

**THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY CAMPUS PLAN
2006-2025, ZC #06-11
AND FIRST STAGE PUD, ZC #06-12**

**ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia**

CASE NO. 06-11
EXHIBIT NO. 119

TESTIMONY OF SHEILA CROSS REID
September 25, 2006

Good evening Chairperson Mitten and Members of the Zoning Commission. My name is Sheila Cross Reid former chair of the BZA that approved GW's 2000 Campus Plan. Today I am testifying as a private citizen, who supports the current proposal.

- I. In GW's 2000 Campus Plan, one of the primary concerns was the lack of sufficient University housing – on campus – for GW's full time undergraduate population.
 - A. In 2000, GW housed only approximately 50% of its full time undergraduates.
 - B. The BZA imposed stringent conditions intended to require GW to increase its on campus housing capacity.
 1. We imposed the "70% plus" housing requirement: GW was to provide housing for 70% of its full time undergraduates up to 8,000, and an additional bed for every student over 8,000.
 2. All beds had to be on campus. GW was not permitted to count beds in its off campus residence halls.
- II. In the interim, GW has made great strides in meeting the housing requirements set forth in the 2000 Plan. According to GW reports:
 - A. The University has added approximately 2,800 beds since 2000.
 - B. The University has met the 70% plus housing this fall with more than 6300 beds – all located on campus.
 - C. Thus, GW has achieved the housing goal that the BZA set out in the 2000 Campus Plan.

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A. Use of off campus dormitories: I understand that GW proposes to discontinue the use of each of its off campus dormitories for undergraduate housing by a set timetable. Use of such off campus housing by undergraduates was a key issue of concern in the 2000 Plan.

B. Expansion of new university uses in residential zones off campus; GW proposes to agree not to purchase additional residentially zoned properties in Foggy Bottom/West End for university uses for the next 20 years. This agreement to forgo its right to engage in such matter of right purchase and use is a major step by GW to address a significant area of concern in the 2000 Plan.

C. Use of the Old Hospital Site/Square 54: GW proposes a mixed use town center that would include offices, apartments and retail uses that would return this property to the tax roles. While this project is the subject of a separate Zoning Commission application, such a concept is appropriate for a major development area as Washington Circle and consistent with other GW owned commercial uses on Pennsylvania Avenue.

D. Historic Preservation District for a large part of the Campus. GW has agreed to completed discussions with HPRB for an historic district for the southern part of the campus which would preserve the historic character of this area in perpetuity.

IV. Given the progress that GW has made in meeting its on campus housing requirements, and the commitments the University is willing to make to address long standing issues of community concern, I'd highly recommend that the Commission should grant the University's request to substantially increase the density at the core of the campus for university uses.

A. Increase density through rezoning of parts of the interior of the campus along 20th street is the appropriate place for expanded academic and student housing uses – away from the community.

B. Rezoning parts of the campus to commercial zones is consistent with the higher density in the surrounding area.

V. Conclusion

I distinctly recall how the BZA struggled to find the right balance between the interests of the University and the surrounding community in 2000, I firmly believe that the far reaching plan that GW has now put forth will build on the progress made under the 2000 Plan and significantly advance the interests

not only of GW, but the surrounding community and the City as a whole. This plan continues the key conditions we put into place in the 2000 Plan, while addressing many issues where there were not the tools to reach five years ago, including the issues of off campus expansion.

Finally, I feel that this plan successful lays the ground work for hopefully resolving long standing sources of friction between GW and the surrounding community.

Thank you.