Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board,

My name is Michelle Vricella and I have lived at 2947 Upton Street for 5 years. My husband and I own one of the six homes on the north side of Upton that share an alley with the Edmund Burke school. I am self-employed and work primarily out of my home so I am well aware of the traffic and safety issues we live with in our residential neighborhood. I personally shot and edited the videotape that was presented during the NULS testimony on October 14th. I would like for the Board to know that the tape is representative of what happens in our neighborhood on a regular basis.

Not only is the traffic management plan proposed by Burke unmanageable and unenforceable, it's unrealistic. The plan only manages the morning drop off and not the afternoon pick-ups and evening events which cause major congestion. I have witnessed, and on occasion, videotaped, countless infractions – some of which happened right in front of Burke's hired officer as highlighted in the video NULS presented.

Is it fair to the neighbors to bear the burden of proof that their traffic management plan will not work? What recourse do we have if the plan is approved and it doesn't work? DDOT is saying that as a condition, the school may ultimately have to have an enrollment REDUCTION. My neighbors and I, all tax-paying citizens of DC, should not be expected to monitor the school's activities and cover 11 possible violation points from 7:30am throughout the day. Even if we could, the school is saying that it can have 40 violations per month, and these are only ruled violations if David Shapiro believes they warrant it. This is a case of the fox guarding the hen house! Their plan has no independent, unbiased and surprise monitoring system in place that provides the information to the neighborhood.

My main reason for objecting to the school expansion is <u>safety</u>. I see children at risk every day jaywalking, being dropped off illegally in traffic, in the alleys hanging out, running through the neighborhood, crossing the busy streets and alleys with vehicles nearly missing them. Does the new plan have an athletic field or a lunchroom to alleviate these existing problems? No! What it does have is a 200 seat Black Box Theater that will bring with it more traffic and congestion to an overburdened residential neighborhood.

DOT graded our corridor of Connecticut Avenue an F – Failing grade, and yet they approve of a <u>school</u> expansion right smack in the middle of one of the city's most heavily trafficked areas? Ken Laden, in his testimony before you on Oct. 14th said, and I'm paraphrasing here, "the site plan presents a circular pattern that HOPEFULLY would reduce traffic." How can he approve something based on his hopes and dreams? I liken that to my hope of winning the lottery some day – but the odds are against it.

BZA
Case No. 17022
Exhibit No. 179

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17022
EXHIBIT NO. 179

In closing I want to express how difficult it has been to oppose a school. I am parent and fully understand the need for good schools in the District. But as a parent, and a resident directly affected by this decision, I must oppose the school expansion for 3 reasons: safety, traffic and lack of credible enforcement. I respectfully ask the Board, when is enough enough? Are you going to approve all expansion plans that private schools bring to you even if they impose adverse impacts on their neighborhood? I urge you to deny the Burke School their expansion and make this case an example of an unforgiving site plan.

Thank you.