

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

MACECD

CASE NO. 06-06

EXHIBIT NO. 97

Mayor's Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Development

"Making Early Care and Education Everybody's Business"

2006 SEP 25 PM 1:10

DC OFFICE OF ZONING

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September 22, 2006

D C Zoning Commission
Attn. Ms. Sharon Schellin
Secretary of the Zoning Commission, Office of Zoning
Zoning Commission Members
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Case Number 06-06 (Charter Schools - Text Amendment)

Dear Ms. Schellin

We are writing this urgent letter because of our deep concern that you are moving too quickly on a matter that may have a profound impact on the ability of families in the District of Columbia to access child care. Unfortunately, we only just learned about Case Number 06-06. The Mayor's Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Development (MACECD) has never been contacted by the Office of Planning concerning this case. The primary mission of MACECD is to advise the Mayor on policies and practices that promote quality services for young children; therefore, our comments are solely based on the best interests of the children and families living in the District of Columbia.

On September 20, 2006 MACECD voted to oppose adoption of ZC Case 06-06 and to send this letter. We believe that the Text Amendment being considered has not been sufficiently vetted or researched and the negative ramifications have not been fully explored or presented. We would strongly urge the Commission to reconsider taking final action on Case 06-06, regarding the location of public charter schools, small private and parochial preschools and day care centers in residential zones. Limiting access to such programs in residential areas would be counterproductive and precipitate a true emergency for families in the District. Educational services are needed in residential areas so that child-

C/O DC Department of Human Services Early Care and Education Administration (ECEA)
717 14th Street, NW • Washington, DC 20005
202-727-1839 (Phone) • 202-724-7229 (Fax)

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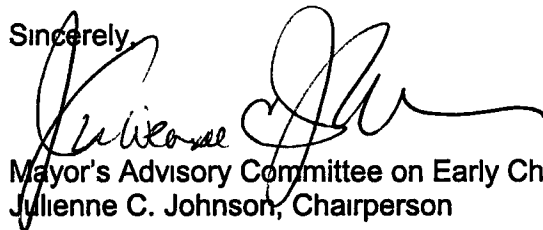
Mayor's Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Development
Letter to the DC Board of Zoning
September 22, 2006
Page Two

ren can safely walk to school and locating these facilities in commercial areas would endanger our children. Schools and community-based early care and education facilities need to be viewed as vital cornerstones of our neighborhoods

The fact that Dr. Clifford Janey, Superintendent of DC Public Schools, has raised questions about this matter, should give the Commission reason to pause and reflect. It would be advisable and most appropriate for the Commission to reject these proposed zoning amendments and start anew - in a way that fosters constructive public participation as well as includes a comprehensive impact study. We are therefore respectfully requesting that you ask the Office of Planning to establish a deliberate and inclusive process for the development of amendments to the Zoning Code affecting public charter schools, small private and parochial preschools and child development centers

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. We look forward to hearing from you and working with you to achieve an improved amendment. Please feel free to contact Dawn Alexander, MACECD Liaison, on (202) 835-1585 if you have any comments or questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julianne C. Johnson", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Mayor's Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Development
Julianne C. Johnson, Chairperson