ten years ago, I was, of course, aware that a nursery school was in business next door. I understood NCRC to be a neighborhood school that happened to be in a lovely old house. I was at peace – for a while.

I have seen NCRC encroach on the neighborhood and misuse its exceptional status bit by bit. In 1994 over the summer NCRC built a gigantic playground which blanketed much of its hitherto green and natural area. Active neighbors managed to block the opening of a school driveway by agreeing not to challenge what were perceived as illegal actions on the part of the school (such as the building of the playground). There were feelings of betrayal: the landscape was completely altered, trees were felled, green was eradicated. I was saddened.

About four years ago some kind of exception was made and traffic mushroomed. A just barely manageable traffic situation on narrow and quaint Highland Place became chaotic, hectic and frustrating during school hours. NCRC's location is at the coming together of two narrow non-through streets, a dead end point, in effect, which easily becomes a pile up of parked and waiting cars.

More recently, NCRC revamped its AC system, installing very large and very noisy HVAC units just below my bedroom window and just to the side of my front porch. The porch is not very usable any more – the units are too loud to enjoy conversation there.

And now... what is proposed is even more totalistic destruction of the school's beautiful property; additions of some 15 students and at least 6 staff – adding many additional cars to area traffic and parking (with student body and staff sizes promising to multiply at the school's whim); doubling the school's size in square footage; adding contrived new buildings, rooftop AC units, an elevator; massive excavation of the land I share with the school for an underground addition (threatening the structural integrity of my more than 100 year old home). I am appalled, and I am angry.

These proposed changes do not in any way fit into residential standards or guidelines for historic preservation. They would not allow me, my family or my neighbors to experience quiet enjoyment of our homes and neighborhood.

If the school wishes to stay in our neighborhood, I believe it must respect our community, architecture, commitment to natural beauty, and quiet streets. Let it once again become a nursery school in a house. Alternatively, NCRC should relocate to another locale which is commercial, on a main artery, and where expansion is appropriate.

I very much appreciate your taking the time to read and consider this letter.

Sincerely,

Gaylord Neely

Gaylord Neely
3207 Highland Pl. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

WILLIAM V. P. NEWLIN
3026 Newark St., NW
Washington, DC 20008
(202) 362-1038 FAX: (202) 244-0412 e-mail: bill@newlin.org

May 2, 2003

Andrew Altman
Director; Office of Planning
801 North Capital Street, SE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Altman,

I find it hard to believe this letter is necessary. It should be clear that **no institution should be able to take over a quiet residential street** in one of the most remarkable neighborhoods in Washington. Yet that is what is happening. Some of the already limited parking spaces on Highland place will almost surely soon be suppressed,and sure as shooting, it will soon be one way. That is shameful.

NCRC, when my daughter went there in the 1960's, was a fantastic institution, supportive and "warm and fuzzy." Then it was on an appropriate scale and while hardly residential itself, it was not inconsistent with the residential character of the neighborhood. Little by little it has been creeping up in size and this is no longer true. I challenge you to go to Highland place at the changing of the guard (which takes place at the beginning, middle and end of the day) and see if you think that is right for a tiny residential street. I used to think the only nicer place in Washington than my street, Newark Street, was Highland Place. No longer. I am very grateful not to be up in that Zoo. For heaven sake do the right thing and don't let it get even bigger.

"If they build it, they will come." No one in the world can think 20 years from now (or even ten of fifteen) NCRC won't want more students and more staff to fill up their significant new space. (They will need more students to pay for it.) **Don't let NCRC creep continue to take over little Highland place.**

Sincerely,

William Newlin

4:40