

MaryAnn Griffin

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February 27, 2006

Mr. Geoffrey H. Griffis, Chair
Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia Office of Zoning
441 4th Street NW, Ste 210-s
Washington DC 20001

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Re: Application No. 17429 Friends of St. Patrick's et al.; Hearing February 28, 2006

Dear Chairman Griffis:

I am writing to you in opposition of the application of St. Patrick's to develop a new middle and high school at 1801 Foxhall Rd with an initial enrollment of 440 students and 100 faculty members. Traffic conditions on Foxhall Road have deteriorated over the last few years to the point where it is often backed up in both directions from Canal Road up to the German Embassy, and it gets worse month by month. St. Patrick's proposes elimination of a northbound lane on Foxhall and a new intersection that is likely to create yet another bottleneck morning and evening.

This new school proposed by St. Patrick's simply cannot be supported without strict and enforceable caps on the number of students at the school, the number of vehicles entering and leaving the school, and the number and timing of activities that can occur there. St. Patrick's plan does not adequately reflect the amount of traffic that its operations will in truth create and contains no teeth to force it to protect our neighborhoods.

I have lived on Foxhall Road for 13 years and on a daily basis, I can attest to the ever increasing traffic, largely due to the disproportionate share of private school traffic created by the 9 private schools and 2 universities within on-half mile of the proposed St. Patrick's site (St. Patrick's Lower School, Georgetown Day Middle and Lower Schools, the Lab School, the Field School, the Rock Creek International School, Our Lady of Victory School, the Washington International School, the River School, GW- Mount Vernon and Georgetown University). These schools create traffic, parking, noise, and operations problems for us every day. The enormous number of students who live far beyond the boundaries of our neighborhood and who are driven in to these schools on a daily basis creates the traffic.

The last time the BZA approved a school on Foxhall (the Field School), it did so only with hard vehicle and student caps, required widening of Foxhall road, and continuation of an established traffic plan, with both future enrollment and occupancy itself tied to the

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school's compliance with these protections. With an initial enrollment of 440 (70% bigger than Field), no enrollment or vehicle caps, and no enforceable traffic plan, the St. Patrick's development doesn't present these types of protections, even though traffic on Foxhall has worsened in the intervening years and is projected to deteriorate still more, even without this proposed new school.

In its plan for the new school, St. Patrick's has taken a hard nose approach and are unwilling to compromise with the neighborhood on issues of traffic. Anyone who proposes a brand new school on Foxhall road should carefully and explicitly address each of the challenges and issues that school operations will create, and must be required to ensure that the reasonable interests of existing homeowners and businesses are protected. So far St. Patrick's has failed to do that and should not be entitled to a special exception until they do.

Even though I am a member of the St. Patrick's church community, I cannot support the plan that they have put forward and the deleterious impact that it would have on the quality of our daily lives. I therefore urge the BZA to reject St. Patrick's plan for a new school on Foxhall at this time, unless and until the issues of traffic, student enrollment and school operations have been addressed in a manner that is satisfactory to the neighboring community.

Sincerely



Mary Ann Griffin
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Fax Cover Sheet

Date: February 27, 2006

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