

May 8, 2018

VIA IZIS

DC Board of Zoning Adjustment

441 4<sup>th</sup> Street, NW

Suite 200, South

Washington, DC 20001

Re: Board of Zoning Adjustment Case No. 19377

The Boundary Companies and the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle (the "Applicant")

3015 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE (Square 3648, Lots 1070 and 1071) (the "Application")

I am opposed to the application because it adversely affects the two schools both located in the old St. Paul's College building directly next to the project site. I have two children that attend Lee Montessori Public Charter School (an elementary school), which is one of the two schools (the other is Washington Leadership Academy, a high school).

**Summary of the Adverse Affects of the Application**

**1) Public Access Easement**

The project initially outlined in the Application, as proposed, prohibits pedestrian and vehicle access to the schools beyond one circuitous driveway easement, essentially making the schools surrounded by an island of private development that has only private streets, where public access is prohibited and enforced against by anyone who is not a homeowner.

Based on the testimony of the Applicant on April 25, 2018, it is my understanding that the Applicant intends to provide a public access easement to access all streets, sidewalks and green space in the proposed project area. This public access easement is crucial to the children and families who attend both Lee Montessori Elementary and Washington Leadership Academy High School, in order to access the school. The current tensions created by the residents of Chancellor's Row (the nearby development with similar fully-private streets) is untenable and likely to result in a serious incident in the near future.

I kindly request that the Board ensure that the Applicant provide the public access easement to all streets, sidewalks, and green space before this project is allowed to continue.

## **2) Green Space**

The current application contains only a very small amount of green space, and not surprisingly NONE of it is located near the school. Studies routinely show that children learn better when they have access to nature. If the Applicant wants to provide more than lip service to their claims of preserving the tenor and tone of the neighborhood, they would create more green space, position at least some to be easily accessible to the schoolchildren, and ensure they public access easement discussed above also applies to the green space.

## **3) Proposed Paulist's Building**

The Application includes a very large building on a very small plot of land, directly adjacent to the schools and the current Chancellor's Row housing. The Applicant purports that it will be a space for 15 aging Paulists, but there is no requirement that it will stay that way. There is every reason to believe that the Paulists will sell the building after development for conversion to high-density condominiums or apartments. The Application as proposed is already extremely dense for such a small area surrounding schools that will have 800+ in the near future, and the construction of what will likely be a very large apartment building (that will no doubt house more than 15 aging Paulists) adversely affects the two schools. I respectfully request that the Applicant be required to remove this building from the Application and instead use the area as green space.

## **4) 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE Narrowing**

Per DDOT's testimony, DDOT intends to narrow 4<sup>th</sup> Street two lanes with a middle turn lane.

The large number of cars coming in and out from the schools, and the lack of East-West connectivity between 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets NE (due to the private roads of Chancellor's Row), creates an already gridlocked situation during rush hour almost daily. Chancellor's Row has pushed hard to have the Applicant put a "green space" on Regents Place (which would otherwise create the possibility for East-West connectivity between 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets NE in the event of an emergency or natural disaster.

I agree with DDOT's condition that requires Regents Place have East-West connectivity, so the phony "green space" currently there to impede such connectivity should be removed.

## **5) Tree Preservation**

Please require long-term tree preservation measures. The Applicant overstates the tree survival rate. Please carefully consider the testimony given by Barbara Deutsch, as well as the lessons learned from the many trees that are dead/dying in the overbuilt Chancellor's Row neighborhood. Tree root structures extend 2-3 times the size of the tree's crown and the plan as shown does not adequately limit construction to protect existing trees.

## 6) Density

The overall density of the proposed project is still *extremely* dense given the area of the land and the lack of the ability for through traffic. Simply put, 60+ homes for this site is absurd, and will remove nearly all green space from the entire neighborhood. (Chancellor's Row has almost none and all of it is private.) I'd beg the Board to consider requiring that the Applicant lower the density and create more green space.

Thank you for considering my concerns and comments.

Sincerely,

Faye Hammersley

1312 Randolph St. NE

Washington, DC 20017

(Proud Lee Montessori parent)