

J. D. Thomas
7305 Burdette Court
Bethesda, Maryland 20817

November 11, 2025

By email: ozah@montgomerycountymd.gov

Office of Zoning And Administrative Hearings
Montgomery County, Maryland
100 Maryland Avenue, Room 200
Rockville, MD 20902

Re: Special Exception Application of Holton-Arms School, Case No. CBA-1174-E

To The Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings:

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of Holton-Arms School and its efforts to seek a special exception major modification.

For more than two-thirds of my life I have lived within 100 meters of the Holton campus. Four years before I was born—and six years before Holton moved to its River Road campus in 1963—my parents bought their first home at the corner of Burning Tree Road and Melody Lane. As a child I remember catching tadpoles and frogs in the marshes adjoining Booze Creek. As a teenager I remember cutting through the woods along the creek for Holton's spring fair, as well as to take tennis lessons.

More than 20 years after moving from my childhood home at Melody Lane, my wife Laurie and I moved with our children to our current home at Burdette Court and raised our family there. Other than when our daughter as a young child attended Holton's summer camp, our only connection to the school has been as a neighbor. And we have always found Holton and its people to be extremely and uniformly good neighbors. Holton owns several properties along our street. And while we do not have frequent contact with the school's staff (including multiple school heads, administrators, and security and grounds personnel) our interactions have always been defined by decency, professionalism and an awareness of the special, even unique place that the school occupies in our community.

Believe us when we say that we are concerned about the nature and pace of the changes that are overtaking our world and our community. There are times when we, too, would like to turn back the clock on some of the "progress" that has occurred in our lifetime and that at times can be overwhelming. I was alive (and Holton's neighbor) before the Beltway was completed—and also when the large subdivision across River Road used to be a horse farm. It would be nice to live in a smaller and simpler time and place. But for good and ill, we don't. And while we too worry about unchecked expansion and development, our belief in the critical importance of our schools and education (whether public or private) lies at our core. Schools, like the rest of us,

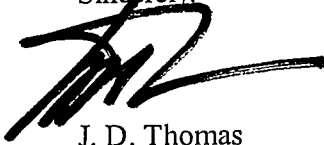
Exhibit 28(h)
OZAH Case No: CBA-1174-E

must adapt to our changing world. But their work of equipping tomorrow's problem-solvers, contributors and leaders requires flexibility, even deference.

In the 40-plus years that I have lived "next door" I have always found Holton-Arms and its people to be respectful, thoughtful, considerate and reasonable. That uniformly positive experience generates every expectation that in both its planning for the future, and in the implementation of whatever plans are approved, Holton-Arms will continue to fairly and carefully balance its mission, needs and interests with those of its neighbors.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. D. Thomas", with a stylized, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

J. D. Thomas