

**Testimony by Lucia Pollock before the
Washington, DC Zoning Commission on 9/28/06**

Ladies and gentlemen of the Zoning Commission and the audience:

I am Lucia Pollock, a 40-year resident of Foggy Bottom and a member of the DC Preservation League (formerly Don't Tear it Down), Historical Society of Washington, DC, National Trust for Preservation and National Building Museum, over the past 25 years.

In the past few years, I have attended many hearings on various issues—sometimes in support of, and sometimes in opposition to, a proposal or bill. My attendance has been to show interest and concern—the same reason I've attended all of the previous hearings on the GWU application. Tonight is the first time I've testified at a hearing, and I only decided to do so after this past Monday's hearing.

I attended a hearing on GW's 2000 campus plan application; however I was and am not one of the "totally negative" voices repeatedly referred to by proponents of GW's proposal—who, incidentally, have reiterated some of the same citations of GW's good works for the neighborhood and city, not to mention the nation and the world, as in 2000. Most of these services cannot be disputed; however my response was then and is now that these good works are not pertinent to the consideration or merit of the proposed campus plan. Citing good works for the community cannot erase any negative impact on that community—past, present or future.

I have lived in Foggy Bottom during all phases of my adult life—from 4 years after college to retirement—and have seen many changes in the neighborhood, some good, some not. (I still feel sad when I think of the 23rd St town houses which GW destroyed just a few years ago to build the dorm between Va. Ave. and H St.)

I have tried to be objective about GW's proposals, plans and actions, and I am not convinced that the extent and density of the proposed campus plan—particularly the Square 54 PUD—is an example of good urban planning and land use. Three new condos have just been built in the old Columbia Hospital block—one square block of greatly increased density only about 3 blocks from Square 54. Especially since GW has tied the expansion and growth of the institution to its Square 54 commercial development investment, I fail to be convinced that this plan will not adversely impact the residents of the Foggy Bottom-West End neighborhood. Can it tolerate the results—such as traffic congestion—of such density?

It has become increasingly difficult to preserve the quality of life and ambience which make this convenient area livable. (Convenience of location is one of the main things that keeps me in FB.) This plan seems in conflict with the efforts of the Mayor and his Office of Planning over the past several years to encourage and facilitate residential development downtown.

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The issue remains why should the current plan be abandoned and a new longer-term plan established? I, for one, have not read or heard sufficient or convincing reasons for this exception.

The bottom line is that GW has its needs, desires, goals—but this does not relieve it of its responsibility for giving serious and sincere consideration to the impact on the residents' of the community, and thus to our needs and desires. This lack of considerations is the source of many residents' mistrust of the institution.. The lack of interaction and dialogue between the two parties is regrettable but I realize some of the reasons for this situation. Should this breach enter into the consideration of the plan? Should residents have to pay such a high price for this?

Thank you for your attention and consideration.