

February 16, 2022

**Opinion: Episcopal Center for Children Renovations and Maret Land Use Project
Application Number 20643**

To: BZASubmissions
BZASubmissions@dc.gov

Greetings Bureau of Zoning Adjustment

I am writing you as a member of the Episcopal Center for Children Board of Directors, as a special education Urban School Psychologist, as a resident of the Northwest DC Community, and as a well-seasoned parent and soon to be grandparent. I am recommending a favorable BZA response to the presented land use application and to the underlying arrangements between Episcopal Center for Children and the Maret School. This is an excellent arrangement that will benefit both schools and will also benefit the greater Northwest DC community.

I recognize the challenge that change brings to a community. I live up the street from the Lowell School which was formerly Galludet University and Howard University. When they were coming in we also did the traffic studies and had the community meetings with some rancor and negative posturing. In the end, Lowell School has turned out to be a great neighbor and they improved the grounds and play areas for the entire community's use and benefit.

The Episcopal Center for Children has been a great neighbor to this Northwest DC community for many decades. They have successfully served some of the most socially and emotionally challenged children from the greater Washington DC area. They want to reopen and continue that legacy. This BZA and Northwest DC community should eagerly lend its support to their cause and this presented means for doing so.

Slightly off the point of this concern is that DCPS and the area school districts should simply pay tuition sufficient for the Episcopal Center for Children to operate at the level of service that it does. Any leverage the BZA may have toward making that happen would be the best solution for all. But our school and social system values are not what they need to be for any schools, and that has put The Episcopal Center in this precarious circumstance in trying to reopen.

Maret school has also served the greater Washington DC community very well for many years. This solution for their youth lifts the tide for the whole community. I hope the BZA sees that a far greater majority of the community will benefit from their field solution than not. Further, those who feel that it would not will be minimally impacted; and I expect that afterwards they will all find, like we did with the Lowell School, that a great neighbor can be even better if given the chance.

I must add that not only am I an Episcopal Center Board member, I served as the Episcopal Center for Children School Psychologist for about three years 1997-2000 . Before that, for ten years I was the DCPS placement specialist who placed emotionally disturbed youth in their program. I have always said that this school has one of the finest models for educating emotionally disturbed youth that I have ever seen. That is still true and I hope the BZA will support this solution, which will lead to their reopening.

With Best Regards and Appreciation,

Edward Galiber, M.Ed.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.20643
EXHIBIT NO.190