

Tracey P. West
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Washington, DC 20008

2011 MAY -6 AM 10:44
May 3, 2011

Mr. Anthony Hood
Chairman, DC Zoning Commission
441 Fourth St, NW Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Case No. 1032, Georgetown Campus Plan, 2010

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Zoning Commission:

My name is Tracey West and my husband, Michael West, and I bought our first house at 3828 T Street in Burleith in 2003. After renting apartments for years in rough neighborhoods and saving our money, we were finally able to buy something of our own in a safe neighborhood and we planned to live there a long long time. We looked forward to putting our own touches to our little fixer upper, getting to know the neighbors and being a part of a community. Unfortunately these dreams were never realized because of Georgetown University student conduct.

We soon discovered our house was situated between two rental properties. While we were busy fixing up our yard, and trying to improve our end of the block, the two neighboring households let their lawns and weeds grow, accumulate abundant trash and take up all the parking at our end of the street because there were 4-5 cars per house.

After the first year, a new group of 5 women moved in next door. They had parties, played loud music and threw their beer cans and cigarettes into our yard. I usually had to get out of bed and ask them to keep it down at least once every weekend. The situation got so uncomfortable and it struck me how utterly self absorbed and rude these kids were.

Two years later the girls moved out and a group of 5 young guys moved in. They seemed clean cut, polite and we were looking forward to a more mature group of neighbors. Not before long, we were awakened at 3am on a Friday night by the loud music and voices next door. I got out of bed, walked over to their house and asked them to please keep it down. Always giving the benefit of the doubt, I thought perhaps they did not realize how loud it was for us on the other side of the walls. But this was just the beginning of the end to our residence in Burleith.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 10-32
EXHIBIT NO. 87

My husband and I work very hard at our business and in our down time we enjoyed working in our yard, painting the interior of our house, and entertaining friends on our newly designed deck. We were making our home a sanctuary. But our home soon became a living hell. After redoing our outdoor living space, we could not enjoy it because our neighbors and their friends took over the outdoor peace and quiet. After adding sound proofing material to our shared living room wall, we still could not watch a movie because we could not hear our TV above their noise. We had a fan and a sound machine in our bedroom. We grew to dread the weekends because every night the guys would have friends over at around 6pm, party until around 11pm before they went out, and then we were awakened again when they came home at 3am and started all over again. Our weekends were more exhausting than the work week. But even the weekdays were becoming more and more disruptive. They had at least a few friends over at any given time, which made it that many more people slamming the front door, going up and down the stairs, and yelling at sports programs. Their over all lifestyle and the number of people in the house became overwhelming to us.

After confronting the guys on our own and calling the police numerous times, the noise did not stop. One evening the conflict escalated so high, mostly due to the intoxication level next door, that there was almost a physical altercation. We contacted the landlord ourselves in hopes that he could intervene. He was not interested in helping us and said he could not evict them because there was nothing in their lease about a noise disturbance policy. We felt trapped and knew that as long as we lived next door to these rental properties, we would have conflict. We either had to move or try one last option.

We finally enlisted the help of Lenore Rubino and the Burleith Citizens Association. With her help we arranged a meeting with our neighbors to try and come to an understanding and resolution. We needed to explain to them, when they were sober, that they were seriously affecting our quality of life. The young men basically appeased us, and said they would keep it down. The had a party the next night, we called the police and their behavior got even worse. They began to retaliate. In addition to the parties, and loud music, we endured pounding on walls, bottle caps batted at our car, urination on our fence, beer poured on our plants and trash in our yard.

We could not sleep, we were reduced to living in our guest room because that was the only place to hear the TV or read, we could not entertain, and we felt threatened. We were very unhappy and so we decided to move. They won. They cheered when they saw the "For Sale" sign go up.

There are many terrible points about this situation. A very major point is that Michael and I are self employed and this house was an investment for our future. We did not want to flip it, we wanted to stay there, improve it and enjoy it into our

later years. After we sold our house, we moved into a one bedroom apartment where, although it is small, it is quiet and there are rules. Another point is the lack of landlord accountability. The landlord should be required to enforce certain rules and regulations and evict the tenants at any time or be fined if they do not abide by them. The kids that lived next to us never had a sense that their actions would have consequences, but more importantly they were not a part of the community and did not care how they affected others' lives.

There is something very special about Burleigh. Aside from the increasing value of the homes, there is a comforting small town feel where neighbors of all ages and circumstances can belong. The encroaching occupancy of students and young people who are not mature nor responsible enough to live among hard working adults should not have the benefit of living in this neighborhood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tracey P. West'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Tracey' being more prominent and the last name 'West' following in a similar style.

Tracey P. West