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3/15/2026

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CBA-1174-E

Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings
Montgomery County, Maryland
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Opposition to Holton Arms School Expansion – Case No. CBA-1174E

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a resident of the Al Marah community, and I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Holton Arms School expansion outlined in Case No. CBA-1174E. My concerns are based on direct, ongoing impacts to safety, traffic flow, and neighborhood quality of life, as well as the lack of meaningful communication from Holton Arms to affected residents.

1. Pedestrian Safety and Cut-Through Traffic

For years, Holton Arms traffic has used Al Marah as a cut-through to avoid congestion on River Road. This has resulted in repeated safety issues for pedestrians, dog-walkers, and children boarding and exiting school buses. Cars traveling at high speeds through our neighborhood have created multiple near-miss incidents.

These safety concerns will only increase if enrollment rises and if additional traffic is funneled through Al Marah without enforceable mitigation measures.

2. Opposition to a Dedicated Left-Turn Lane on the Al Marah Side of Royal Dominion Drive

I strongly oppose the construction of a dedicated left-turn lane on the Al Marah side of Royal Dominion Drive. This change would:

- Make it easier for Holton Arms drivers to cut through our neighborhood
- Increase traffic volume and speed on our residential streets
- Make it more difficult for Al Marah residents to safely turn right onto Royal Dominion Drive
- Potentially require removal of mature trees that contribute to the character and environmental health of our community

This proposal would effectively turn Al Marah into a de facto driveway for Holton Arms, which is unacceptable and contrary to the safety and interests of residents.

3. Lack of Communication and Notice to Al Marah Residents

Despite statements made by Holton Arms representatives, most residents of Al Marah were not informed about the school's expansion plans. Many of us were not invited to the November 13, 2024 meeting at Holton Arms and have never received direct communication from the school regarding the proposed changes.

We learned about the expansion only through neighbors, not through any outreach from Holton Arms. Once informed, we expressed clear opposition to the proposed increases in enrollment, facility rentals, and traffic-generating activities.

4. Additional Concerns Regarding Items 1–5 in the Updated Application

I oppose the following requests in Holton Arms' updated application:

- Increasing academic year enrollment from 670 to 870
- Increasing summer camp enrollment from 665 to 970
- Expanding rental of facilities to outside groups on evenings and weekends
- Constructing a dedicated left-turn lane on the Al Marah side of Royal Dominion Drive
- Using Primary Day School for overflow parking with shuttle buses traveling through Al Marah

Each of these proposals would increase traffic on River Road and within Al Marah, worsen safety risks, and degrade the residential character of our neighborhood.

I respectfully request that OZAH deny the proposed expansion or, at minimum, require enforceable traffic mitigation measures and meaningful community engagement before any changes are approved. The cumulative impact of these proposals would significantly and negatively affect the safety, environment, and daily life of Al Marah residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sara Qureshi

 3/15/2026