

David A. Javdan

November 12, 2025

Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings
Council Office Building, Room 200
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Re: Local Resident in Support of Holton Arms School Special Exception Request - So Called "Community" Organizations do NOT Speak for Residents

I write to strongly support the Holton Arms School Special Exception request and object to the characterization of those opposing the exception as somehow speaking for the community.

I have been a Bethesda resident for 15 years. I reside at 7205 Arrowood Road with my wife and three children -- in the neighborhood association which the Bradley Boulevard Citizens Association (BBCA) purports to represent. Prior to that, our family lived at 8504 Burning Tree Road (also located within the BBCA) from 2011-2019. Both of these homes are a mere two minute drive from the Holton-Arms School. I know most of my neighbors and regard them as friends.

I believe most of my neighbors would be mortified to find out that their name is being invoked to keep others of their friends and neighbors from having greater access to the facilities and programs Holton Arms offers. We are strongly in favor of community access to all. Those opposed to the Special Exception seek the opposite.

No one was ever elected to represent me and my neighbors. The BBCA's position opposing the Special Exception Request does not represent all of the community, in fact, likely does not represent the majority of the Community. I'm not sure that most members of the community even know the BBCA exists. I object to the BBCA purporting to represent my interests in this matter.

Holton Arms School moved to Bethesda in 1963, longer than most of us have been alive and surely well before most of the current residents built or purchased their homes in the surrounding community. Its existence and that of other independent schools in the area is part of the reason why people want to live here. When we moved to Bethesda and our young children were at Burning Tree School (MCPS), preferential access was given to local residents for Holton's Creative Summer program, and the only complaint was that the slots filled too fast. Slots would literally fill in 5 minutes because of this artificially created

scarcity. I remember mothers at Burning Tree literally weeping because a bad internet connection cost their kids the opportunity to attend Creative Summer. Our children missed out on a valuable summer opportunity when we first moved to the neighborhood because my wife apparently failed to log onto the website for signups quickly enough.

What I find most offensive about the opposition to the Special Exception is that this is aimed at a school - one that has been here over 60 years. This isn't building a new Starbucks or a new strip mall. This is a school. A school!! One that has been here forever. This is about providing opportunities to more people and providing access to the opportunities Holton has to offer. Both for students but also for community use. Holton has to turn away more students than it would like, many who live right here in our neighborhood. Denying the proposed Special Exception modifications is literally denying a score of young women the education of their dreams - and others in the community access to a great resources, a state of the art indoor swimming facility, tennis courts, and soccer fields to just name a few.

I also find some of the attacks to be misogynistic. Perhaps not in intent but unquestionably in impact. Only a few minutes away - literally in the same zip code - we have an all male school that is subject to none of the same restrictions or objections. As a result, Landon has brand new beautiful buildings and facilities and are a gift to our community. Meanwhile the facilities at Holton - an all-girls school - are separate and wholly unequal. It is unable to modernize.

Girls are not second-class citizens and should not continue to be treated as such. Perhaps that is not the intent but that is the impact of the current regime. How can this be allowed to stand? It is offensive and it is wrong.

Thank you for your kind consideration. I am available for any questions.

Respectfully submitted,



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