

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

From: Bethany Thomaier
2350 H St. NW #904
Washington, DC 20052

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

Dear Ms. Mitten,

I'm writing to you on behalf of The George Washington University Mount Vernon Campus Pelham Replacement Project. I'll begin this letter by explaining to you why the Mount Vernon Campus is important to me, and then explaining why I feel this project is crucial for the campus to continue fulfilling its role with the overall university.

When I arrived at George Washington as a freshman, I had never actually visited the Mount Vernon Campus. As a member of the Women's Leadership Program (WLP), I was automatically placed into Somers, the largest residence hall on the campus. Not knowing what to expect, I was thrilled to discover amazing opportunities to become involved and the best friends I could imagine. My time on the Mount Vernon Campus gave me the experience that has led to many of my current roles in the GW community. It was my WLP friends who brought me to the first International Affairs Society. It was my role on the Somers Hall Council of the Residence Hall Association that taught me to plan socials and pursue advocacy issues. Now, serving on the Executive Boards of both these organizations, the lessons I learned on The Vern have helped me bring a well-rounded viewpoint regarding ways to serve GW students.

Since Mount Vernon means so much to me, it's really important to see the Pelham Replacement Project pass through. Pelham was always the one part of The Vern that seemed separate from the rest of us. Leaving for Model UN trips at 3 a.m., we'd go knock on doors if people were late, but no one ever wanted to make the trip to Pelham. When planning the end of year RHA water fight, all the hall councils worked together, except Pelham, which didn't have one. The Pelham Replacement Project will change that by making the hall an integral part of the Mount Vernon Campus.

First, the added living space will create a greater draw for students to live on the campus. With more beds than Somers, Pelham could become its own unique community that would engage with the rest of the Mount Vernon campus. Most Vern students never actually go to Pelham, but with over 250 students there, it would be a struggle to not find friends living there. Next, the planned dining facility is very much needed by GW students. Although I love Ames, there are only so many times you can eat in the same place in a week. A new venue would bring variety and also draw students out to the Pelham side of the campus. Also, since many Mount Vernon students really value fitness and health, the more gym space we can get, the better. Bringing space for artistic students to pursue their talents would also bring a ton of creativity to the campus. Music practice rooms, a student theatre performance and practice space, and maybe even a arts

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
07-12
CASE NO. 07-12
EXHIBIT NO. 33

studio would allow new venues for students to display their talents. I never once saw a performance on the Vern in my time there, but if they took place inside Pelham, I would have no excuse not to go. Even in the design of the building, it's clear that the Pelham Replacement Project aims to integrate that side of campus into the rest of the Mount Vernon community.

The Mount Vernon Campus has always held a special place in my heart and I want nothing more than to see more and more students realize how amazing the community is there. The Pelham Replacement Project really will achieve that by drawing in more students, providing diverse resources for students to pursue their interests, and giving new options for dining and exercise. By approving this project, you will allow the George Washington community to fully take advantage of the wonderful Mount Vernon Campus. Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bethany Thomaier", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bethany Thomaier
The George Washington University
Class of 2009