McLean Citizens Association (MCA) Resolution
Appeal Application A 2004-DR-047
McLean Bible Church
Tax Map Reference: 28-2 ((1)) 10, 11 and 18

Whereas, in April, 2004, McLean Bible Church (MBC) requested an interpretation of their Special Exceptions (SEA 78-D-098, SEA 78-D-098-2 and SEA 78-D-098-3) with regard to:

a. the presence and location of six permanent shipping containers and two trailers;
b. the presence and location of two temporary shipping containers for construction;
c. the presence and location of two clothing bins; and
d. the operation of graduate seminary classes by Capital Bible Seminary (CBS) on the property, and

Whereas, Zoning Division determined, and so notified the Church in a letter dated October 28, 2004, that:

a. the permanent placement of the six shipping containers (40 feet by 8 feet by 8 feet) and two trailers on the south side of the Church building would "alter the character of the approved development and its relationship to the adjacent residential properties," and therefore is not in "substantial conformance with the SEA Plat and development conditions,"
b. the two temporary containers for construction material would be in substantial conformance provided that a temporary special permit were obtained prior to their installation and provided that they be removed after construction, and
c. because of incomplete information regarding the size, the screening, and the hours of operation, the Zoning Administrator was not able to make a determination on the issue of the collection bins and that further consideration could be given at a later date after receipt of more information, and
d. the proposed use of the Church facility for a seminary offering graduate degrees is not permitted under the approved SEA 787-D-098-2 and that the addition of such use would require an approved special exception amendment application, and

Whereas, in November, 2004, the MBC filed an appeal to the above Determination, and

Whereas, the containers are located in a cluster at the southern end of the property, are only partially screened by a six-foot fence, are of different colors and states of repair and are visible from the neighboring community to the south, and

Whereas, the six permanent containers are stated as being used for storage of seasonal items and the two trailers are being used for storage and display of donated clothing, because, the Church claims, there is no room in the 279,000-square-foot, 88-room Church building, and

Whereas, the Zoning Administrator determined that operation of graduate classes by CBS is defined as a college or university under the Zoning Ordinance and is, in fact, an accredited degree-granting graduate program, and

Whereas, the agreement between CBS and MBC dated August, 2001, states that the purpose of the agreement "is to create a regional CBS office and a theological library that will meet the needs of CBS Virginia students...," that the "office and library are designed to meet the requirements of the Commonwealth of Virginia State Council of Higher Education and ... the Association of Theological Schools," and that the undergraduate program associated with CBS, Washington Bible College, "may have a future interest in scheduling classes and utilizing the library;" in addition, the CBS website (www.bible.edu/cbs/) refers to the MBC as a "Northern Virginia Extension Site," and

Whereas, the presence of a graduate school extension site and the possibility of opening that site to undergraduate classes as well, in addition to the lack of a limit to the classes that may be held at MBC and their enrollment numbers, raises the question of increased traffic, a great concern to the community,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the McLean Citizens Association supports the determination of the Zoning Administrator and opposes a reversal of that decision as requested by the McLean Bible Church.

CC:
Fairfax County Board of Zoning Appeals
Fairfax County Zoning Division
Supervisor Joan DuBois
Commissioner Nancy Hopkins