Presentation to the BZA by Ruth McDiarmid
Opposing Application 17022, by Edmund Burke School
Oct 28, 2003

My name is Ruth McDiarmid. I live at 2936 Upton St, NW, where I have lived for over 35 years. I am also the mother of a former Burke student. What I would like to present today is an illustration of one way in which Burke fails to meet the standard for exemptions to the zoning regulations because it fails to benefit the local public. Not only is Burke increasingly failing to benefit the local public, but it is imposing an increasing burden on the community. Its proposed expansion does nothing to resolve these failures and additionally fails to benefit its own students.

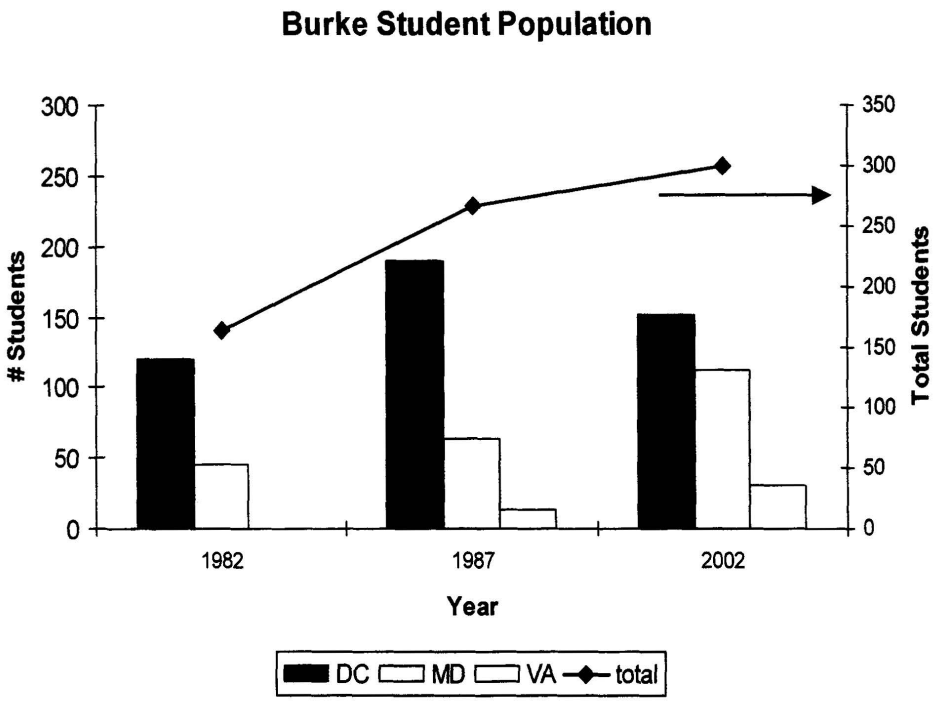
I would first like to illustrate the changing Burke demographics over the last 20 years. The top curve shows the total Burke student population. The population increases from 165 in 1983 to 267 in 1987, after its permitted expansion, to a non-compliant 296 in 2002. What is more interesting is the change in demographics of the student body, shown in the lower portion of the graph. In 1983 the student body was 73% from DC and 27% from the suburbs. In 1987 the significantly larger student population had about the same geographic distribution, 72% from DC and 28% from the suburbs. (190 to 75) By 2002 the DC population of the still larger Edmund Burke had dropped to only 152 students or slightly more than 50% compared with an almost equal number of suburban students (145). Edmund Burke is, thus increasingly failing to provide an educational opportunity for our DC students.

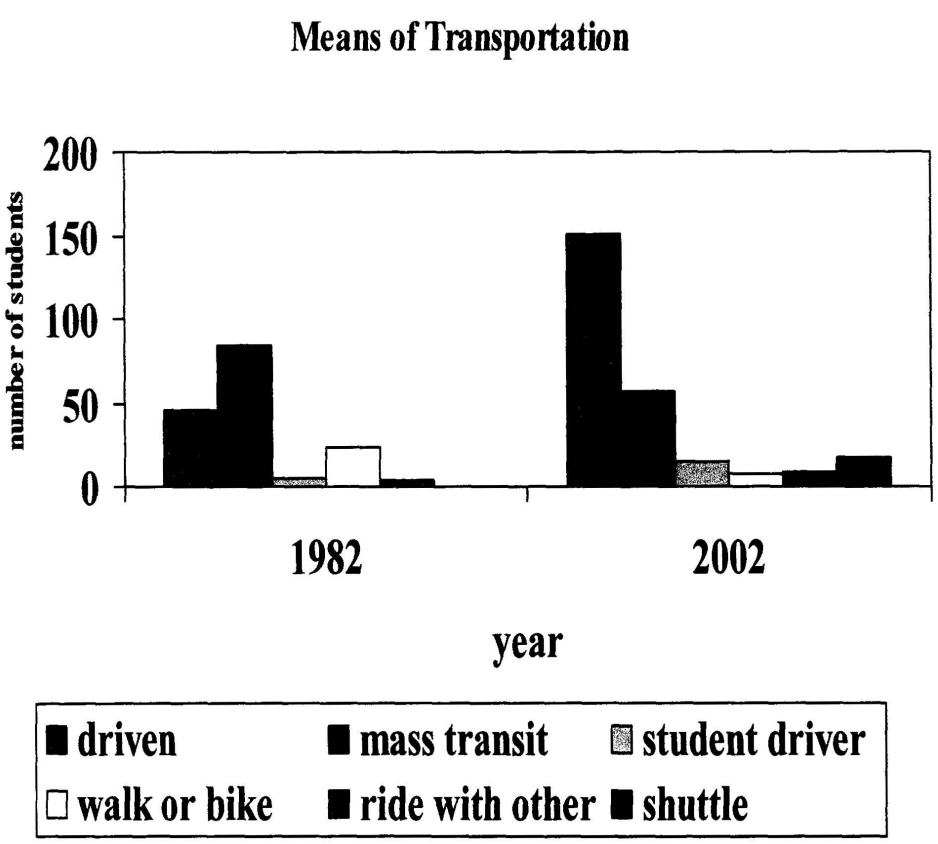
One serious consequence of this change in demographics is illustrated on the next slide, namely the change in means of transportation of Burke students to and from the school. In 1983 fewer than 30% of the students were driven to Burke (46). By 2002 over half of the students who reported their means of transportation to school (15% did not report) were driven by their parents. This 150 students is more than three times the number who were driven in 1983. Despite the city providing metro subsidies to DC students and Burke having almost double the number of students in 2002 than 1983, a fewer absolute number of students used metro transit in 2002 than in 1983. (57 in 2002 vs 84 in 1983.) Clearly the presence of Burke on Upton Street is not serving "to promote public transit usage" as specified in paragraph 1403.5 of the Ward 3 element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Burke has the highest student density of any private school in Northwest Washington. In addition to having a higher student density than any other private school in NW Washington, Burke's current space allocation per student, 115 square feet/student assuming all interior space in their existing structures is devoted to student use, is far below the DC public school standard of 170 sq. ft/student for middle/junior high schools and 192 sq. ft/student for high schools. Burke also lacks athletic facilities and an eating facility, both of which are required in DC public schools. Notwithstanding these deficiencies Burke does not propose remedying them in their proposed expansion; they propose instead to building a black box theater and classrooms for an expanded middle school.

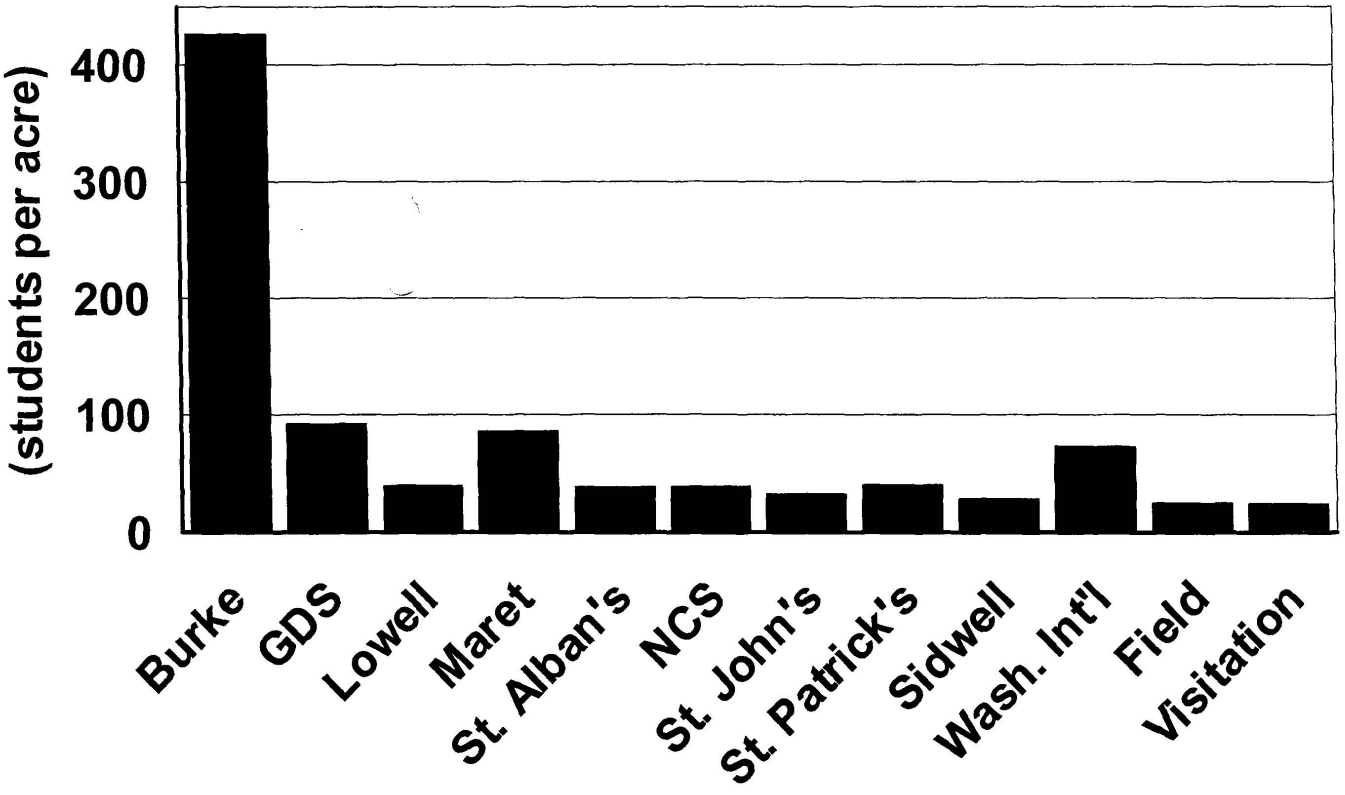
Burke, therefore, is increasingly failing to serve either the local public, is imposing an increasingly large burden on its neighborhood, does not provide services required for public schools, and is not proposing to remedy any of these failures to either the city or their own students by their proposed expansion. Burke does not merit being permitted to expand at its current location on Upton St.

Case No. 17022
Exhibit No. 176
Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17022
EXHIBIT NO. 176


Burke Student Population
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
Students
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
Total Students
1982
1987
2002
Year
DC
MD
VA
total


Means of Transportation
200
150
100
50
0
number of students
1982
2002
year
driven
mass transit
student driver
walk or bike
ride with other
shuttle

Private School Population Densities in N.W. Washington D.C.



Comparison of Facilities

Property	Public School	Burke
Density (sq ft/student)	170-192	115
Eating facility	Required	Absent
Athletic Facility	Required	Absent