

March 18th, 2026

Dear Ms. Lynn Robeson Hannan and OZAH Board Members

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed expansion by Holton Arms School under CBA-1174E which would increase academic year enrollment from 670 to 870, increase summer camp enrollment from 665 to 970, and allow facility rentals to groups as large as 870.

I live in Al Marah, a community with approximately 150 single family homes and 22 townhomes in Bethesda, MD. Al Marah is located just inside the 495 Beltway off River Road and is directly across from Holton Arms.

Al Marah already is negatively impacted by Holton Arms traffic on River Road since we only can enter our community using either Burdette Rd. or Royal Dominion Drive, both of which are on the stretch of River Road directly affected by Holton Arms traffic.

Holton Arms seems determined to expand their academic and camp enrollments in ways that they admit would result in hundreds of additional cars entering and leaving the school each day. Holton Arms also is determined to rent out facilities to as many as 870 non-Holton people on evenings and weekends, which their traffic consultant admitted would result in "huge surges" of traffic along River Road. This not only affects our neighborhood, but also commuters and other traffic using River Road.

In addition, Holton student families and faculty/staff already are using our neighborhood as a cut through to avoid the left turn lane on River Rd into Holton. They enter our neighborhood on Burdette and leave via Royal Dominion to enter Holton. Many of them use excessive speed while doing this. This not only increases local traffic, but is a safety hazard, especially since children are waiting for school buses on this route at the times the cars are whizzing by to save time.

I object to Holton's proposal to construct a left turn only lane on Royal Dominion. This would only increase traffic cutting through the neighborhood. I also object to the proposal to use Primary Day School's ("PDS") parking lot for overflow parking. We already have issues, whenever there is a PDS event. PDS cars create a hazard by parking on both sides of Al Marah streets to avoid getting stuck in the traffic exiting the PDS parking lot at the end of an event. I am sure that the same situation would occur if Holton was allowed to use the PDS parking lot for overflow parking.

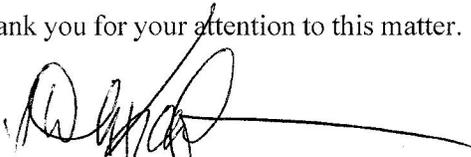
I would like to add that I never received any notification from Holton regarding their plans. I only found out from neighbors through word of mouth.

I do not think that Holton Arms should be allowed to expand their student or camp enrollment, nor rent their facilities to large groups. In fact, I would like to see measures taken now, even with their present enrollment to prevent cars from using our neighborhood as a cut through.

Restricting traffic to only right or left turns at the intersection of Royal Dominion and River and prohibiting going straight into the Holton entrance would prevent this unless Holton drivers are willing to break the law.

I hope you will make recommendations to oppose the proposed Holton Arms expansion and to help protect our safety, our children, our access to our neighborhood, and our property values.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.


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