My name is Jaynie Simmons. As a resident with 27 years tenure I have seen firsthand many changes affecting our neighborhood where Edmund Burke seeks to expand their current enrollment.

During the past 27 years the Board of Zoning Adjustment has created a level of increase in the usage that cumulatively threatens to overwhelm the residential neighborhood on Tilden Street, Upton Street, 29th Street, Lenore Lane, Linnean Avenue and Connecticut Avenues between Tilden and Van Ness Streets, N.W.

These past decisions, made by the BZA piecemeal and each independently of the next instituted a de facto public policy where the neighborhood is viewed as a hospitable haven for almost al forms of institutional use, and which, as a result, actually creates an environment where the tax-paying homeowners feel like outsiders in their own neighborhood.

Perhaps the most interesting piece of the zoning and density puzzle is a comparison of Edmund Burke's proposed expansion with that of the currently existing grounds provided by other private schools operating in real-estate expensive Upper Northwest.

Even WITH the proposed Burke expansion, which would double the size of the school's the school's current property share, the school admits that they will have a student density level of 450 students per acre (360 students on 3/4 acre)

This density level is FIVE TIMES GREATER than that of Georgetown Preparatory School, which has the NEXT highest density level, with 90 students per acre on their Davenport Street, N.W. location.

Burke's projected density will be 17 ½ TIMES GREATER than the current student roster which the field school will transplant to the 10.4 acre Cafritz Estate on Foxhall Road.

The rest of the private school density reports make one thing strikingly clear: Edmund Burke overwhelmingly reports the highest density levels of ANY private school surveyed in Northwest Washington.

How is Burke able to fit so many intellectually curious and active students into so small a place. The answer is obvious to all of us who live on Tilden, Upton, Van Ness, 29th and the surrounding streets: our neighborhood has simply become an extension of the Burke grounds.

Students jog through the streets, engage in the teenage rites of cigarette smoking, amorous flirtations and ditching school in our alleyways and streets. Cheerleaders voice their school spirit, go on photography outings, and share their youthful enthusiasm as they walk past our homes. Parents and students cut through our alleyways, often at unsafe speeds, double and even triple park along Upton Street and the Upton-Tilden alleyway.

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But their altitudes and behaviors make clear a seemingly prevalent point of view: that $18-20,00 a year tuition that Edmund Burke charges does not merely buy an opportunity for a good education; it buys them the neighborhood, too.

It is not the students' fault. There is no place else for them to go. There is no place else for them to drive. There is no place for them to park. There is no place for them to eat lunch, practice their cheers, engage in outdoor sports, smoke a cigarette away from prying eyes, explore mutual attractions and just be teen-agers.

It is the administration's fault for insisting that so ambitious a plan be shoe-horned into so small a space.

This case ultimately is about Edmund Burke's ability to compete with other private schools in revenue rich Washington who also charge $18-20,000 per year per student.

Burke needs more space to accommodate more students. They need more students to provide more revenue. They need more revenue to have expanded programs and staff to complete with other private schools and stay in competition for private school dollars.

This is understandable. But because this is not a By-Right case, Burke asks the neighborhood to share our streets, our parking spaces, give up any sense of residential tranquility, so that they can increase their market share.

Burke's original student enrollment was **165**. When Burke originally asked the neighborhood to accept without contest a student enrollment of 270, I heard promises that this was the last time that the administration would ask for an increase in student enrollment. What they didn't tell me was that this was the last increase THAT administration would ask for. Now the NEW administration wants the BZA to ignore the 270 mandated limit, saying that the 270 number is simply "not workable". The proof? Burke has been out of compliance at 300 students for several years.

May I also request that the next time a D.C. police officer finds me in excess of the stated speed limits, that I ask that since the speed limit is inherently unsound, that the stated legal limits be summarily tossed out and replaced with numbers that are more to my liking? Almost more importantly, will you fine me in a ratio to my income that is commesasurate with the insignificant rate Burke pays as a fine for being out of compliance?

David Shapiro has repeatedly stated that he (and the school) LOVE the neighborhood and wish to continue to be a part of it.

Burke is not my neighbor. My neighbor picks up my mail when I am gone. My neighbor shovels my walk when I am sick. Burke wouldn't even shovel their own walks last winter on Connecticut and the intersecting portion of Upton, when heavy snowfalls created a driving and walking nightmare for people trying to get into or out of the neighborhood despite the fact that are the property owners in the midst of asking for a BZA exemption.

There is no reciprocity between Burke and the neighborhood. And I caution, if you tell me that Burke opening its facilities as a polling place is a bonus, I will tell you that every neighborhood resident I have ever discussed the subject with, has assured me that they also feel polling and voting days are among the days when the entire neighborhood reduces to gridlock of every imaginable kind; both pedestrian and vehicular as voters, drivers, and campaign workers, are shuttled in and out of our neighborhood for a 12 hour period. Please, do me no favors: move the polling place to UDC.

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Burke exists in the neighborhood, but is distinctly not a part of the neighborhood.

This case is not about Burke's desire to provide bright students with a challenging education. Burke's request is not about scholarships or diversity or championship volleyball teams or good works. The Edmund Burke School is a business. Their area of expertise is education. Their mission is to stay in business.

Edmund Burke cannot compete for these tuition dollars without a BZA approved increase in physical space, staff and corresponding dollars.

This is not a case of Not In My Backyard. This is a case of no more in my backyard. We already play host to Hillwood, Howard University Law School, numerous embassies including the Dutch, the Kuwaitiis, The Indonesians, The Chinese Chancery, Intelsat, and our nearest neighbor, Edmund Burke.

This situation is about trying to shove a Size-26 woman in a size 12 dress. Trust me, I know of where I speak, I feel uniquely qualified to comment on the feasibility of achieving success. It is not a pretty picture and it is doomed to failure, anyway.

The Zoning decisions that have been made piecemeal in the past should not be repeated in this case. "The true danger is when liberty is nibbled away, for expedience, and by parts. " [Edmund Burke, April 3, 1777 to the Sheriffs of Bristol]

On behalf of the Tilden/Upton/Van Ness neighborhood, I respectfully ask that the BZA not nibble away at our neighborhood's environment for expediency's sake. Please reject the Edmund Burke request for a Zoning Exemption.

Thank you.

Jaynie Simmons
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Washington, D.C.