

District of Columbia Zoning Commission

Statement in Support – GWU/School Without Walls Partnership (Case 06-17)

October 30, 2006

Ricky Garibay

This grant proves to be extremely beneficial to both parties and addresses flaws that need severe rectification. Having spent all four years of high school at School Without Walls, I've seen the condition of the building affect students and teachers over time. The paint chipping off of walls in multiple rooms, the leaking ceilings and trash-bag-covered computers during heavy rain, a piece of the buildings exterior falling on the head of a student, the presence of cockroaches and other insects, on rare occasions, birds, and the overall dilapidated feel the interior gives off. The rise in students each academic year has caused not only space restrictions among classrooms, but rescheduling and redesigning classes as well. In my own experience, an AP Art History class that I was assigned during my senior year had to be cut from the list of classes and replaced with another History class to accommodate the increased amount of freshman that attended. Heat and air conditioning during the winter and summer months respectively were also areas of significant concern. The lack of either often resulted in attending class or taking tests in freezing cold or scorching hot weather. An expanded building would be beneficial in addressing these issues, giving more to the students and faculty. Since graduating and moving on to George Washington University, it's hard to imagine that such a worn down building could exist on the universities campus. However, despite the condition of the building, School Without Walls has produced some of the brightest individuals I've come

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to know. It's a testament to persevering against all odds, and of opportunity through untapped or budding potential. Such opportunity has afforded me the Stephen Joel Trachtenberg scholarship, my link between School Without Walls and George Washington University.