GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Policy and Planning Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: Andrew Altman
Director, Office of Planning

From: Kenneth G. Laden
Associate Director

Date: July 3, 2003

Subject: Edmund Burke School; BZA Application Number ~~16611~~ 17022

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the Edmund Burke School (School) Application for Special Exception dated April 14, 2003. This report addresses the transportation issues.

DDOT's initial BZA submittal addressed the School's Transportation Management Plan (TMP), dated May 15, 2001. At that time, DDOT expressed concerns about the following issues:

- Marketing transit subsidies
- Location of shuttle bus pick up
- Special event management plan
- Van Ness Metrorail Kiss-and Ride
- Carpool Operations
- Disciplinary sanctions

To address these concerns, and due to the BZA's denial of the initial application, the School implemented a TMP. This TMP established a shuttle bus system, required any drop-off/pick-ups on Upton Street to be part of a carpool system, encouraged the expanded use of transit by students, as well as addressed parking issues.

Officials from DDOT have conducted field visits to evaluate the effectiveness of the voluntary TMP. These visits, along with reports from neighbors and the school, have demonstrated that the TMP has had a positive effect on traffic patterns in the immediate area. Although there is not 100% compliance, DDOT feels the compliance rate is substantial enough to improve the traffic situation over pre-existing conditions.

BZA
Case No. 17022
Exhibit No. 67

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17022
EXHIBIT NO. 67

The School's current special exception application, dated April 15, 2003, requests an increase in the number of students as well as faculty and staff. The current proposal includes the same transportation management components of the May 2002 TMP, with the inclusion of the following important new components:

- Creation of 15 on-site drop-off/pick-up spaces provided on the ground level beneath the new building,
- Access to the parking and drop-off/ pick-up lane exclusively from Connecticut Avenue,
- Connecticut Avenue ingress/egress will be allowed as right turn in/right turn out only,
- Increased on-site parking with proposed parking garage; 47 parking spaces would be provided on two underground parking levels beneath the new building, plus three shuttle bus parking spaces,
- Encouragement of public transportation use,
- Provision of two off-duty, uniformed police officers to monitor and direct traffic at the Connecticut Avenue/ Burke driveway and the alley/Upton Street intersections.

The compliance component of this TMP requires that parents of students attending the School comply with the requirements of the TMP. If parents (or students) are found not to be in compliance with the TMP, there are a variety of sanctions that would be applied, including a requirement that a parent meet with the Head of the School for a first infraction; second and third offenses would result in fines, and a fourth offense would result in the child not being enrolled for the following academic year, or in the case of seniors or non-returning students, other disciplinary action would be taken.

Additionally, the School's request for an increase of student enrollment will be directly related to the success of the school in implementing the TMP components. An enforcement committee comprised of seven members – three neighbors, three school representatives and an objective third party person, will oversee compliance of the regulations. After four consecutive trimesters without an unsatisfactory rating, the School would be permitted to increase the student enrollment to 320. If the School goes over current student enrollment levels before this milestone, the School could be fined or required to go under the current cap of students by the same number that they had gone over. For example, if the School enrollment exceeded its cap by three students, the school would either be fined the equivalent of three tuitions, or they would be forced to reduce enrollment to three students under the current cap. DDOT would agree to work with the School and neighbors to establish criteria to determine if the School had met TMP compliance goals.

DDOT has met on several occasions with school officials and both neighbors in support and opposed to the application. Some neighbors in opposition to the application have brought a number of concerns to DDOT's attention. These concerns included: unintended traffic consequences of the TMP, pedestrian safety, constructability of the proposed parking facilities, traffic and parking during after school and evening events, the

7-10-03; 1:47PM; 2026710617 # 3/ 6

proposed enforcement plan, and the lack of a loading dock at the school. DDOT will address these concerns below.

Unintended traffic consequences

DDOT recognizes that there are potential unintended traffic consequences that may occur under the proposed traffic management plan. One potential consequence of the TMP is that parents will most likely use some local residential streets to get into position for the right turn off of Connecticut Avenue into the proposed drop-off queue lanes. In addition, vehicles turning out of the proposed drop-off lanes onto Upton Street will either turn right to make a rather difficult left turn back onto southbound Connecticut Avenue (without benefit of a traffic light), or use local streets or alleys to access Tilden Street. DDOT recognizes that parents will be required to use some residential streets during student drop-off, but does not believe that this will necessarily result in a more dangerous situation than what already exists. We feel that the TMP's proposed traffic routes present the best possible solution available to the School.

Furthermore, to prevent a potential unintended consequence of traffic backing up on Connecticut Avenue caused by cars trying to enter the queue line, DDOT recommends the school further stagger arrival times so that cars are not arriving all at once. We would prefer this approach rather than have parents re-circulate into the queue using the alley adjacent to the school, or use the adjacent alley as an unapproved drop-off site.

Finally, DDOT engineers have reviewed the plans for the drop-off lane exit on Upton Street and its proximity to the alley exit, and feel that the queue line was properly designed and will be a safe situation, especially with uniformed police present to help direct traffic.

Pedestrians

Some community residents expressed concern about the unsafe behavior of students walking to the school from the various designated drop-off areas, especially those on the west side of Connecticut Avenue. In fact, the number of student pedestrians will naturally increase with the TMP's encouraged use of transit and student drop-off areas off of school property. DDOT recognizes that this is a concern, but also notes that there is an underground passage across Connecticut Avenue near the Van Ness Street Metrorail Station, plus several signalized intersections near the school. DDOT recommends that the School make provisions to educate parents and students to use the underground Metrorail walkway to cross Connecticut Avenue, or use signalized intersections safely.

Parking

It has been brought to DDOT's attention that there may be some geology and/or hydrology issues concerning the proposed below-grade parking garage. DDOT requests that if the below-grade parking structure is, for any reason, unable to be built, that the Burke school provide off-street parking spaces through a nearby parking garage facility, equivalent to the number of spaces that would have been provided by the on-site parking garage.

7-10-03; 1:47PM; :2026710617 # 4/ 6

Additionally, DDOT strongly feels that the school should make provisions to provide off-street parking available for attendees of all events including athletic, evening school activities, and social public events and/or classes. Busses from visiting schools should be parked behind the original school building, in the parking garage, or on Connecticut Avenue, but not on Upton Street, Van Ness Street or other residential streets.

Enforcement Plan

The issue of how the seven-member TMP enforcement panel will be assembled was of concern to some citizens. DDOT recommends that representatives of the neighborhood be designated by the local Advisory Neighborhood Commission. DDOT also agrees with the neighbors that they should not be held liable for any mediation or arbitration costs that are incurred in disputes over the enforcement plan. DDOT recommends that all mediation costs be borne by the school.

Additionally, DDOT feels that penalties for parent or student infractions of the TMP be increased. DDOT agrees with some of the neighbors that an allowable 40 infractions would have a negative impact on the transportation plan's effectiveness and suggests that this number be lowered. As stated earlier, DDOT would work with the School and the neighbors to develop criteria for determining the success or failure of the TMP. Fees for infractions should be $250.00 for the first infraction and $500.00 for the second infraction. Expulsion should be the result from a third infraction.

Additionally, the school should establish and make efforts to reach a goal for transit use so that the morning transit usage would, at minimum, be increased to that of the afternoon transit usage. DDOT would like to see an additional decrease in the number of vehicles being driven to the school during the morning peak period. Perhaps a "vehicle use surcharge" could be applied to parents who drive, or a tuition reduction, as well as transit financial support, could be provided to parents who commit to have their children use transit for both morning and afternoon travel.

Additional land use impacts

The District Department of Transportation also recognizes that there are a variety of institutional land uses in the immediate neighborhood. These land uses include, but are not limited to:

- University of the District of Columbia
- Levine School of Music
- Embassies
- Intelsat
- VMT Education Center
- Hillwood Site

Each of these land uses generate traffic that compete for scarce curbside parking spaces and clog residential streets during peak arrival times. In response to the recent increased growth of these institutions and citizen concern about traffic, DDOT commissioned the Connecticut Avenue Transportation Study. The purpose of the study was to examine

7-10-03; 1:47PM; 2026710617 # 5/ 6

existing transportation conditions in the study area and projected future transportation conditions related to proposed development. The study identified short-term and long-term transportation management and infrastructure improvements to reduce traffic congestion, especially during peak morning and evening travel hours, evening hours and weekends; improve traffic and pedestrian safety; and protect surrounding residential streets from traffic impacts.

The "study area" for this project included the following area: Connecticut Avenue, NW from Sedgwick Street, NW to Albemarle Street, NW. The eastern boundary of the study area was Linnean Avenue and the western boundary of the study area was Reno Road.

The Connecticut Avenue Transportation Study, currently in Draft Final Form, has made short-term (implementation could occur within a year) and long-term (implementation will occur in out years as these options are more costly and require placement in the capital budget) recommendations. A copy of the Draft Final Study will be filed with this submittal.

Loading Dock

Some citizens questioned the lack of a loading dock as part of the new facility that may be required under existing zoning regulations. DDOT feels that a loading dock is not necessary at this site due to its use as a school. DDOT would support an exemption for a loading dock, berth or platform on the site provided that occasional loading or unloading activities could be accomplished using a portion of the garage parking area.

Conclusion

DDOT recognizes that the proposed expansion of the Edmund Burke School at this location will add additional traffic to an already congested area. We recognize that the number of institutional land uses in the neighborhood presents unique transportation challenges. However, we believe that the Edmund Burke School has demonstrated an ability to reduce transportation impacts from their facility through the implementation of various transportation management programs. We believe that the proposed expanded TMP, if successfully implemented, could reduce or contain traffic impacts from a limited expansion of student population. We believe that significantly increasing the use of transit, along with staggered arrival times, use of approved/scattered drop-off areas, the construction of new drop-off lanes within the new school property and use of van pools could substantially buffer the residential neighborhood from the traffic generated by the school.

We support the notion that expansion of the student population be linked with successful implementation of the TMP. DDOT is willing to continue to work with the School and the neighbors to modify the TMP, if necessary, to further improve traffic conditions. DDOT supports the expansion of the Edmund Burke School as outlined in the April 15 2003 application with the conditions mentioned above and with the caveat that if, after full implementation, there are still adverse transportation issues, further adjustments to the TMP may be required, and that ultimately a reduction in the number of students may be required.

7-10-03; 1:47PM; 2026710617 # 6/ 6

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

District Division of Transportation
2000 14th Street, N. W., 7th Floor
Washington, D. C. 20009

Fax # 202-671-0617 Phone # 202-671-2730/40

TRANSPORTATION POLICY & PLANNING ADMINISTRATION

2003 JUL 10 PM 3:05

FAX SHEET

Send To: Company name	John N Yanker	**From:**	Colleen Smith
Attention		**Date**	July 10, 2003
Office location		**Office location**	
Fax number	727-6072	**Phone number**	671-2228

If you did not receive all pages, please call 202_____

☐ **Urgent** ☐ **Reply ASAP** ☐ **Please comment** ☐ **Please review** ☐ **For your information**

Total pages, including this cover page _____

COMMENTS

DDOT BZA Submittal re: Edmund Burke School.

d.

05/03/02

7-10-03; 1:47PM; 2026710617 # 1/ 6