

Zoning Commission Testimony

regarding Foggy Bottom Campus Plan

by Kris Hart, Foggy Bottom Business Owner

September 25, 2006

Commissioners and fellow concerned residents:

My name is Kris Hart; I am a business owner in Foggy Bottom, eight year resident of the District of Columbia, former student at the George Washington University and former student body president. Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today regarding the Foggy Bottom Campus Plan. It is my heartfelt belief to support the plan, with a few minor reservations.

I understand there are many qualms from residents in the community concerning existing requirements in the current Campus Plan. Considering the state and developments of our current community, we must work together to move forward and develop a mutually amicable joint agreement for our future.

First, my reasons to lend my support. This is without question fair grounds to seek compromise. For years residents have been concerned with the sprawl of the university; this directly addresses and adheres to those concerns. The idea to build the university and strengthen it within its existing boundaries is past its time. Now, let's work from there.

It is clear we need a basis to work towards a cooperative, co-existing community. Currently, we do not have that. Over the last three years, the University has reached out and offered ideas, possibilities and solutions, and I commend their efforts. We, the members of the community must meet them face to face at the table and come to agreement.

Some of my initial concerns include:

1. If the University plans to house all of its undergrads on campus, bringing students within campus bounds from HOVA, Colombia Plaza, etc., then it is unacceptable to think we do not need an increase in on-campus parking. We must continue to look after the residents and businesses who are within the campus bounds.
2. As a city, we must protect the look of that area of our community as it has come to be. We must not allow a free-for-all in the size and height of buildings. Preserve historic Foggy Bottom, but let's not overshadow it with an entirely too dense campus.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 06-12

EXHIBIT NO. 116

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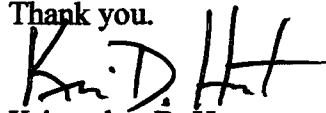
3. I am offended, though it may be off topic, that older students cannot freely choose where in the city they would like to live. This, to me, is a basic civil right.
4. I have noticed the strides the University has made to work with the community. I have not been as involved this past half year, but I believe it is imperative that we work more closely together and in a civil manner.
5. The university needs to be more fair in its practice of adhering to and sticking to commitments. What we decide today, should not be held in a legal battle for an exemption tomorrow.
6. We need to work to create Square 54 in a timely manner with neighborhood input.
7. We must establish a strong Neighborhood Advisory Committee.

This last concern, I believe is most important. For it underlines the idea of a committee coming together with members of all constituencies, the university, residents, resident students, government leaders, business leaders, etc. to have a simple and effective goal committing ourselves to the preservation and promotion of the betterment of the Foggy Bottom community. Anyone who has resisted efforts to create dialogue in the past has not served the members of the community.

I understand there are issues of trust. We must work today for what we can effect tomorrow having learned from yesterday. We cannot afford to continue to resist based on past matters when issues of great importance to Foggy Bottom are imminent.

Let's make each party, and the university in particular, put commitments to the community in writing. For our town-gown relations will never cease to exist, we must focus on the process to manage them to our mutual benefit. All interested parties must make a concerted effort to decide the future of our shared community, Foggy Bottom.

Thank you.



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