

October 31, 2017

Chunmeng Bai & John Giles
1501 Gallatin St NW
Washington, DC 20011

Chairman Fred Hill or Current Chairman
D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Opposition to Specific Features of Application #19581: Latin American Montessori Bilingual Public Charter School Application to Increase the Number of Students from 300 to 600 at 5000 14th St NW

Dear Chair and Members of the Board:

We, Chunmeng Bai and John Giles, live at 1501 Gallatin St NW, which sits at the corner of Gallatin St NW and Piney Branch St NW, which is diagonally across from the Kingsbury School at 5000 14th Street NW. We are concerned about plans for the Latin American Montessori Bilingual School (LAMB) Public Charter move to the Kingsbury property, and in particular, the likely increase in traffic along Piney Branch Rd NW. Traffic along Piney Branch, and likely congestion and backups at Piney Branch and Gallatin St NW were not considered in the traffic study commissioned by the Applicants (Building Hope and LAMB). We believe this to be a serious deficiency in the study, and feel that any plans to allow entry or exit of vehicles on Piney Branch during morning drop off or afternoon pick up from the Kingsbury/LAMB property will have significant detrimental effects on the community.

Piney Branch is an unimproved road with no pedestrian walkways, no parking lanes in either direction and is frequently restricted to one lane of travel with cars parked along it. Nonetheless, for students traveling from north and east of Kingsbury in the morning windows, GPS systems set to 1501 Farragut St NW (which is across from the rear entrance to Kingsbury) bring vehicular traffic down Colorado St NW to Piney Branch and to the rear of Kingsbury. As the current traffic study did not consider traffic south on Piney Branch or the likely back up of traffic at Piney Branch and Gallatin, we believe the traffic study to be deficient. In particular, if there the entrance to LAMB/Kingsbury is used for drop off and pick up of children, then this raises considerable concern about the volume of traffic that will be seen on this narrow and unimproved road.

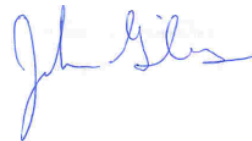
Apart from the likely difficulties this will cause for those of us in the neighborhood who need to commute to work, those of us who are parents of young children are particularly concerned about the possibility of anxious LAMB parents driving at high speeds down Piney Branch in an effort to get to school on time. We strongly believe that Piney Branch should not be used for child drop off and pick up.

The application states that hours of operation would not include weeknights or weekends, but special events occur at all schools (e.g., orientations, parent-teacher meetings, school picnics), and visitor parking is likely to be a challenge. The neighborhood is home to several religious institutions that use available street parking during large portions of the weekend, as do visitors to Carter Barron Amphitheatre and Rock Creek Park. While there is ample parking for staff during normal operating hours, visitor parking during school-wide events would severely tax neighborhood streets.

We should stress that we are not adamantly opposed to LAMB's move to the Kingsbury property, but we feel that the concerns of the neighbors over the traffic and noise impacts of the proposed move have not been adequately addressed. We urge the BZA to make any increase in the allowed number of students at 5000 14th St NW to be contingent on developing a transportation plan that keeps down the volume of traffic along Piney Branch St NW.

Sincerely,

Chunmeng Bai



Chunmeng Bai
John Giles