GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Policy and Planning Administration

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17383
EXHIBIT NO. 63

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Jerrily R. Kress, FAIA
Director
Office of Zoning

FROM: Kenneth G. Laden
Associate Director for Transportation Planning

DATE: November 8, 2005

SUBJECT: **BZA Application No. 17383- Special Exception to Permit an Increase in Faculty and Staff, and for Establishment of Accessory Parking Spaces for the Lab School Located at 4759 Reservoir Road, NW, Square 1372, Lot 25**

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the subject application and material for the above site. This memorandum addresses the transportation aspects of the proposal. **DDOT does not support the application.**

The applicant, The Lab School of Washington, is a private school for children with special needs ranging from kindergarten to high school, with additional educational programs for adults. The site is located near the intersection of Whitehaven Parkway, NW, MacArthur Boulevard and Reservoir Road, NW and is bounded to the west by Fire Engine House No. 25, Whitehaven Road, NW to the north, Reservoir Road, NW and private residences to the south, and St. Patrick's Church and School to the east. The school has been operating at its present location since 1982 and was last approved by BZA Order No. 16273 in 1997, which provided a maximum enrollment cap of 310 students and a staff cap of 95. The school currently exceeds the staff and enrollment cap prescribed in BZA Order No. 16273 with 330 students enrolled, and 182 staff. The applicant is required to provide a minimum of 130 accessory parking spaces to satisfy the proposed increase in staff and enrollment. A total of 88 parking spaces are located on the school property. To satisfy the remaining parking requirements, the applicant seeks to provide 50 angled-parking spaces in the public-right-of-way on Whitehaven Parkway, NW and 8 parking spaces on a private parcel located on Whitehaven Parkway, NW.

The applicant proposes to reconstruct the western portion of Whitehaven Road, NW near the site to install a total of 50 back-in angled parking spaces, a new six-foot wide sidewalk and five-foot wide planting strip for curb trees. The DDOT Public Space Management Administration

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#63

previously reviewed the proposed angled parking space design and determined that from a technical standpoint, the proposed spaces are acceptable as they generally meet our design standards, however DDOT reserved the right to comment on the BZA application and take into account any changed conditions. (Attachment A) Subsequently, DDOT staff contacted the law firm representing the applicant, *Pillsbury, Winthorp, Shaw, Pittman, LLC,* several times requesting full-scale site plans that identify existing conditions to better determine the impact of the proposed construction, however DDOT never received the site plans.

DDOT staff conducted several site visits. Staff observed that Whitehaven Parkway, NW has a sharp drop in elevation from the curb to the property line on the side of street adjacent to the school. The submitted site plans do not identify this situation, which may require the construction of retaining walls on private property. The street also slopes down towards Reservoir Road, NW, and staff could not determine if the slope is adequate for angled parking spaces. The site plans do not identify what will occur to the existing fire hydrant, utility pole and mature trees that are in the location of the proposed angled parking spaces. Also absent from the submitted site plan are proposed new streetlight locations, utility locations and proposed materials to be installed.

A traffic consultant retained by the applicant submitted a Transportation Impact Assessment to DDOT dated November 7, 2005. The study discusses existing conditions and the Transportation Management Plan in use by the Lab School, but does not examine the impacts of the proposed new angled parking spaces on overall traffic circulation and in particular, the intersection of Whitehaven Parkway, MacArthur Boulevard and Reservoir Road, NW, which currently operates at Level of Service (F) during the AM and PM peak-periods for both commuter and school traffic, which is unacceptable by DDOT standards.

The Lab School shared an alternative parking solution with the community, construction of an on-site parking garage, as stated by the applicant in *Section V-Community Outreach* of the *Preliminary Applicant Statement.* As stated by the applicant, *"That alternative would temporarily displace approximately 48 parking spaces, bus pick-up, and bus delivery to the street during a two-year construction period of a parking structure."* ANC-3D held two meetings to review the project and voted unanimously on November 5, 2005 to deny approval of the proposed angled parking spaces. (Attachment B) DDOT recommends the applicant construct an onsite parking garage, which may cause short-term inconveniences, but would provide a permanent solution for parking needs onsite.

Although the proposed angled parking spaces can be designed to DDOT standards, DDOT would prefer Zoning and BZA applicant's to satisfy accessory parking requirements on the subject property or adjacent private parcels, retaining roadways for public use. DDOT is available to assist the applicant as they develop a revised Transportation Management Plan and will work with their traffic consultant to identify ways to improve the traffic operations at the intersection of Whitehaven Parkway, NW, MacArthur Boulevard and Reservoir Road, NW. Accordingly, DDOT does not support the proposal.

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Attachments

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of Public Space
Management Administration

TO: Allison C. Prince

FROM: Lars Etzkorn, Associate Director
District Department of Transportation

RE: The Lab School

DATE: 18 February 2005

ONE PAGE FAXED TO 202/663-8007

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the proposed location and layout for approximately 50 angled parking spaces along lower Whitehaven Parkway, NW, for The Lab School. The school has incorporated certain changes requested by DDOT into the plan and DDOT finds that, from a technical standpoint only, the proposed spaces are acceptable. We understand The Lab School will request permission from the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) to use these spaces to satisfy a portion of the parking requirement associated with the school. DDOT reserves the right to comment on such an application when it is filed and, by noting that the proposed location and layout plan meet DDOT design requirements, does not waive its right to comment on the BZA application. Furthermore, design changes may be necessary to take into account any changed conditions or new information.