

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Bardin, Sara (DCOZ)
Sent: Thursday, October 21, 2021 2:16 PM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: FW: CASE: #20472 - Opposition to River School Application for Special Exemption.

Sara

Sara Bardin
Director



Office of Zoning | District of Columbia Government
www.dcoz.dc.gov | sara.bardin@dc.gov

441 4th Street, NW | Suite 200-S | Washington, DC 20001
(202) 727-5372 (office) | (202) 727-6072 (fax)

From: Colin Andrews <col.andrews@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 21, 2021 2:11 PM
To: ATD DCOZ <dcoz@dc.gov>
Subject: CASE: #20472 - Opposition to River School Application for Special Exemption.

Some people who received this message don't often get email from col.andrews@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the DC Government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know that the content is safe. If you believe that this email is suspicious, please forward to phishing@dc.gov for additional analysis by OCTO Security Operations Center (SOC).

Dear Chairman Hill,

I am writing to request that you deny the River School's application for a special exemption and to support ANC3e who voted to oppose the application on October 14, 2021.

I live on 4217 43rd Street NW, less than half a mile from the proposed application.

I object to the application because I think the plans are fatally flawed and will fundamentally alter the daily lives and safety of local residents – in particular families with children and the elderly. I have little understanding how a plan of this scale has even reached this stage of discussion. At the outset, I would like to state my support of TRS mission and hope the ambitious plans for scale up can be accommodated in an appropriate location going forward.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.20472
EXHIBIT NO.84

To elaborate:

- AU Park is in the midst of at least seven large-scale developments, which will fundamentally alter the nature and traffic safety of this area. AU Park has a track record of supporting urban development and diverse schooling. However, with such a construction pipeline, the local environmental and safety impacts need greater scrutiny. I hope the local ANC can lead on this wider reflection going forward. Concerning TRS application, specifically, I am perplexed that a construction for close to 500 people on a single residence plot, beside a double intersection is even being considered. For many years, this site has been an area of local preservation and historic value. It is a shame that such a legacy is being fudged in the name of local development. Indeed, when I purchased my property this green and historic space was a consideration. .

- The *River School Comprehensive Traffic Report for the River School* is flawed on many levels. The detailed study is a challenging and largely inaccessible read and I would hope that expert (and critical) reviews of this report are considered in your review. From a local perspective, it is quite clear that the report masks some simple facts, and is misleading: First, benchmarking data draws disproportionately and misleadingly from COVID-19 lockdown data, when our local public schools were operating on a part time basis. As lockdown restrictions ease, traffic congestion and challenges are on an entirely different level to when this assessment was undertaken. Second, the spillover effects on local streets is completely ignored. At my residence on 43rd Street and Verplank we already see disruption from local construction projects as workers park cars for much of the day. The Traffic Report entirely ignores the complicated intersection on 43rd Street and Warren, which will be impacted by this application.

- I would encourage BZA representatives to “walk in the shoes” of local residents who will live with the consequences of this application. It is already alarming that traffic analysis with TRS will result in 10 of the 14 assessed intersections continuing to fail. What does this look like in reality for a local with small children.
 - o I have three children who walk to and from our local school each day. Within a mere 400 meters there are three challenging intersections: (i) 43rd Street and Warren (not considered in the traffic report) is complicated for pedestrians and drivers alike. Out of town drivers tend to ignore the stop signs; (ii) The circle on 42nd and Warren is much debated, and a lack of clear signage is a traffic risk. Drivers tend to speed through this circle, it is very concerning; (iii) The intersection at 42nd and Yuma is heavily congested with drivers and young families alike. This is one of the main intersections for locals bringing children to school.
 - o Afternoon commutes area already complicated by local development and existing schools. Traffic build ups on 42nd (between Wisconsin and Nebraska) have become notorious in recent months – and this is at a time when many workers still remain in virtual mode.
 - o Any discussion to accommodate bike travel by children (such as TRS Traffic Report) is purely academic – this is a hazardous traffic area already.

- Finally, the local benefits to hosting yet another private school remain unclear. For a small cohort of students, the River School serves an admirable purpose. For the majority of students, TRS serves to be yet another private school option. It is debatable if AU Park needs yet another private school facility – given the unusual concentration of private schools within the area.

Best regards,
Colin Andrews
43rd Street & Verplank Place.