

Testimony in support of Square 54 development and Foggy Bottom Campus Plan

Members of the Zoning Commission and Interested Parties:

My name is Dr. Dwan Tai, a neighbor of George Washington University ("GW") and a Foggy Bottom resident for more than 37 years. I have both studied and taught at GW, having earned my Ph.D. there as well. For about three decades, I have been a property owner in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood. I also work across from Square 54 on Pennsylvania Avenue (on Washington Circle). I would like to highlight just 3 points.

First, my neighbors and I support the Foggy Bottom Campus Plan 2006-2025 which was developed over the past two years through a transparent, open and inclusive process. As a long time Foggy Bottom resident, I believe all of us have benefited from the development of GW into a world class university. We are all beneficiaries of the hard work and dedication that created this Foggy Bottom Campus Plan which will further enhance both GW and the Foggy Bottom/West End community.

Second, it is important to support a Square 54 development which includes within its purpose and design meeting spaces of various sizes that would be made available for neighborhood groups on a free reservation basis. This is needed because other possible community spaces (such as the Marvin Center, the GW Hospital, West End Library and hotels) either charge fees or have limited access, hours and restrictions on refreshments. The community deserves and expects a Square 54 development that will provide neighborhood facilities needed to advance a friendlier and more inclusive community.

Third, it is important to support a Square 54 development that includes within its purpose and design a "food court" with extra community tables (similar to the food court at Georgetown Park Mall) where healthy, reasonably-priced food choices would be available and the ambiance and hours would be conducive to creating an informal neighborhood gathering place for conversations and community networking. Such a food court would be a critical part of a dynamic "town center." This will respond to a basic need as there is no other public food court that provides such ambiance near the Foggy Bottom/GWU Metro Station.

In summary, my neighbors and I support the proposed Foggy Bottom Campus Plan. We commend GW for establishing and maintaining its Office of DC and Foggy Bottom/West End Affairs which has taken effective actions to follow up on community issues and concerns. I strongly urge support for a Square 54 development which would include free meeting spaces and a community-friendly food court.

If you have any questions, I will be happy to respond. Thank you very much for your consideration.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
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EXHIBIT NO. 121
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