The below is a sample email that Residents are encouraged to send to the County Board of Commissioners and County Planning Board members. Consider having every family member over 18 years old send a letter.  This is the first step in a multi-pronged effort to stop Classical Academy from locating their multiple school buildings, athletic fields and amphitheater (with associated traffic and noise) at 8000 Bee Ridge Road (presently owned by Grace Community Church).

To copy the below letter into an email:

Type in your name into the first line and include your neighborhood.

Type in your name and address into the last line of the message (below)

Cut and paste the email addresses of the County officials into the ‘to’ line of the email

Hit 'Send'

mmoran@scgov.net

mhsmith@scgov.net

ncdetert@scgov.net

jneunder@scgov.net

rcutsinger@scgov.net

bhanson@scgov.net

Donna.Carter@sarasotaadvisory.net

Kevin.Cooper@sarasotaadvisory.net

Colin.Pember@sarasotaadvisory.net

Neil.Rainford@sarasotaadvisory.net

Andrew.Stultz@sarasotaadvisory.net

Justin.Taylor@sarasotaadvisory.net

Dear County Commissioners,

My name is                 and I live in the              community.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that I am absolutely OPPOSED at this time to the insertion of the The Classical Academy of Sarasota (TCA), with 3 schools K-12, in the current location (41.2. acres) of Grace Church at 8000 Bee Ridge Rd.  The property is located on Bee Ridge Road between the roundabout at Laurel Oak and Bent Tree neighborhoods and further east at Lorraine Rd and Bee Ridge near the neighborhood Publix. The affected area is comprised of peaceful residential communities and already known additional development rapidly occurring.  Bee Ridge Rd is only a two-lane road between these two roundabouts and is already heavily travelled by the surrounding communities.   Adding significant TCA traffic will instantly overwhelm and jam-up our local roads.

I ask you to DENY any further processing of the Special Exemption request of TCA and its developer Genesis, or at the very least, delay it until pre-requisite workshop and other requirements are met.

The first workshop, held on February 6, was illegitimate because the meeting was poorly and inattentively set up.  MEETING ACCESS was denied to hundreds of residents that will be affected.  Those who managed to get on received incomplete, vague, and inaccurate information.

1.       The ZOOM format did not work for many people; some were only able to get connected by telephone, so had no ability to see any visuals; not everyone who wanted to speak was allowed.

2.      A totally inadequate number of invitations were sent out – actually to a small number of residents only within 750 feet of the parcel.  Yet, the irreversible and permanent impacts from traffic, noise, light and air pollution extent way beyond that tiny threshold.  Studies show, for example, that amplified sound can extend to about 2 miles.  Two miles!

3.      The workshop sponsor did not provide adequate, timely notice for the few that were notified. People have reported receipt of the notice around Jan 31, yet 10 days is required.  In Laurel Oak the HOA did not ever receive the postcard – it was sent to the Country Club!

4.      Poor preparedness of the presenting team.  The TCA/Genesis meeting moderators provided very poor, general, and inadequate answers to very specific questions about their site development intentions.  Their displayed and verbally-stated plans for use of the facilities were vague and incomplete.  For example:  they never showed nor volunteered that a stadium was intended until citizens asked them specific questions.  Their lack of attention and interest in the enormous negative and dangerous traffic implications were noteworthy.  Furthermore, they refused to acknowledge impacts that residents brought up, and certainly did not broach any mitigative offerings.

As earlier indicated, any decision to approve this Special Exemption will cause adverse noise, light, and air quality Impacts to surrounding neighborhoods.  These are serious and meaningful issues to me.  The increased traffic is dangerous and will significantly change the character of our locale.  TCA is expecting to enroll over 900 students in 3 schools, plus about 150 staff by the fall of 2023.  They intend to place  temporary structures at first, then and build permanent structures as quickly as possible.  They intend to expand to over 1,300 students over time.  And – no bussing is proposed, so individual cars will drop-off and pick-up individual students – twice a day!  TCA proposes an athletic program, including an athletic field with bleachers, lighting and loudspeakers.  They will be utilizing weekends and evenings in addition to regular school days for their program.

We deserve, and must have a more inclusive, informative, and legitimate re-do of first Neighborhood Workshop that is open to all affected residents - with appropriate notice and complete information. We request that knowledgeable and appropriate county personnel are also present. The Grace Church is a perfect place for this meeting.  We need to hold meaningful discussion between affected residents and TCA and Genesis on their request for a Special Exemption.

In summary, we expect the Special Exemption Review Process to be followed correctly – with truthful and forthright sharing of intentions.  We want to see a more detailed site plan that we can actually comment-on – and which considers the major impacts caused.  This irresponsible proposal brings major changes, risks and negatives to the lives of thousands of residents, so the process needs include all affected residents, be conducted in an open forum (not a closely-controlled Zoom call) , and acknowledge impacts, and be willing to consider effective mitigation of the risks and dangers to our community.

Please do not allow this to be done without all of the above.  Thank you.

Sincerely,

**[Name and address]**