

Dear Nancy,

It was useful to hear the updated River School transportation plan if you purchase the Buchanan Estate and begin construction. Your current plan differs in several ways to the transit document provided to the BZA on February 17, 2021.

In an attempt to reconcile some of the details presented on April 22, 2021 to members of the Tenleytown community, including several “200 Footers,” we compiled questions and concerns for which we would like timely responses. In addition, we would like to obtain the slides and the recording from the “listening session,” as soon as possible. Please let us know when and where those will be publicly available.

Please provide written response to the following questions and comments:

1. What would be the total estimate of the number of people on the proposed River School property **each day** including all students, faculty, staff, visitors?
2. Completing a transit plan after the school has purchased the property and constructed a school is too late in a neighborhood already plagued with traffic and parking issues. Please review your timeline and provide a new timeline to the community with your written responses.
3. If the River School purchases the Buchanan Estate, and the BZA approves the special exception request, when would you begin talks with the ANC about rules and sanctions related to construction? When would construction begin? Where would the construction vehicles enter and exit the property? What would be the hours of construction? Would construction take place at night and on weekends? Who would monitor the traffic, parking, noise and safety issues related to construction and workers? Would the 42nd Street curb-cut be used during construction?
4. If there were only 29 parking spaces on the proposed campus available for teachers, families and patient families visiting the clinic, and the child care

center, where would excess cars park? How would the school control parking in the neighborhood by school-related cars and the public visitors?

5. How many cars each day would be related to families of children in pre-k and younger who your colleagues stated will not be required to carpool?
6. Would there be a drop off AND pick up carpool mandate for K-6th grade families in perpetuity?
7. In the discussion held in December 2020, between the River School and the “200 Footers,” you made clear that you would close off the curb-cut on 42nd Street based on neighbor concerns and clearly stated that you would not use it **at all** for **any** entry and exit. Yet, in your April 22, 2021 presentation, your Transportation expert said that DDOT would likely “force you to make one.” Please explain that change.

Based on the plans you have shared, the school would have entry and egress on Nebraska that is fully compliant with safety and code requirements so therefore it would not be necessary to add an entry/egress on 42nd or Warren. Clearly, despite the verbal proclamation that the school would not have any entry/egress on 42nd, the school is exploring the option of maintaining the curb cut in some capacity. If the school had an entry/exit for bikes and pedestrians on 42nd what would it look like, and how would the school control drop off, pick up and parking by parents who choose not to wait in the long lines on Nebraska each day. **You and your colleagues stated in the meeting in the meeting on April 22, 2021, that currently your parents don’t abide by your requests to not come early to queue up for pick up. Yet, they come early every day and queue up despite the school telling them not to. If you cannot control your parents now, what makes you think that you will be able to control their driving behavior in this new location where parking, traffic and safety are already major issues?**

8. What do you mean by “peak hours for the area” in reference to your chosen proposed drop off and pick up times each day? There are 12+ schools and

child care centers in the area, a senior center and a senior living residence as well as an active public library.

The community considers “peak hours” of particularly dangerous traffic, from 7:30-9AM, 12-1PM, 2:15-4:15PM and 5:00-6:30PM. With significant speeding and erratic traffic at other times of day and night.

9. The size and scope of the River School plan would be too large for the busy corner where the Buchanan Estate is located. How would you assure the community that you would actually accommodate the safety, traffic and parking issues that the community already faces BEFORE you begin construction?

10. Sanctions on River families after 6 transportation-related violations would not curb behavior. Changing to 3 or less might make a minor impact. Please develop and share a new sanction plan for school related visitors and families.

11. What sanctions would be put on the school, before year 5, to encourage timely compliance with your transportation plan? How would you control the visitors to the school who do not have to sign a contract to abide by the traffic and parking rules? Please reevaluate your plans and submit them to the ANC and community for review.

12. In your April 22, 2021 presentation, your traffic experts said that they looked at Maret, St. Patricks and the Lab School as well as the old GDS location for transportation related data. Please explain why you have not reached out to schools, child care and senior care centers in Tenleytown that serve young and or vulnerable populations like Janney Elementary, National Presbyterian School, St. Columba’s, GDS, the Public Library, the Iona Senior Center and Sidwell Friends.

13. The number of car trips estimated by the River School has changed dramatically from what was submitted to the BZA in their application for

Special Exception. Yet, the math still does not work. Please review your calculations and provide new calculations related to the number of estimated total cars, bikes and pedestrians to and from the school each day and timing for drop off and pick up per car. Please also show the delta from your current location.

14. Based on the age of your student population, with many under age 3, why would Tenleytown neighbors have any confidence in your assertion that a large percentage of your students would be able to walk and bike up the steep hills and dangerous streets between Spring Valley, Palisades and Tenleytown each day?
15. What would the school do to stop River-parent cars from Maryland and Virginia from using side streets to get to the “mandatory” right turn entry into the campus from Nebraska Avenue? In the April 22, 2021 meeting, there was no response to questions from the neighbors about MD and VA vehicles that will likely approach the campus from points other than southbound Nebraska Avenue.
16. The potential new traffic caused by River School would be more far reaching throughout Tenleytown than you have addressed in any of your plans. One important example of the significant negative impact on the community would be cars coming from Massachusetts Avenue to get to school each day. What would River School do to curb traffic turning onto 45th Street NW from Massachusetts Ave to access Van Ness each morning and then back in the afternoon? This route would take drivers past the coveted community resource and very active, Friendship “Turtle” Park. Any additional cars would exacerbate the already dangerous traffic caused by cut-through cars. Please provide a plan to address that concern.
17. 20016 is a large zip code. How many current River families live up to 8 blocks of the proposed location at 4220 Nebraska?

18. How many current River faculty, students and staff ride their bikes or walk to the River School's Palisades location each day?

19. How would the school manage cars leaving the campus after drop off and pick up when there is a full bike lane on Nebraska Avenue?

20. DDOT has created several "fixes" to traffic issues in Tenleytown to help deal with traffic safety and parking issues. Unfortunately, many of their "fixes" have made pedestrian safety, traffic and parking issues worse. How do you expect that DDOT would "fix" the traffic safety and parking issues that it is clear the relocation of your school to Tenleytown would cause?

In addition to the traffic-related concerns noted in the aforementioned questions, the community has many additional concerns about the fact that you would like to purchase an historic residential property; rezone the property to construct a large school, massive child care center and public health clinic; destroy the historic gardens and neighborhood greenspace; and create immense amounts of new traffic, safety and parking issues. We look forward to receiving your responses to our questions above and having the opportunity to participate in a larger scale community-wide meeting, to include representatives from neighboring schools, that would allow for more in-depth conversation about all aspects of the River School plan.

Sincerely,

Concerned Citizens of Tenleytown and the Tenleytown Preservation Association