DATE Monday, April 11, 2005
TO Mr. Geoffrey Griffis, Chairman, Board of Zoning Adjustment
RE Case #17300, St. Patrick's Episcopal School
FROM Commissioners Richard J. Hamilton, Hugh Mullane, and Sarah S. Shapley, ANC-3D

Dear Mr. Griffis,

Regarding the April 12, 2005 hearing on the application of St. Patrick's Episcopal School, Case #17300, to increase the middle school enrollment from 40 to 60 students over a two-year period (the "Proposed Enrollment Increase"), we three undersigned commissioners of ANC-3D, who voted to support the increase, wish enter our reasoning on the record for your consideration. The following points were made in the colloquy of the commission in deliberating the matter at our regular March 2, 2005 meeting (at which a quorum was present at all times). We note that by the rules of our commission the vote to oppose the application did not carry but, instead, was recorded as a divided vote.

The middle school program was designed to operate at its optimal level with a 60-student enrollment. Thus, the Proposed Enrollment Increase will bring the physical space of the middle school to full capacity; therefore, we believe that the proposed change would be the final increase in enrollment at the middle school campus.

The Board, the ANC-3D, and the Office of Planning have previously entertained debate regarding enrollment at the middle school campus. This prior debate culminated in BZA Order #16852-A, which established certain criteria for the transportation of students to and from campus and the management of the resultant traffic. At the March 2, 2005 ANC-3D meeting, the school presented evidence that it has complied with the BZA order over the course of the prior two academic years. The school has instituted a traffic management plan, including shuttle buses, and has secured parental compliance. We believe that the plan has been effective. We also believe that the school has adequately demonstrated its willingness and ability to continue to meet the BZA order's conditions for student transportation in ways that minimize traffic and other impacts at the site for the neighborhood. We note that the Proposed Enrollment Increase would not begin until the 2006-2007 academic year, thus allowing another year (i.e., 2005-2006) for the evaluation of the school's ongoing compliance with the BZA order.

We also point to the extensive routine of community liaison and communication, with quarterly meetings for which agenda and minutes have been widely and variously circulated. This mechanism allows for advance consultation with the immediate neighbors on adjustments to any routine or scheduling at the school. In addition, testimony at the ANC-3D meeting by the immediate neighbor (whose property runs with the eastern border of the school) indicated that other matters, such as landscaping and stormwater management, are being addressed with positive improvements to the campus site. Similar indications are found within the minutes of the quarterly meetings. Again, a history of compliance with the BZA order exists.

We wish to emphasize that there were no specific or substantive measures or criteria set forth in the prior BZA order indicating how an incremental increase of 20 students should be evaluated for adverse impact. The prior BZA order contained only a decision to reject an automatic increase to the full complement and, therefore, opened the door to the present consideration of the Proposed Enrollment Increase. There has been no substantive argument presented on the record in support of the Office of Planning's recommendation in 2002 of a ten-year cap at the initial level of 40 students. At the March 2, 2005 ANC-3D meeting, in response to a question, the school addressed how they would manage recess and lunch periods for the full complement of students so as to minimize noise for the immediate neighbors. We found that the community objections and citation of potential adverse impacts referred only to the previous round

BZA
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of debate about having the school located at 4925 MacArthur Boulevard, rather than to any actual experience of the past two academic years or to the actual increment being proposed.

We hope you will consider these points in deliberating the application on April 12, 2005 to increase St. Patrick's enrollment to its full complement of 60 students.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard J. Hamilton, ANC 3D-08

Hugh Mullane, ANC 3D-01

Sarah S. Shapley, ANC 3D-02

Sent by e-mail April 11, 2005. Paper copy to be sent by post.

Cc: ANC-3D
St. Patrick's Episcopal School



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