

Corbb O'Connor
The George Washington University
2212 Eye Street, NW #703
Washington, DC 20052

Carol Mitten
Chair, Zoning Commission
441 4th Street NW, Suite 200 South
Washington DC 20001

June 29, 2007

Re: Case 07-12, The George Washington University Mount Vernon Campus - Pelham
Replacement Project

Dear Ms. Mitten:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you and your colleagues my thoughts about the Pelham Replacement Project. This fall, I will be a sophomore in GW's Elliott School of International Affairs double majoring in International Development and Economics. Currently, I serve as the General Manager for The Daily Colonial—GW's only online, daily, student-run news source. As I am blind, I also serve on the Speakers Bureau for Disability Support Services—a group of students with disabilities who seek to educate others at the University about disability-related issues, from building accessibility to classroom accommodations. Currently, I am working as part of the Visitor Information Program with GW's Office of Undergraduate Admissions, where I work with other students to give tours to visitors and help with the processing of applications in the office. This past year, I worked at Mount Vernon Campus Life helping in the development of marketing materials for the Mount Vernon Campus.

I currently reside on GW's Foggy Bottom Campus, however I spent my freshman year living at Mount Vernon. Coming from a suburban Chicago town, I was very used to rolling green hills, winding neighborhood streets, and the peace and quiet of the suburbs. While I came to GW because of the many opportunities it could provide because of its location in such a big city, I enjoyed GW's compliment to the noise and concrete of Foggy Bottom. That compliment was Mount Vernon. **Had it not been for the Mount Vernon Campus, I would probably not be at GW today.** Mount Vernon provided the setting of a suburban town, with the access to a big city whenever I wanted it. The thought of coming to a school with 9,700 undergraduates scared me, but I loved that Mount Vernon had a mere 495 residents. **Because of the smaller campus environment at Mount Vernon, I felt a much stronger sense of community.** The Ames Dining Room, the on-campus dining venue at Mount Vernon, helped with that sense of community. While I do enjoy the over 100 eateries on the Foggy Bottom Campus, I enjoyed that the dining facilities at Mount Vernon allowed me the opportunity to see the same people every day.

The Pelham Replacement Project will allow even more students to enjoy what Mount Vernon has to offer socially, individually, and academically. The Pelham Replacement

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CASE NO. 07-12
EXHIBIT NO. 25

Project has plans to **increase social space at Mount Vernon** with the creation of student theatre practice and performance spaces and dining facilities. Instead of students leaving campus for their social events, this will keep students close to home more often. Doing this can only grow the sense of community at Mount Vernon.

Second, the Pelham Replacement Project will provide students **more opportunities for individual growth**. Instead of traveling to Foggy Bottom for a fitness center, students can use brand-new facilities at Mount Vernon that will be included in the new Pelham Hall. Music practice rooms will help with this by allowing students with similar interests a chance to meet each other without upsetting their neighbors by practicing loud music in their rooms!

Third, the main role of a university is its **academics**, and the Pelham Replacement Project has this in mind as well. Meeting in study groups can sometimes be difficult during midterm exam and final exam seasons. While the libraries at both campuses have group study space, the spaces are not enough to accommodate all students that need it. The Pelham Replacement Project will help alleviate this problem by providing two levels of group meeting space.

Reading about all these enhancements to the campus that was my home last year sends shivers through me. **The Mount Vernon Campus provides for a great experience to its residents, but also to *all* students at the university.** Because the two campuses are fully integrated with one another, any student living on the Foggy Bottom Campus can feel a part of the community at Mount Vernon. I urge you to support the Pelham Replacement Project, and I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Corbb O'Connor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Corbb O'Connor

The George Washington University Class of 2010

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