

**From:** [Meg VanDeWeghe](#)  
**To:** [Byrne, Kathleen](#)  
**Cc:** [O'Neil, Patrick L.](#); [Ndou, Livhu](#); [Jay, Barbara](#); [vivianriefberg@gmail.com](#); [Jason Smolen](#); [Meza, Nicole](#); [Al Marah HOA](#); [garay.pedro@gmail.com](#); [Uy Hoang](#); [Kim Brinkman](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Holton-Arms School's Support of Motion to Postpone the July 17, 2025, Hearing for Special Exception Amendment (Case No. CBA-1174-E)  
**Date:** Friday, May 30, 2025 3:14:33 PM

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**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

Ms Byrne and Mr O'Neil,

Thank you for your notes and your agreement to postpone the hearing regarding the Holton Arms proposed expansion plans.

I should point out two things:

1) The AlMarahHOA@gmail email address is only for an HOA representing the residents in townhomes on Jenson Place (so does not include over 100 families living in single family homes in the rest of Al Marah who all are affected by Holton Arms traffic). Unfortunately, there is no active HOA for the entire Al Marah community, and so there is no single person who can speak on behalf of the community. For this reason, as Scott Thayer has pointed out to Holton Arms in past, the school should be sending communications/invitations to all of the residents of Al Marah individually (as we understand was done for residents living on the other side of River Road).

2) Since those of us who live in Al Marah are not zoning experts and only recently learned about the proposed Holton Arms expansion, we are having to spend a lot of time finding and reading all the relevant documents, and contacting all the relevant county and state officials. We believe that there were several deficiencies in the traffic study that Holton Arms commissioned, and we believe that a more robust and complete traffic study ought to be done. We are actively investigating how to get a new traffic study done, and hope to have a plan in place sometime this summer, with the intention of being ready for an October 20 hearing date. However, since we do not yet know who will be doing the traffic study or when it will be completed and ready for submission, we want to let you know that if an October 20 hearing date is set, we may need to ask for the hearing date to be postponed again if the new traffic study will not be ready for submission in time for an October 20 hearing. An alternate approach might be to simply wait a few weeks to set a new hearing date, since we hope a schedule for a new traffic study will be set within a few weeks.

Thank you for your assistance with this matter that could have such a significant negative impact on our community.

Best regards, Meg VanDeWeghe

On Fri, May 30, 2025 at 10:36 AM Byrne, Kathleen <[Kathleen.Byrne@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Kathleen.Byrne@montgomerycountymd.gov)> wrote:

All,

In light of the Applicant's consent to a postponement, the July 17, 2025 hearing date will be rescheduled. Since notice of the July 17, 2025 hearing was mailed, a new hearing notice must go out with a new hearing date. Would scheduling the hearing during the week of October 20, 2025 allow sufficient time for the Applicant to meet with the parties?

Katy Byrne

Kathleen E. Byrne

Director/Hearing Examiner

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**From:** O'Neil, Patrick L. <[ploneil@lercheearly.com](mailto:ploneil@lercheearly.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, May 29, 2025 10:46 AM

**To:** Byrne, Kathleen <[Kathleen.Byrne@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Kathleen.Byrne@montgomerycountymd.gov)>

**Cc:** Ndou, Livhu <[Livhu.Ndou@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Livhu.Ndou@montgomerycountymd.gov)>; Jay, Barbara <[Barbara.Jay@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Barbara.Jay@montgomerycountymd.gov)>; [vivianriefberg@gmail.com](mailto:vivianriefberg@gmail.com); Jason Smolen <[jasmolen@ruttenberg.law](mailto:jasmolen@ruttenberg.law)>; Meza, Nicole <[Nicole.Meza@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Nicole.Meza@montgomerycountymd.gov)>; Al Marah HOA <[almarahhoa@gmail.com](mailto:almarahhoa@gmail.com)>; [garay.pedro@gmail.com](mailto:garay.pedro@gmail.com); Uy Hoang <[uyhoang@gmail.com](mailto:uyhoang@gmail.com)>; Kim Brinkman <[Ksbrinkman@gmail.com](mailto:Ksbrinkman@gmail.com)>; Meg VanDeWeghe <[meg.vandeweghe@gmail.com](mailto:meg.vandeweghe@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** Holton-Arms School's Support of Motion to Postpone the July 17, 2025, Hearing for Special Exception Amendment (Case No. CBA-1174-E)

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

In response to the pending motion to postpone the July 17, 2025, hearing for the above-referenced Special Exception, the Applicant, Holton-Arms School, hereby expresses support for the motion.

Holton-Arms School appreciates the request raised by Ms. VanDeWeghe and other members of the Al Marah community to postpone the Special Exception Modification hearing from July to the fall. We also believe that a postponement will be beneficial to all interested parties, and allow time for additional conversations with residents of Al Marah and other neighborhoods in proximity to Holton-Arms School, to ensure that members of the community have the opportunity to share their questions and concerns directly with school leadership. In turn, Holton-Arms School will update

neighbors on the efforts the school has been actively undertaking, in coordination with County transportation agencies, to respond to community members' feedback and develop strategies to effectively mitigate potential transportation-related impacts associated with the Special Exception Modification proposal.

Over the coming weeks and into the fall, the Holton-Arms team will redouble its efforts to engage directly with residents of the community to share these new proposals, discuss neighbors' feedback, and update the Special Exception Modification application accordingly. In the meantime, community members are invited to visit the Special Exception website for general information about the proposal and the review and approval process. If neighbors have specific questions, would like to schedule a campus tour or meeting, or need any additional information related to the Special Exception Modification, they are encouraged to contact team member Sherry Rutherford at [sherry.rutherford@holton-arms.edu](mailto:sherry.rutherford@holton-arms.edu).

This response is submitted on behalf of Holton-Arms School by its counsel with copies to interested parties of record,

Patrick O'Neil

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**Patrick L. O'Neil**, Attorney

Pronouns: He, Him, His

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**From:** Byrne, Kathleen <[Kathleen.Byrne@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Kathleen.Byrne@montgomerycountymd.gov)>

**Sent:** Monday, May 19, 2025 10:36 AM

**To:** Meg VanDeWeghe <[meg.vandeweghe@gmail.com](mailto:meg.vandeweghe@gmail.com)>; O'Neil, Patrick L. <[ploneil@lerchearly.com](mailto:ploneil@lerchearly.com)>

**Cc:** Ndou, Livhu <[Livhu.Ndou@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Livhu.Ndou@montgomerycountymd.gov)>; Jay, Barbara

<[Barbara.Jay@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Barbara.Jay@montgomerycountymd.gov)>; [vivianriefberg@gmail.com](mailto:vivianriefberg@gmail.com); Jason Smolen

<[jsmolen@ruttenberg.law](mailto:jsmolen@ruttenberg.law)>; Meza, Nicole <[Nicole.Meza@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Nicole.Meza@montgomerycountymd.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Concerns about CASE NO. CBA-1174-E (Holton Arms proposed expansion)

Ms. VanDeWeghe and Mr. O'Neill,

I am responding directly to your email below and am also directing my response to Mr. Patrick O'Neil, attorney for the Applicant. Please note I have removed Councilmember Freidson's Office and Council President Stewart's Office from this email thread. Due to rules governing ex parte communications with Councilmembers while a land use matter is pending before OZAH, the Councilmembers cannot have direct communication with any party, participant or constituent regarding those matters. I've copied Ms. Livhu Ndou, Senior Legislative Attorney for the Council, so she is aware of the email and my response to you. Additionally, I have copied the Barbara Jay, the Board of Appeals Executive Director, Ms. Riefberg and Mr. Smolen. Ms. Riefberg and Mr. Smolen previously requested to be included in any hearing scheduling discussions.

While OZAH has received several emails and letters from neighbors regarding the pending application, none of those individuals requested that they be considered "parties of record." OZAH Rule 3.1 describes "parties of record" to include applicants for a zoning action or a conditional use, individuals and organizations testifying at an OZAH public hearing and those who have requested and been approved by the Hearing Examiner to be parties of record. Anyone may testify at the OZAH public hearing and will be automatically considered a party of record.

In your email below you specifically request a postponement of the July 17, 2025 hearing until September when more residents are available to testify at the hearing. Per OZAH Rule of Procedure 3.9 any preliminary motion made before a hearing, like the one you have made for a postponement, must be sent to all "parties of record" and must include a certification of the date mailed. The rule further requires that those parties of record that receive the motion must respond to it within 10 days of the certified mailing date. Mr. O'Neil, as the attorney for the Applicant, a party of record, must have an opportunity to respond to your request for a postponement.

While your request was not "mailed", as the assigned Hearing Examiner, I will accept the postponement request and treat it as a preliminary motion. Via this email, I am requesting Mr. O'Neil respond to your motion before I make any decision regarding a postponement. Thank you.

Katy Byrne

Kathleen E. Byrne

Director/Hearing Examiner

Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings

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240-777-6660

[Kathleen.byrne@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Kathleen.byrne@montgomerycountymd.gov)

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**From:** Meg VanDeWeghe <[meg.vandeweghe@gmail.com](mailto:meg.vandeweghe@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Friday, May 16, 2025 6:24 PM

**To:** Byrne, Kathleen <[Kathleen.Byrne@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Kathleen.Byrne@montgomerycountymd.gov)>

**Cc:** Friedson's Office, Councilmember <[Councilmember.Friedson@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Councilmember.Friedson@montgomerycountymd.gov)>; Stewart's Office, Councilmember <[Councilmember.Stewart@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Councilmember.Stewart@montgomerycountymd.gov)>

**Subject:** Concerns about CASE NO. CBA-1174-E (Holton Arms proposed expansion)

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

Dear Ms Byrne,

My husband and I are residents of Al Marah (a community in Bethesda across from the Holton Arms School). We and our neighbors are quite concerned about the Holton Arms proposed expansion which would increase enrollment by 30% (some 200 students). We believe that the proposal not only would cause logistical nightmares for our neighborhood (which ONLY can be accessed using the portion of River Road affected by Holton Arms traffic), but would decrease property values in our neighborhood.

Unfortunately, Holton Arms has not been providing information to local residents (despite our repeated requests that they do so), and the hearing on this matter has now been set for July 17 (a date when many of our neighbors will be out of town). We request that you postpone the hearing until September when more residents will be in town and will be able to attend the hearing in person to explain our concerns about traffic along River Road and through our community.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Meg VanDeWeghe



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<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cybersecurity>