

1501 Farragut Street, NW
Washington, D.C.
November 13, 2017

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

Re: Opposition to Application #19581: Latin American Montessori Bilingual (LAMB) 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:

I write in regard to the LAMB application to relocate to Kingsbury School. I oppose it as currently drafted. I first moved to 1501 Farragut Street, NW in 1977, so I have a very long--40 year--perspective on the current Kingsbury School property which is virtually 20 yards from my home. (I can hear individual voices and conversations when students are outside.) I have watched the community shrink and change with the encroachment of institutions in a residential neighborhood zoned for single family homes. When the now-Kingsbury facility was a home for "white Christian gentlemen of certain means," the peace and quiet of the neighborhood was maintained. Various other tenants over the decades did not disturb the tranquility of the neighborhood—until Kingsbury.

Kingsbury has impacted the neighborhood with traffic, noise, students throwing trash on our lawns, even without reaching its limit of 300 students. Limited parking spaces resulted in overflow cars parking on our streets, forcing us to get two-hour residential parking signs. We have complained publically about excessive noise from the air-conditioning unit and various disturbances from school activities.

So you can understand why we close neighbors have strong concerns regarding the special exception application (BZA #19581) of Building Hope Parkside Foundation and the Latin American Montessori Bilingual Public Charter School (LAMB) for a special exception to establish a public charter school (LAMB) and co-location of LAMB with another permitted private school (Kingsbury Center) at the 5000 14th St NW location. If passed, this special exception would grant permission to increase the allowable student population at this location from 300 to 600 and to build a new gymnasium adjacent to neighboring single family residences.

As longtime residents, we have years of experience with a school as a neighbor. We have learned to live with Kingsbury and its intrusiveness. At the same time, we appreciate the reputation for commitment to quality education that Lamb has earned and would welcome it with a lower number of students. Doubling the number of students as proposed, with the traffic associated with bringing young children to school exacerbates an already fraught situation. The dramatic increase in size changes the nature of our community with its mandated emphasis on **residential single-family homes**.

And that gets to the heart of the matter. The Application is primarily about LAMB's special exception request to significantly expand nonresidential use of the Kingsbury facility within the

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Sixteenth Street Heights - 2 Overlay District. The SSH-2 District was put in place in recognition that this stable single-family residential neighborhood already is compromised by nonresidential use of more than 35 assorted institutions.

The SSH-2 District offers special protections and requirements for “improved public review to ameliorate adverse impacts on immediate and nearby neighbors and preserve a **predominantly single-family residential** character.” The LAMB Application significantly expands the **non-residential** use of the Kingsbury property. LAMB wants to expand the student population from the current Kingsbury level of 108 to 600, a 556% increase.

Moreover, LAMB’s own traffic study points out that morning student drop-offs by car (vehicle trips) would increase from the current Kingsbury level of 73 to 548; that’s 475 more rush hours car trips, a 750% increase. In addition, LAMB also plans construction of a new gymnasium with the accompanying noise, lighting, foot and car traffic. The proposed h offers of community use would result in still more traffic.

As an opponent with standing, I urge you to preserve the residential quality and character of our neighborhood. As a member of the Committee of Neighbors Directly Impacted by the LAMB Application (CNDI-LA) who has standing in this case, I feel strongly that LAMB and Building Hope have not sufficiently demonstrated that their Application will not have adverse impacts – in terms of traffic/parking, noise, lighting/design and other objectionable environmental effects – on us and our neighborhood. Moreover, the dramatic increases will inevitably **reduce the value of our homes** as has been proven in similar situations.

While the Applicant has dismissed the high likelihood of a variety of negative effects arising from this dramatic expansion of school-associated activity in this SSH-2 neighborhood, our experience with Kingsbury demonstrated that we need specific written guidelines. In meetings, we indicated to Building Hope and LAMB we would support a more modest expansion, using their own estimated figures of interim period (2018-2024) maximums of 310 LAMB students and 36 LAMB staff and 175 Kingsbury students and 80 Kingsbury staff.

Approval at the lower maximum student thresholds would allow all parties to experience the effects of LAMB’s co-location with Kingsbury and address any negative issues that arise. The Office of Planning agrees with approval of the Application with scaled-back terms. In its 11/03/17 memo outlined (see Exhibit 46), the Office of Planning recommended important interim conditions on the Applicant to mitigate potential adverse impacts of the Application on the surrounding community including:

1. The maximum number of students in the interim stage shall be 310 and a maximum number of faculty/staff shall be 36;
2. The hours of operation shall be 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday to Friday; and
3. LAMB shall maintain the current allotment of 107 parking spaces.
4. When Kingsbury departs the property and the student population for LAMB is to be increased to 600, the proposal be submitted to the BZA for further review. In addition,
5. LAMB shall submit details of the gymnasium to the BZA for review prior to construction either as part of that review, or as a modification to the approved LAMB [application].

In its 11/08/17 meeting the ANC 4C voted 5-2 in favor of a letter of support for applying these same OP conditions on the Applicant. As one of the home owners most directly impacted, I

urge the BZA to reject the LAMB Application as submitted and impose the Office of Planning's recommended conditions, with regular community monitoring and reporting as stated in SSH-2.

Citizen activism and home ownership are two hallmarks of a democracy. I thank you for your respect for these two institutions and appreciate the transparency of the process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vivian Lowery Derryck". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and address.

Vivian Lowery Derryck
1501 Farragut Street, NW
Washington, DC 20011

cc: Brandon Todd
Council Member, Ward 4