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Secretary of the DC Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA):

RE: Letter in Support of BZA Application No. 20472: The River School Proposed New Campus at 4220 Nebraska Avenue

I'm a resident of the AU Park / Tenleytown neighborhood and parent of a current River School student. I'm writing in support of The River School's proposed relocation to Tenleytown at 4220 Nebraska Avenue NW.

In our ANC3E meetings a frequent topic of discussion is getting people out of cars and onto bikes or walking. Addressing climate change, bike safety, and traffic calming are all important to this neighborhood, city and region. River's proposed location close to Tenleytown Metro Station is much more transit accessible than the current MacArthur Blvd. location. I strongly support locating places that people commute to, like schools, close to Metro Stations. I support the value of environmental stewardship, which includes more density close to transit.

River has already addressed traffic volume and safety concerns and made significant changes to its proposal, considering neighboring community and ANC inputs. Changes that have been made to effectively mitigate vehicle trip impacts on neighborhood streets near the property include:

- Eliminating the curb cut on 42nd St. so all vehicles will access the site from Nebraska to reduce traffic on neighborhood streets
- Reducing number of projected vehicle trips in the AM peak and PM peaks with a combination of strategies such as mandatory carpooling, shuttle buses, and transit subsidies
 - Note that I already carpool to River's current location, though it's not mandatory
- Proposing signal modifications and infrastructure improvements on Nebraska Ave. at Van Ness and Warren, at a significant cost to River
- Strengthened monitoring and enforcement

The relocation will be safer for River students because drop-off and pick-up will be off the street, not on busy MacArthur Blvd. Some Tenleytown community members have been very focused on the perception that the school will bring a lot more traffic and cite safety as their main concern, without regard for safety of River students. Just because some River students come from MD and VA doesn't mean their safety is less important.

On a more personal note - my son transferred to River part way through second grade, he was struggling to learn to read and was feeling like he was behind his peers in school. River has small class sizes, low

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.20472
EXHIBIT NO.77

student-teacher ratios, and a unique model of having an educator and Speech Language Pathologist in each classroom. He was able to progress quickly at River and within 2 months gained a lot of confidence and no longer felt like he was behind the other kids. So, while I don't have a child with hearing loss, I can attest to how effective River's model is at helping a child with literacy challenges. I've also been very impressed with how well run the school is from a logistics standpoint. River held in-person classes for the entire 2020/2021 school year with minimal Covid closures. This was not the case for many of the independent schools in the area.

I'm confident that River will be able to deliver on all commitments it makes with respect to traffic management and safety, which is the major concern of community members expressed in ANC meetings and in neighborhood signage.

In conclusion, I support the new campus proposal by the River School because the move will make the school more transit accessible, will be safer for River students without worsening traffic and safety in the neighborhood, and will be an asset to the neighborhood I live in. Relocating the school from MacArthur Blvd. to Nebraska Avenue is better for Ward 3 and the city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sariah Tambre Leigh".

Sariah Tambre Leigh

CC: ANC3E Chair Jonathan Bender