

Government of the District of Columbia
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3-D

P.O. Box 40846
Palisades Station
Washington, D.C. 20016

DO NOT WRITE
IN THESE SPACES
MAY 29 2006

May 28, 2006

Mr. Geoffrey H. Griffis
Chair
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 210-S
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Application No.17429, Friends of St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School LLC
and St. Patrick's Episcopal Church and Day School

Dear Chairman Griffis:

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D held a special meeting on May 17, 2006, in response to a request from the Foxhall Community Citizens Association (FCCA) for further consideration of St. Patrick's Special Exception Application and the proposed Operations and Transportation Management Plans. Notice of the special meeting was posted in the Northwest Current and on the Palisades Listserv two weeks prior to the meeting which was held in the Eckles Library Auditorium on GW's Mt. Vernon Campus. A quorum (3) was present at all times.

The Chair of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D opened the meeting and commended the Foxhall Citizens Association, Colony Hill Neighborhood Association and St. Patrick's for continuing to meet in an attempt to work out an agreement on the aforementioned aspects of BZA Application No. 17429.

Robert Avery, president of FCCA, spoke for FCCA and the Colony Hill Neighborhood Association (CHNA), and for these purposes both groups shall be jointly referred to as "the Community." Mr. Avery informed the Commission that at its April meeting the FCCA voted 36 to 1 to oppose the St. Patrick's application unless its operations and traffic management plan were comparable to those of other neighboring schools. The membership also empowered the FCCA Board to join with the CHNA to negotiate these conditions directly with St. Patrick's. Mr. Avery reported that the Community and representatives of St. Patrick's had met four times since that point and had reached agreement on many items. However, he said that there were several points upon which the Community and St. Patrick's had not reached accord and he sought support from the ANC for the Community position on these remaining areas of contention.

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Mr. Avery stated, "Very simply put, the school is asking for permission to construct 28 houses (9 matter of right and 19 in a theoretical lot subdivision); build and establish a new educational facility that would include both junior and senior high schools; hire staff; and, move approval of the entire process. The school has applied for approval of an ultimate school size with intermediate hurdles. Perhaps, because full school operation is many years in the future, St. Patrick's proposed operations plan is very open-ended. The Community believes that it is better under these circumstances to not grant the school immediate full latitude in how it operates its facility, but to require it to return to the BZA at a future point when the school needs and Community concerns are better known. The conditions recommended for ANC consideration at this point attempt to limit the open-ended features of the current operations plan. It is the Community's belief that none of these proposed restrictions will limit the school's ability to operate when it first opens, they only effect future operations."

Mr. Avery noted that the Community drew some of its recommendations from conditions found in the Field School's BZA Order. These conditions were cited as having guided the implementation of a successful school model.

In its February 18, 2006 letter to the Board, ANC 3D stated, "Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D reserves the right to consider any changes to the application as filed and to supplement our report on matters that shall come before the Board of Zoning Adjustment during the course of the hearings." These additional conditions do not alter the intent of the commission's original letter. However, one member of the Commission voted against all six motions based on the fact that these matters have not come before the Board. Other Commission members were comfortable that the intent of the February letter was to allow for additional Commission input on aspects of the Application brought to its attention for consideration by the Community.

Following discussion of aspects of the current draft of St. Patrick's Operations Plan and TMP, where agreement has not been reached between members of the Community and representatives of the school, six separate motions were put forward by the Chair of ANC 3D for a vote by the Commission.

Motion No. 1) There shall be no approval of summer academic programs or a camp at this time.

Approval of summer academic programs or camp at this time would be premature. St. Patrick's should return to the BZA once the new school is fully operational and submit a fully developed plan and request to operate a summer camp and/or summer academic programs. Commission support was sought for this motion based on the fact that at this time it is impossible for a plan to contain other than a theoretical outline of possible activities, hours of operation and a Transportation Management Plan (TMP). It was noted that the summer TMP would differ substantially from that designed for the regular school year based on the length of sessions and the ability for parents to form carpools. It was noted that no summer programs exist at Field School or the current St. Patrick's Middle School campus.

ANC 3D approved Motion #1 by a vote of 4-1-0.

Motion No. 2) There shall be no student drivers at this time.

Approval of student drivers is not relevant at this time and will not be relevant until there are students who have earned the right to drive. Field School's Student Driving Policy was reviewed. A majority of commission members felt there is ample time for the school to develop and implement an enforceable policy on student driving.

ANC 3D voted 2-3-0 to deny Motion No. 2. (The motion did not pass)

Motion No. 3) There shall be established a three-tiered events classification based on the number of attendees at each event and the number of events in each category permitted each academic year. The school and church shall be limited to 6 "major" non-athletic events per year; 12 intermediate events per year of which no more than five such events may be held outdoors, but none of the five events may be held on the athletic field; and, there shall be an unlimited number of events having less than 50 attendees. All outdoor or summer events [those occurring outside the normal school academic year] must conclude by 6:00 PM. Events at other times of the year must conclude by 10:00 PM Sunday through Thursday or 11:00 PM on Friday or Saturday.

Events were divided into the following categories:

Major event: The number of attendees is expected to approach or exceed 450 and might include graduation, proms or back-to-school nights.

Intermediate event: The number of attendees is expected to exceed 50 but not reach 450 and would likely include events such as plays and open houses.

Other events: The number of attendees is expected to be 50 or less.

It was also recommended that the Colony Hill and Foxhall Citizens Associations would be notified in advance of scheduled major and intermediate events.

ANC 3D approved Motion No. 3 by a vote of 3-2-0.

Motion No. 4: No open campus at this time.

The school has agreed that only junior and senior students will be allowed to leave campus on foot during the day. However the community has safety concerns given the location of the school on Foxhall Road; and, the close proximity of Colony Hill was raised by residents of that neighborhood. Field School was cited as a successful closed campus model that has resulted in the harmonious existence of an established junior and senior high school in a residential neighborhood. One resident expressed concern about teenagers at leisure in the neighborhood, a concern that a commissioner, remembering that period in her own life, endorsed. Community members noted that The Lab School of Washington, located at the west end of Whitehaven Parkway, has an open campus.

Students are often observed unsupervised in the neighborhood. A recent head-on noontime crash with serious injuries involving a Lab School student (who was charged) and an elderly driver was cited as one reason for students to remain on campus during school hours. The community recommended that the school return to the BZA once the school is established and an open campus policy is fully developed.

ANC 3D approved Motion No. 4 by a vote of 3-2-0.

Motion No. 5: Cap on daily AM vehicle trips.

The school's TMP for the Foxhall campus is not fully developed at this time. In an effort to prevent traffic impacts on Foxhall Road during the AM peak hour in an area that is already "schooled-up," the Community recommended that St. Patrick's adhere to the same 3:1 student/vehicle trip ratio that is conditioned for Field School. St. Patrick's has shown that when required to implement a policy, St. Patrick's can do so successfully. The community requested that a daily vehicle cap of 146 be set for the AM peak hour. The 146 cap was set with the understanding that during the AM peak hour 21 vehicle trips to drop off junior and senior high school students at the Whitehaven Campus would reduce the number of Foxhall vehicle trips from 146 to 139.

ANC 3D approved Motion No.5 by a vote of 3-2-0.

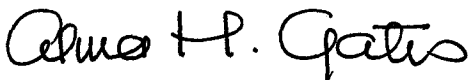
Motion No. 6: Reporting Requirements and Enforcement Mechanisms.

The school will provide quarterly report to ANC 3D and DDOT on the successful implementation of its TMP. The manner by which daily trip counts are calculated will be determined by DDOT.

ANC 3D approved Motion No. 6 by a vote of 4-1-0.

Therefore, ANC 3D requests that its findings be given the "great weight" to which they are entitled under DC Law.

Sincerely,



Alma H. Gates
Chair

cc: Robert Avery
Phil Feola
Ed Lyle