

February 26, 2026

Mr. Carl Blake, Chairman
D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment

Re: Order No. 17703-C for Sidwell Friends School – Request for Modification without Hearing to Change Condition of Approval

Dear Chairman Blake and Members of the Board:

On behalf of the Sidwell Friends School (the “**Applicant**” or “**School**”), the Applicant in the above-referenced case, we hereby request approval of a Modification without Hearing, pursuant to Subtitle Y § 703.7 of the D.C. Zoning Regulations, to Condition 3.a of BZA Order No. 17703-C (the “**Order**,” attached as Exhibit A).

I. Background

Pursuant to the Order, issued on February 11, 2020, the Board approved a modification to private school campus plan for the Sidwell Friends School located at 3825 Wisconsin Ave. NW (“**Wisconsin Campus**”) and 3720 Upton Street NW (“**Upton Campus**”). The Order authorized a comprehensive reconfiguration and modernization of the School’s campus across its adjacent Wisconsin Campus and Upton Campus, including new construction, renovations, relocation of academic divisions, and implementation of a multi-phase construction program.

As approved, the modified campus plan includes, among other elements, the following:

- Construction of a new Lower School building on the north side of the Wisconsin Campus adjacent to the parking garage and traffic circulation areas, to relocate the Lower School from its present location in Bethesda, Maryland and consolidate all the School’s academic programs at one location in the District;
- Relocation and consolidation of academic divisions, including movement of the Upper School to the Upton Campus and reorganization of student use of campus facilities;
- Improvements to internal circulation and campus operations, including changes to on-site vehicular access, drop-off and pick-up locations, and pedestrian safety measures; and
- A detailed phasing and sequencing plan allowing the School to remain fully operational while construction occurs over multiple phases and years.

The Order expressly contemplated that construction of the Lower School and other campus elements would occur concurrently with ongoing school operations, and that construction staging, equipment, and temporary circulation adjustments would be required during active construction periods. To address transportation, safety, and neighborhood impacts associated with these approved campus plan modifications, the Board adopted a comprehensive set of transportation-related conditions in the Order, including operational conditions governing student pick-up and drop-off.

In particular, Condition 3.a of the Order requires the relocation of the Middle School pick-up and drop-off area (“PUDO”) from 37th Street NW to “*locations on campus as soon as practicable but no later than the beginning of construction of the Lower School.*” The area identified for the relocated PUDO in the approved plan would be a newly created PUDO lane adjacent to the current Upper School building (currently occupied by tennis courts). This condition established an outside deadline to relocate the PUDO before the commencement of Lower School construction based on the anticipated availability of on-campus circulation areas following campus reconfiguration.

II. Requested Modification to Condition 3.a

The School plans to begin construction on the Lower School in the summer of 2026. As the School has advanced detailed planning for the construction and associated staging, it has become clear that, while the ultimate relocation of Middle School PUDO remains appropriate and consistent with the approved campus plan, the timing specified in Condition 3.a does not fully account for the safety and operational constraints created by active construction in close proximity to the planned new PUDO lane. Because of on-campus space constraints and the need to continue School operations during construction, the Lower School construction staging must be in – and directly conflicts with – an area that is intended to be part of the relocated PUDO, as shown in the drawing included as Exhibit B.

Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests a limited modification to only the timing component of Condition 3.a, so that the condition instead provides that the Middle School PUDO will be relocated *after* completion of construction of the Lower School, rather than prior to or at the commencement of construction. Lower School construction is expected to be completed in late summer 2028. As modified, Condition 3.a would state as follows (new language in underlined italics):

“Relocation of Middle School drop-off and pick-up from its existing location on 37th Street, N.W. to locations on campus *within six (6) months after completion of construction of the Lower School.*”

All other provisions of Condition 3, and all other conditions in the Order, would remain unchanged and in full force and effect. In addition, to achieve the goal intended by Condition 3.a, the Applicant commits to implement Condition 3.f – the hiring of a

Traffic Control Officer to regulate traffic at the intersection of 37th and Upton Streets – at the start of the school year in the fall of 2026.¹

III. Requested Change Qualifies as Modification Without Hearing

This request qualifies for approval as a Modification without Hearing under Subtitle Y § 703.7 because it concerns “a proposed change to a condition cited by the Board in the final order...” Also, the impact of the proposed modification may be understood without witness testimony because it is a minor adjustment to the sequencing of an operational condition, does not change the ultimate completion of the condition, does not alter the scope of the approved campus plan, and does not result in any greater adverse impacts on surrounding properties or public space.

The requested modification is necessitated by safety concerns during the construction of the Lower School. Construction staging areas, equipment, and construction-related vehicle activity will be in close proximity to the internal drive areas that would otherwise be used for the relocated Middle School PUDO. Relocating the PUDO before active construction would introduce potential conflicts between construction activity, vehicles, and students, creating avoidable safety risks for children, parents, and others. Deferring the relocation until after completion of Lower School construction will allow the PUDO to operate in a fully constructed, stable, and predictable environment, without the presence of construction equipment or staging areas adjacent to student circulation routes.

IV. No Adverse Impacts

The requested modification will not result in any additional adverse impacts since it will simply allow the continuation of the status quo for slightly longer. In addition, the concomitant Fall 2026 implementation of Condition 3.f will ensure that Middle School traffic will be adequately managed. Therefore, the proposed modification will not undermine the Board’s findings in Order No. 17703-C, and it will not disturb the Transportation Management Plan or its ultimate traffic operational requirements. The proposed modification will not increase student enrollment, traffic volumes, or hours of operation, and it will not alter the ultimate requirement that the Middle School PUDO be relocated.

Instead, the proposed modification will promote safe and orderly campus operations during construction, while preserving the long-term transportation and circulation outcomes approved by the Board for the completed campus. The School remains committed to coordinating with DDOT, the affected ANCs, and the surrounding community to manage drop-off and pick-up operations in a manner that minimizes impacts during construction and thereafter.

¹ As written in the Order, this condition does not have a deadline by which it must occur, so the Applicant is committing to a timeline for implementing it.
4916-5657-9215, v. 3

V. Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Board approve the above-requested change to Condition 3.a of BZA Order No. 17703-C as a Modification without Hearing.

Sincerely,

_____/s/_____

Cary Kadlecek
GOULSTON & STORRS PC

Certificate of Service

The undersigned hereby certifies that copies of the foregoing letter and attachments were delivered by electronic mail to the following on February 26, 2026:

ANC 3A
3A@anc.dc.gov

Isaac Bowers, SMD 3A03
3A03@anc.dc.gov

ANC 3F
commissioners@anc3f.com

Radhika Mohan
Karen Thomas
D.C. Office of Planning
radhika.mohan@dc.gov
karen.thomas@dc.gov

Erkin Ozberk
District Department of Transportation
erkin.ozberk1@dc.gov

/s/

Cary Kadlecek