

March 25, 2026

Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings
Stella B. Werner Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue, Room 200
Rockville, MD 20850

Attn. Kathleen E. Byrne, Director/Hearing Examiner
Oppose Holton Arms Proposed Expansion Plans – Case No. CBA-1174-E

Dear Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings:

We have previously submitted letters in opposition to the egregious plans by Holton Arms to expand the use of our neighborhood as their private driveway and parking lot for large outside groups. We are opposed to the original & updated Holton Arms' proposals that would significantly increase the academic enrollment, summer camp enrollment, and the rental of facilities to outside groups on weeknights and weekends without ANY mandatory or enforceable traffic mitigation.

As residents of the neighborhood for over 20 years, Holton Arms has never provided us any information about their proposed expansion, and we only learned about this from other neighbors. The residents who live near St. Barts and St. Marks and surrounding neighborhoods as well as the thousands of Maryland residents who commute via River Road will also be negatively impacted by the Holton Arms expansion – yet Holton Arms or frankly our statewide and local elected officials – have made no effort to educate the public about the adverse traffic and noise effects of Holton Arm's significant unchecked expansion.

As Maryland voters and taxpayers, this process clearly gives the developers and private entities seeking to expand their bottom-line an unfair advantage. This explains why traffic congestion along River Road has significantly increased over the past 20 years. The safety of Maryland residents and the noise pollution caused by the growing traffic congestion – caused in part by Holton Arms refusal to mandate busing and carpooling – should be OZAH's number one, two and three priorities!

The fact of the matter is that most of our neighbors oppose the expansion plan and only the limited number of Holton Arms' families support it. Holton Arms has a well-funded campaign to support its application but has made no effort to work with our neighborhood and frankly has made it clear that they don't care what we think and are relying on their attorneys and planning consultants to push this through.

As our District 16 legislators pointed out in their 11/4/25 opposition letter and request for an independent study conducted by state official's vs the private school/developer study – our neighborhood is “uniquely affected by traffic to and from Holton Arms and Primary Day School (PDS) – the proposed expansion will exacerbate the neighborhood’s current safety challenges, **increasing the possibility of pedestrian injuries and fatalities or other traffic related incidents.**”

While we have yet to witness a pedestrian injury or death, we witness on a weekly basis – Holton Arms students, parents, and faculty racing through our neighborhood to avoid the traffic back-ups on River Road. We have witnessed a head on collision and have avoided many collisions ourselves over the years when Holton and PD cars routinely do not stop when turning left onto Royal Dominion Drive from Burdette Rd during the morning rush hour. We do not have sidewalks or signs and PDS parents routinely park on the street creating safety issues daily. When PDS has any kind of event, **cars park on both sides of the street creating serious safety and traffic issues.**

Holton Arms has refused to consider mandatory busing and carpooling – something that many other private schools are required to do after working with surrounding neighborhoods. Holton Arms’ original proposal would significantly increase traffic congestion without offering ANY meaningful mitigation. Their updated request now includes constructing a dedicated left-hand turn lane on the Al Marah side of Royal Dominion Drive; and using the PDS for Holton Arms overflow parking and a shuttle bus going back and forth between PDS and Holton Arms.

It is bad enough that Holton Arms wants to significantly increase the number of cars coming in and out of the school by increasing enrollments, summer camps, and renting out the facility to outside groups on weekends and weeknights without ANY meaningful mitigation – now Holton wants to make our neighborhood their PERMANENT driveway by constructing a dedicated left hand lane – which they admit is designed to improve the “pass through” to their school and encourage their students, parents, faculty and delivery/service providers to continue to use our neighborhood. The construction of a dedicated left-hand lane will not only increase Holton Arms traffic in our neighborhood but make it even harder for Al-Marrah residents to turn right heading into DC.

Finally, perhaps the most egregious of all of Holton Arms’ aggressive proposals is the use of PDS for overflow parking for outside groups on weeknights and weekends. We have witnessed near misses of cars hitting pedestrians when PDS has an event and cars are parked on both sides of the street. It is impossible for cars to travel in both directions when cars are parked on both sides of the street – coupled with Holton’s private shuttle bus coming in and out – this will cause serious safety and traffic flow issues.

If the County approves Holton Arms' proposal -- especially without requiring mandatory busing/carpooling for existing students -- there will be nothing our statewide and local elected officials can do to "**put the genie back in the bottle**" when traffic congestion dramatically increases and our neighborhood becomes Holton Arms' permanent driveway -- putting our residents/taxpayers lives at risk while driving down our property values.

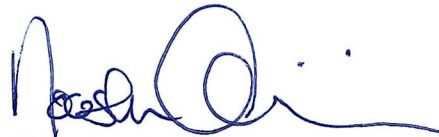
Before Holton Arms is allowed to expand their future student enrollment -- their current students should be required by the County and State of Maryland to **use mandatory busing and carpooling** to mitigate the increased traffic they are causing. Holton Arms already causes serious traffic and noise issues on River Road and in our neighborhood -- as Holton Arms students (many coming from VA and DC), parents, faculty and delivery services routinely use our neighborhood a pass through without ANY enforcement or concerns about the safety of our children who attend public schools or MD residents trying to commute to work in the mornings.

Please do not disregard the concerns of our neighborhood as well as the surrounding neighborhoods and commuters so that a private school can expand without offering or agreeing to ANY mitigation while seeking to make our neighborhood without sidewalks or stop signs their PERMANENT DRIVEWAY!

As long-time Maryland voters and taxpayers, we respectfully ask you to protect the health & safety of our residents and children and **OPPOSE** the Holton Arms' proposal! Thank you for your consideration and public service!



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