

**From:** [Delisa Saunders](#)  
**To:** [DCOZ - BZA Submissions \(DCOZ\)](#)  
**Subject:** Case NUMBER 21101  
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September 26, 2024

TO: Board of Zoning Adjustment

CASE NUMBER: 21101

RE: Written Testimony in Opposition of the BZA Application for 245  
treet, NW (Square 3338, Lot 811)  
submitted to the Board by Mendomas LLC on January 26, 2024

Dear Members of the Board,

As a longtime 31-year resident living on the 200 block of Peabody Street NW, I am concerned about the Mendomas LLC proposed building of a new school at 245 Peabody Street, NW. Based on my longtime background and experience with the multiple ways that school operations of Capitol City Charter School located on the 100 block of Peabody Street, NW impact the daily health and safety of residents, students, parents, and visitors, I am gravely concerned about an additional school and child development center being built at 245 Peabody Street, NW. Especially since the students will be very young which will probably necessitate the involvement of parents or others with dropping off and picking up all enrolled students each day by car.

From the early beginning, the vision, due diligence and proposals provided by the school proved to be misleading and/or problematic. For example, in an earlier proposal, residents were informed during a meeting with representatives of Mendomas LLC that there would just be a need for around three parking spaces for employees because most would be using public transportation. This has now changed to an anticipated need of 20 daily parking spaces for employees. We were also told that since most students would be within walking distance, car traffic would be minimal. This narrative has also changed to the probability that in addition to dropping off their children each day by car using the same alley that many residents rely on to both park their cars when arriving home and again when leaving their homes, the DC public sanitation department uses weekly for trash collection, etc.

These types of drastic changes and admissions after the fact certainly erode community confidence in the level of trust that can be extended. A companion concern is what else might be misrepresented, poorly researched or missed during the planning of the facility which translates into huge challenges and problems in the future. And just how trustworthy will the applicant be moving forward should they build and operate the school? The change in the

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number of employees driving to the school also increases the probability that the limited public street parking spaces in the area may be dominated by non-residents throughout the school year.

For those of us who are older, have mobility challenges or other health situations, this poses an immediate daily threat to our safety and well-being if parking space near our homes are occupied all day. It also leads residents to have less confidence between what is stated and what may actually happen regarding the operation of the proposed school at 245 Peabody Street NW.

Another concern about this new traffic is the overall impact in the area when combined with the existing large volume of traffic using the 200 block of Peabody Street NW by families rushing to drop off their children at Capitol City Charter school. In addition to traffic congestion, the damage to parked cars of residents (especially rear-view mirrors, front and back bumpers), litter and other daily inconveniences, raise serious considerations not mentioned and/or dismissed in the proposal.

More important is the low level of confidence that I have in the research conducted by Mendomas. For example, their initial traffic study was conducted during the spring break of Capitol City Charter School. Whether this was just an oversight or intentional to conduct a traffic study during the same week that school traffic would be absent due to spring break, the level of trust moving forward with any review, assessment or research must be questioned and deeply analyzed by a neutral third-party to expect any level of trust that the outcomes are indeed accurate and trustworthy.

Most important is the imminent threat posed by traffic congestion for any emergency situation requiring ambulances, firefighters or police needing to move swiftly down the street and alley.

Additionally, when a question was raised about the plans and role of the school to inform/work with parents when dropping off their children, the response was that the extent of attention to this known traffic situation by the school would be to inform parents and then provide them with a document about drop-off and pickup. Apparently a piece of paper and one verbal statement is the extent of care and concern that the school has for the families they serve and their neighbor residents.

I urge you to take the time needed to conduct a thorough assessment that includes the validity, reliability and accuracy of the entire proposal before proceeding with making a final decision.

Respectfully,

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