River Oaks Elementary School

12401 Scofield Farms Drive, Austin, TX

(512) 594-5000 Fax (512) 594-5005

November 6th, 2015

Austin City Council
301 West 2nd Street
Austin, TX 78701

Mayor Adler, Mayor Pro Tem Tovo, and City Council Members,

I am writing you in my capacity as Principal of River Oaks Elementary School to express our school community's deep concern about the recommendation of City Staff regarding Zoning Case C14-2014-0193.

In its neighborhood traffic analysis, the City's Planning and Development Review Department recommends that a vehicular connection be established between the River Oaks Neighborhood (directly east of the school) and the proposed Cearly Development (directly south of the school).

We are already very apprehensive about the anticipated increase in vehicular traffic on Scofield Farms Drive due to the connection of that street to Cedar Bend Drive, but it is our understanding that the right-of-way has already been deeded to the City and there is no way to prevent that particular connection.

As a result, we are doubly concerned that the connection of Cearly Drive to Old Cedar Lane would result in even more vehicular traffic passing in front of the school.

Twice a day, 9 buses arrive at River Oaks Elementary for student drop-off and pick-up. Additional vehicular traffic would result in delayed student drop-off, as buses would have to wait longer for an opportunity to turn left into the school parking lot. Such delays would impair our ability to begin the school day on time, and would result in disruptions to the learning environment.

Far more importantly, we believe additional vehicular traffic on Scofield Farms Drive will compromise the safety of our students and parents. Due to limited parking at the school, many parents park their cars along Scofield Farms when dropping off and picking up their children. Many if not most of these parents and kids exit their vehicles directly onto the street. Moreover, those who park on the other side of Scofield Farms from the school must then walk across the street and back – without the benefit of a crossing guard. Obviously, this is an unsafe situation that would be made even more dangerous by introducing additional traffic to Scofield Farms via the aforementioned connection of Old Cedar Lane to Cearly Drive.

Accordingly, River Oaks Elementary joins the River Oaks Neighborhood Association and MMK Ventures LLC in strong opposition to the vehicular connection between Old Cedar Lane and Cearly Drive. In unison with RONA and MMK, we request that the Council approve the Zoning Request with the Conditional Overlay recommended by the Zoning and Platting Commission, which prohibits the vehicular connection, establishes safe connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, and provides a "crash gate" for emergency vehicular access to the Cearly Development.

Thank you for your consideration, and please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about our concerns.

Sincerely,

Aracely Suarez
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