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August 16, 2002

Mr. Geoffrey Griffis
Chair
District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Griffis:

I am writing in support of NCRC's project to improve its preschool program and its facilities. The proposed project will not only further NCRC's educational mission but it will give back to the neighborhood in the form of additional green space and hoped-for reductions in vehicular traffic.

The NCRC administration and parents are sensitive to the concerns of the school's neighbors and I believe the project reflects that concern. The proposed addition and new building which will house two classrooms, a library and music and motor programs have been designed to be compatible with the historic character of the site and in keeping with the character of the historic district. The new building will appear residential in character and is in keeping with the height and density of other structures in the neighborhood. The architect has done a thoughtful job of accommodating both the school's needs and the neighbors' concerns.

My oldest daughter attended NCRC for two years and my youngest daughter currently attends NCRC. I chose to send my children to NCRC because I believe in the school's mission. It is a school that believes strongly in doing the best it can for each child, and it also brings together a unique mix of families from different racial, socio-economic backgrounds, as well as a mixture of children with special needs and typically developing children. NCRC's success at integrating these children is very special and for that I am grateful. My children have been blessed by the experience they have had at NCRC.

Nevertheless, anyone who has spent time at NCRC can see the need for more space. There is no place to meet privately with staff members and the only indoor place where the children can work on their gross motor skills is a relatively small room that has glass doors taking up one wall, and library shelves around all the rest of the walls. When you get sixteen four-year-olds in there, throwing balls, hopping, and running, it is clear that the program needs

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Case No. 16970
Exhibit No. 55

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16970
EXHIBIT NO.55

more space. Lastly, since there are at least two children with special needs in each classroom, I feel strongly that reducing the numbers of children in each class makes sense. In order to accomplish this and not reduce the size of the current population, the school proposes adding two new classrooms. I think these new classrooms will be extremely beneficial to the program and not simply because they will allow a reduction of the current class sizes. Having these two new classrooms, which are slated to be full-day programs—one for older children and one for younger children—will also offer much more flexibility for working parents who need a longer day for their kids.

I know that NCRC has worked hard to respond to neighborhood concerns. After receiving input at more than a dozen neighborhood meetings, the size of the proposed new building has been cut back significantly. They have already begun to make changes in the traffic management plan, and it is clear that the school is working very hard to ensure that there will be no adverse impacts from the dropping off or picking up of children.

I firmly support NCRC and hope you also will support its efforts to provide a model preschool program that its students, as well as the neighborhood, will benefit from. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Diana M. Daniels