



THE MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

6820 Pacific Lane

Annandale, Virginia 22003

703-256-9577

May 22, 2006

Dear Neighbor:

MSNV would like to share some important news with you and ask for your help. As you know, our school has been located at our current site for nearly forty years. We educate children from age two through third grade and, following the Montessori philosophy, teach them to be well-mannered citizens, friends with nature, and to love learning. In accordance with our long-term strategic plan, MSNV is currently evaluating scenarios that would improve the facilities and programs offered to our children. A key goal of our plan is to provide "a complete Montessori program extending from pre-primary through sixth grade." In keeping with this aspect of our mission, MSNV seeks to add an upper elementary program (grades four through six). Our teaching philosophy compels us to support the development of the child through "arts, music, physical education, languages, and nature." We believe that expansion will also improve the very limited space currently available for these important components of the children's education.

How could MSNV's strategic plan affect you? MSNV is in the process of conducting a feasibility study to determine whether we can achieve our expansion plans at our current location. Our first choice is to stay in the neighborhood because we truly love our environment. However, if we cannot achieve our goals here, then we must explore the option of selling our property and looking elsewhere. We understand that any initiative to grow here may raise some concerns with our closest neighbors. We recognize that traffic will be your principal concern and must be addressed to your satisfaction in order for you to support a growth initiative. Before we make any decisions about whether to stay, we would like to work with you to develop viable traffic mitigation alternatives.

MSNV shares many of your concerns about speed and safety on the neighborhood streets caused by cut through traffic. However, we also acknowledge that our presence in the neighborhood contributes to the traffic load. To that end, MSNV has formed a traffic subcommittee to discuss ways in which we can minimize the traffic impact of our future growth on the neighborhood. We would like to share some of our preliminary ideas with you. The following list identifies a few possible ways in which MSNV could mitigate our traffic impact on the neighborhood:

- ***Stagger Start and Dismissal Times.*** By beginning and ending our preschool and elementary programs at different times, we could minimize congestion associated with all of our families dropping off and picking up children at the same time.

- ***Encourage More Extensive Carpooling.*** While many of our families already carpool, we would like to explore additional ways to further encourage carpooling.
- ***Explore Limited Morning Bus Pick Up.*** By transporting some of our elementary-aged students in the morning by bus from designated pick up locations near the school, we could reduce the number of trips into and out of the neighborhood in the morning.
- ***Investigate Traffic Calming/Enforcement Measures.*** MSNV could assist the neighborhood and Fairfax County in researching potential traffic calming and/or law enforcement measures such as speed tables, stop signs, police speed traps, etc.

We would also like to hear your ideas. MSNV sincerely believes that if we work closely with you, our neighbors, we can significantly reduce the impact of our growth on the environment and the neighborhood. To help us accomplish this goal, we invite you--our closest neighbors, MSNV parents who live in the neighborhood, and members of the Hillbrook Civic Association Board--to participate in a traffic focus group. We would enjoy working with you to develop viable solutions to traffic issues within the neighborhood. We hope that you will accept our invitation to work with us.

After speaking with the Hillbrook Board to coordinate, we would like to propose 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 14 at MSNV for the traffic focus group. One of our Board members will attempt to follow up with you in the coming weeks to discuss. Of course, we are also willing to work with the community to address issues other than traffic. If you have any suggestions or immediate concerns, please feel free to contact our Board of Trustees President and School Growth Chairperson, Julia Kurtz, at (703) 534-6805 or our Co-op Chairperson, Joan Fisher, at (703) 764-9212.

Sincerely,



Julia Kurtz
President, MSNV Board of Trustees