

## Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

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**From:** Timothy Chorba <timchorba88@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 25, 2021 12:05 PM  
**To:** ATD DCOZ; DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)  
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**Subject:** Case #20472 River School Proposal - OPPOSITION

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>  
> Re: Case #20472 River School Proposal  
> OPPOSITION  
>  
> Dear Chairman Hill and Members of the Board of Zoning Adjustment,  
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> I write (i) in support of the vote by ANC 3E to oppose the River School (TRS) plan to acquire, relocate to and expand on the 2.27 acre residential property ("Buchanan Estate") located at 4220 Nebraska Avenue NW, and (ii) to urge the BZA to deny TRS' application for zoning exception. For over 22 years I have resided at 4200 42nd Street NW, directly facing the subject property.  
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> Numerous other concerned Tenleytown residents whose homes are proximate to the Buchanan Estate have submitted compelling detailed factual arguments to the BZA in opposition, and I will not reiterate them in their totality.  
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> However, certain salient issues merit emphasis and summation:  
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> (1) The impression fostered by TRS that it is an educational institution dedicated to hearing-impaired children is a misleading exaggeration. In fact, by a wide majority TRS pupils have normal hearing ability. (TRS acknowledges that at most 18% of TRS students are hearing challenged). More important, TRS schoolchildren overwhelmingly are under seven years of age. Most are from prosperous families living in suburban Virginia and Maryland or from DC locations well beyond walking distance from the Buchanan Estate. Because buses don't accommodate children's car seats, these youngsters necessarily would be driven by car daily to and from a property located in a neighborhood that already suffers from chronic, dangerous traffic congestion and conditions. The notion floated by TRS that these young children instead could travel to the property by bus or Metro is laughable. The Palisades/MacArthur Boulevard neighborhood in which TRS now is located suffers from traffic congestion and dislocation inflicted upon it by that school. Residents of that area understandably would welcome TRS' departure and relocation.  
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> (2) TRS' pseudo-authoritative traffic remediation measures resemble a game of three card Monty that obfuscates unpleasant truths about existing traffic conditions and the consequences of introducing hundreds more vehicles into the neighborhood during morning and afternoon rush hours. Our home is directly adjacent to the intersection of 42nd Street NW and Van Ness Street NW, as a consequence of which we experience the frequent blaring of car and truck horns accompanied by screeching of brakes and the episodic crashing of metal and shattering of glass as vehicles collide

Board of Zoning Adjustment  
District of Columbia

CASE NO.20472  
EXHIBIT NO.118

at the dangerous traffic juncture into which TRS would surge yet more cars rushing to “beat the light” at the nearby intersection of Van Ness Street and Nebraska Avenue or attempting to dart through stop signs northbound or southbound across heavily trafficked 42nd Street. Pedestrians in the intersection’s precarious marked crosswalks already are at significant risk. Similar concerns apply to the traffic circle intersection of Warren Street NW and 42nd Street NW and to the intersection of Nebraska Avenue NW and Warren Street NW. TRS pointlessly and illogically proposes eliminating neighborhood parking on Van Ness Street and Nebraska Avenue to address traffic concerns arising from a massive surge of TRS vehicles twice daily. In fact, while sounding purposeful, that would accomplish nothing useful.

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> (3) TRS indicates that it does not have in hand the financial resources necessary to develop the subject property, much less to provide iron-clad guarantees concerning limitations on vehicles accessing the property daily. The TRS proposal contemplates cramming multiple hundreds of schoolchildren, school faculty and administrative staff, in addition to a national research center, along with an avalanche of vehicles onto a two acre residential property in the heart of a single family residential neighborhood. This would be putting the proverbial round peg into a square hole, in this case a massive, disruptive and ill-conceived institutional round peg into a modestly sized residential square hole.

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> (4) TRS’ architectural plans call for the deforestation and defoliation of an environmentally vibrant urban oasis of greenery. TRS’ landscape consultant has boasted of plans to eliminate “non-native species”, whatever that might mean. The verdant Buchanan Estate treasure would be replaced by an institutional mass of eyesore brutalist architecture jammed as close as possible to its denuded property lines.

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> For these and the panoply of other objections expressed in this zoning proceeding by the beleaguered residents of our Tenleytown neighborhood, I urge the BZA to reject and deny TRS’ application for zoning exemption.

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>                   Respectfully,  
>  
>                   Timothy A. Chorba  
>                   4200 42nd Street NW  
>                   Washington, D.C. 20016

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>  
> Sent from my iPad