

Richard Longstreth
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Washington, D.C. 20010

April 5, 2012

District of Columbia Zoning Commission
Attn: Chairman Anthony Hood
441 4th Street NW, Suite 201S
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Z.C. Case No. 06-11F/06-12F

Mr. Chairman and other members of the Zoning Commission,

I regret pressing family business precludes me from testifying before you tonight. For this reason, I am submitting the following written testimony.

For the record, my name is Richard Longstreth. I have resided in Washington and served on GW's faculty as professor of American studies and, formerly, as associate professor of city and regional planning since 1983.

I wholeheartedly endorse the proposed university museum. It will be a great stimulus to student projects and faculty research alike, positively affecting work in a number of departments, including my own. It is not self-interest that motivates my remarks, but rather the long-term benefit this institution will have on enriching the learning experience and student life at the university. This museum fulfills a major gap at GW, which has never had a museum in the true sense of that term. Equally important, the museum is destined to attract many people from the region with an interest in the arts and in the history of Washington. This project represents a significant gift to the greater community of the metropolitan area.

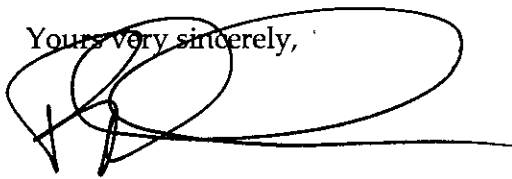
The location in the heart of the campus is an ideal one for members of the university community. For visitors, it is easily accessible, lying five blocks away from the Farragut West Metro station and four blocks away from that at Foggy Bottom, as well as near a number of bus lines. Moreover, the project entails a historically sensitive rehabilitation of the Woodhull house (1855), one of the oldest residences to survive in the area. This building is ideally suited to the proposed gallery for the Small Collection. For decades, this distinguished building has suffered from lack of an appropriate use. Since well before my arrival at the university, it has served as the offices of campus security, a function that has not been beneficial either to the building or its occupants. Finally, we have the opportunity to make the important part of the area's history be a focus of activity and a landmark for the institution of which it is a part.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 06-11F/06-12F
EXHIBIT NO. 27

The argument that this proposed facility will generate a significant increase in vehicular traffic seems to have little basis. Parking is at a premium on and around the campus. The great majority of people who come to GW walk or take public transportation. Much larger university museums – the Center for British and adjacent Yale Art Gallery in New Haven, the Fogg Museum at Harvard, the University Art Museum at Berkeley, to name some well-known examples – have long functioned effectively without generating undue traffic increases for the simple reason that the places of which they are a part – like the GW campus – are primarily pedestrian environments. Do the Corcoran or Renwick galleries nearby incur large numbers of motorists? I can imagine no other location on the GW campus that would be better suited to this function. The fact that it is on such a central site, if anything, will discourage additional vehicular traffic. Furthermore, 21st Street is already equipped to accommodate groups coming in buses, which regularly occurs on a much larger scale for events at Lisner Auditorium.

I consider the benefits of this proposed institution to be very substantial for a broad public audience. If any liabilities exist at all, they are far outweighed by the benefits.

Yours very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Longstreth', written over a horizontal line.

Richard Longstreth