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DATE: November 13, 2003

TO: D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Peter A. Hornbostel

RE: NCRC

I am writing with respect to the application of NCRC in connection with its proposed expansion of its facilities on Highland Place. There are three points which I would like to call to the attention of the Board. Although I have been a resident and property owner on Newark Street for the last 33 years, my comments relate not so much to Cleveland Park, as to the interests of the District of Columbia as a whole.

1.) As you are aware, late in the 1990s NCRC reached an agreement with the neighborhood which blocked further expansion in exchange for the neighborhood's agreement to certain steps then being proposed by NCRC. As Mr. Mendelsohn made clear at the recent hearing, NCRC's current proposal does not conform to that agreement.

It is clearly in the interests of the District of Columbia that citizens groups reach amicable agreements with schools, developers, and others seeking to develop their neighborhoods, by negotiation rather than disputes. Agreements on an amicable basis are not likely to occur, however, if the District of Columbia ignores the terms of such agreements at the behest of either party. I am not suggesting that the District must actively enforce such agreements. However, if it wishes neighborhoods on the one hand and schools, non-profits, or developers on the other to attempt to reach amicable agreements, the parties to such

BZA
Case No. 16970
Exhibit No. 304

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16970
EXHIBIT NO.304

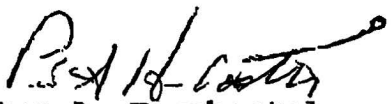
agreements need to know that the District will respect their terms in the future. Otherwise, what is the point?

2) As I am sure you are aware, the homes in Cleveland Park enjoy some of the highest property values in the city. There can be no doubt that increased traffic on Highland Place and Newark Street will have an adverse effect on these values and hence, on property tax revenues of the District. If NCRC paid property taxes to the District, this loss of tax revenues might be counterbalanced by increased taxes paid by NCRC on its expanded facility. However, since NCRC is a tax exempt institution, the net effect in the D.C. tax base is only a reduction in tax receipts due to lower property values of nearby residential properties caused by the additional traffic.

3) Highland Place was built as a small residential street which was not expected to bear significant amounts of traffic. Gas & water mains are located under the street. I believe sewer mains are located there as well. It seems extremely unlikely that the engineering of the street anticipated the amount of traffic now being proposed, particularly given the current size and weight of autos, especially SUVs. Although I am not an engineer, it would seem to be a significant risk that the additional traffic could result in crushing one or more of the water, sewer or gas mains under the street, requiring both the crushed mains and the street to be rebuilt. At the very least, NCRC should be required to bear the cost of any such damage as may occur. Such payment would, of course, not compensate the accompanying danger and inconvenience to the residents of Highland Place.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Very sincerely yours,



Peter A. Hornbostel

PAH:mwm
CC:Bruce Beckner