

Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings (OZAH)
100 Maryland Ave #200
Rockville, MD 20850
ATTN: Ms. Lynn Robeson Hannan and OZAH Board Members

March 23, 2026

Dear Ms. Lynn Robeson Hannan and OZAH Board Members,

I am writing in response to the March 3rd submission by Holton Arms School, a private school in Bethesda, Maryland. Specifically, I am submitting an updated letter to be included in the record in addition to my previous correspondence. The purpose of this letter is to express my **opposition** to new components of the Holton Arms expansion proposals about which I have learned, in addition to reconfirming my previously expressed opposition to the proposed expansion in the Special Exception modification case, CBA-1174E.

Together with my family, I live in Al Marah, a residential neighborhood with approximately 150 single-family homes and 22 townhomes. My neighborhood is located in Bethesda, just inside the Beltway and directly across River Road from Holton Arms.

I am opposed to the Holton Arms expansion plans, including the proposals which would:

- (i) increase academic year enrollment from 670 to 870 (with no mandatory traffic mitigation);
- (ii) increase summer camp enrollment from 665 to 970 (with no mandatory traffic mitigation);
- (iii) increase rentals of school facilities to outside groups on weeknights and weekends (with no mandatory traffic mitigation);
- (iv) construct a dedicated lefthand turn lane on the Al Marah side of Royal Dominion Drive (the street I live on);
- (v) allow for using the Primary Day School (“PDS”), a K-2 private school located on the corner of River Road and the Al Marah side of Royal Dominion Drive, for Holton Arms overflow parking and using a shuttle bus to go back and forth between PDS and Holton.

The current level of traffic risk posed by Holton-Arms' current enrollment is dangerous for pedestrians, cyclists and car drivers and passengers. If any proposal were to be approved, the situation would get even worse.

Contrary to some people's perceptions, many families with young children live in Al Marah, not just retirees. Dozens of children (including my own) wait at Montgomery County Public Schools (MPCS) bus stops, which have no sidewalks, in the "cut-through" area along Burdette Road and Royal Dominion Drive, where cars and SUVs are often zooming at high speeds to get to the Holton Arms private school. Also, vehicles are often parked on both sides of the street along this cut-through area due to private school PDS traffic, and MCPS school buses and pedestrians already experience difficulties passing, even at current traffic levels.

Besides being a safety hazard to schoolchildren, this cut-through area within Al Marah has become hazardous for the many people who are cycling, elderly persons who are walking, and people who are entering the neighborhood using the public transportation bus M82 (which stops at both intersections of River Road with Burdette and Royal Dominion Drive in both directions of River Road).

Further, whenever a vehicle breaks down on River Road, a frequent occurrence, they pull into the cut-through area to wait for repair and tow trucks. This cut-through area is already congested, and any proposed expansion by Holton Arms would further compromise the safety of everyone in Al Marah.

I have witnessed pedestrians nearly being hit by speeding vehicles and witnessed near head-on collisions between vehicles in this cut-through area. It would be tragic if a child, elderly person, or anyone else were killed or injured should any of the above-mentioned proposals be approved.

The Holton Arms' proposed expansion, in all its aspects, would pose a great danger to peoples' lives and safety in Al Marah. **For the safety of our family and our neighbors, we hope you will make recommendations to oppose the proposed Holton Arms expansion.**

Thank you for your consideration of this matter,



Laura Maratou-Kolias
7509 Royal Dominion Drive
Bethesda, Maryland 20817