

Testimony of Robert B. Avery, Board President
Foxhall Community Citizen's Association

Re: Application No. 10-32; Georgetown University 10 year Campus Plan
Hearing Date: May 16, 2011

My name is Robert Avery and I am the elected President of the Board of the Foxhall Community Citizens Association (the FCCA). The FCCA is a neighborhood association that has represented the area immediately west of Georgetown University and Glover Archibold Park since 1928. There are approximately 900 households in our community.

We strongly agree with the arguments made by our sister associations, CAG and Burleith, that Georgetown's failure to adequately control the behavior of its off-campus students and its plan to expand the number of graduate students represent serious objectionable threats to the character of our neighborhoods. Our association has twice voted unanimously in open meetings to oppose Georgetown's Campus Plan and to empower its Board to register as a party in opposition for exactly these concerns. In open calls for input on this issue I have received only one email in favor of the campus plan. In reviewing the letters that the Commission has received in favor of the plan I would note that only one came from a resident in our area and that person is an employee of the university. We will supply you with petitions that show that virtually all the households bordering the Georgetown Campus on the west are opposed to the Campus Plan. This is not just a CAG and Burleith issue; it is a Foxhall issue as well.

I have been allocated only a limited time so let me spend it on the two issues which are of the most importance to our community. First, the loop road.

Council member Cheh and ANC-3D member Ann Haas have already articulated many of the arguments against the loop road. Let me add several additional points.

Over significant opposition from our neighborhood and others in Ward 3, Georgetown went over the heads of the community to obtain earmarked Federal funds to create an expanded campus entry off of Canal Road. Like every Federal Highway project this required a 20 percent matched local contribution. In 2003 Georgetown granted Glover Archibold Park a scenic easement running most of the length of their boundary with the park. Since the cost of the project according to the Federal Government was at least \$7 million dollars, this easement was presumably valued at \$1.4 million dollars.¹ This concession on Georgetown's part was held out as a meaningful contribution to the community and mitigated some of the anger over the entrance.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 10-32
EXHIBIT NO. 129

¹ The Surface Transportation Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987 authorized \$6 million for the GU Canal Road entrance expansion project. According to Federal highway officials most of that money has been spent -- about \$3.7 million for construction and \$2.3 million for environmental work and design. DDOT provided an additional \$1.2 million for additional lighting along Canal Road. The source of that money is not clear.

At the time Georgetown's own assessor acknowledged that the land in the easement is heavily sloped and really couldn't be built on. We were also told that the entrance would not be used to provide access to the north end of campus. We are now told by Georgetown that their view of the easement is that it is perfectly ok to build a road carrying 60-passenger buses and any other future traffic as they might decide right on the edge of the easement. Moreover, the canal road entrance will now be the main entrance for the whole campus. This raises the question as to whether Georgetown ever really intended to grant any meaningful concession in signing the easement or promising that it would not be used for a north/south road. It is but another example of Georgetown not acting in good faith with the community.

It also shows a callous disregard for the National Park as a neighbor. But this is nothing new. Georgetown treats the park boundary as a place to store trash; it has paid little attention to maintaining its side. Is there any reason to believe they will behave differently with the road.

Moreover, there is an obvious alternative to the loop road. The buses could simply be turned around at the Lombardi center and driven back out on West Road. This would require little expense and no road-building. Since no bus stops are proposed for the loop road it would serve the same population. It would have little environmental impact. As can be seen by the enclosed map (slide 1) all that would be required would be to chop a little off of the end of North Kehoe field to enable a turnaround. As shown by the next slide from Georgetown's proposed 2020 campus map (slide 2) they already intend to do that anyway.

The buses are Georgetown's own creation—not the communities. It is their responsibility to move them onto and out of the campus with as little impact on the surrounding community as possible. Just as it is not right to dump all that traffic on Prospect Street—it is equally inappropriate to dump it all on Glover Archibold Park users. Particularly when there is such an obvious, cheaper, and far less objectionable alternative as returning via West Road.

I urge the Commission to prohibit this road. Georgetown has not presented a meaningful transportation plan, nor have they revealed their future plans for the hospital expansion, which could have significant implications for the use of the loop road. Once built, Georgetown's record shows that whatever promises or restrictions on the use of the road are made now, they will conveniently be amended in the future.

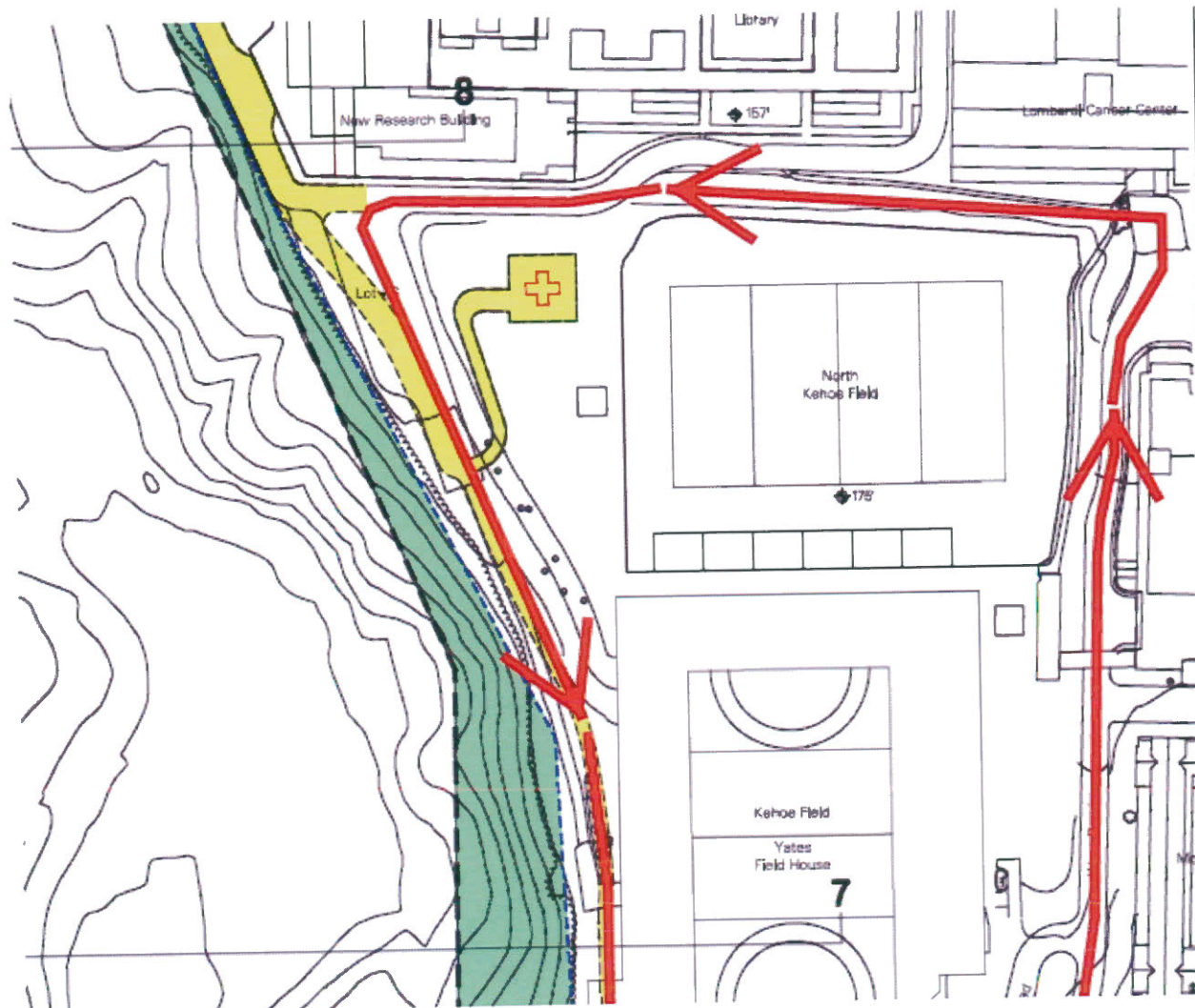
Let me briefly touch on one other issue—Georgetown's proposed expansion of graduate students. Georgetown and their experts are treading a very fine self-serving line. In the year 2000, the same economic firm hired for this year's plan estimated that shifting 780 students from off-campus to on-campus housing would result in 170 residences in Burleith and West Georgetown being converted from student to non-student occupancy. The firm said that not only would this increase property values but it would generate approximately \$7,400 (\$10,000 in today's dollars) per house (or \$1.4 million total) to the District due to higher sales and income receipts from non-student residents.

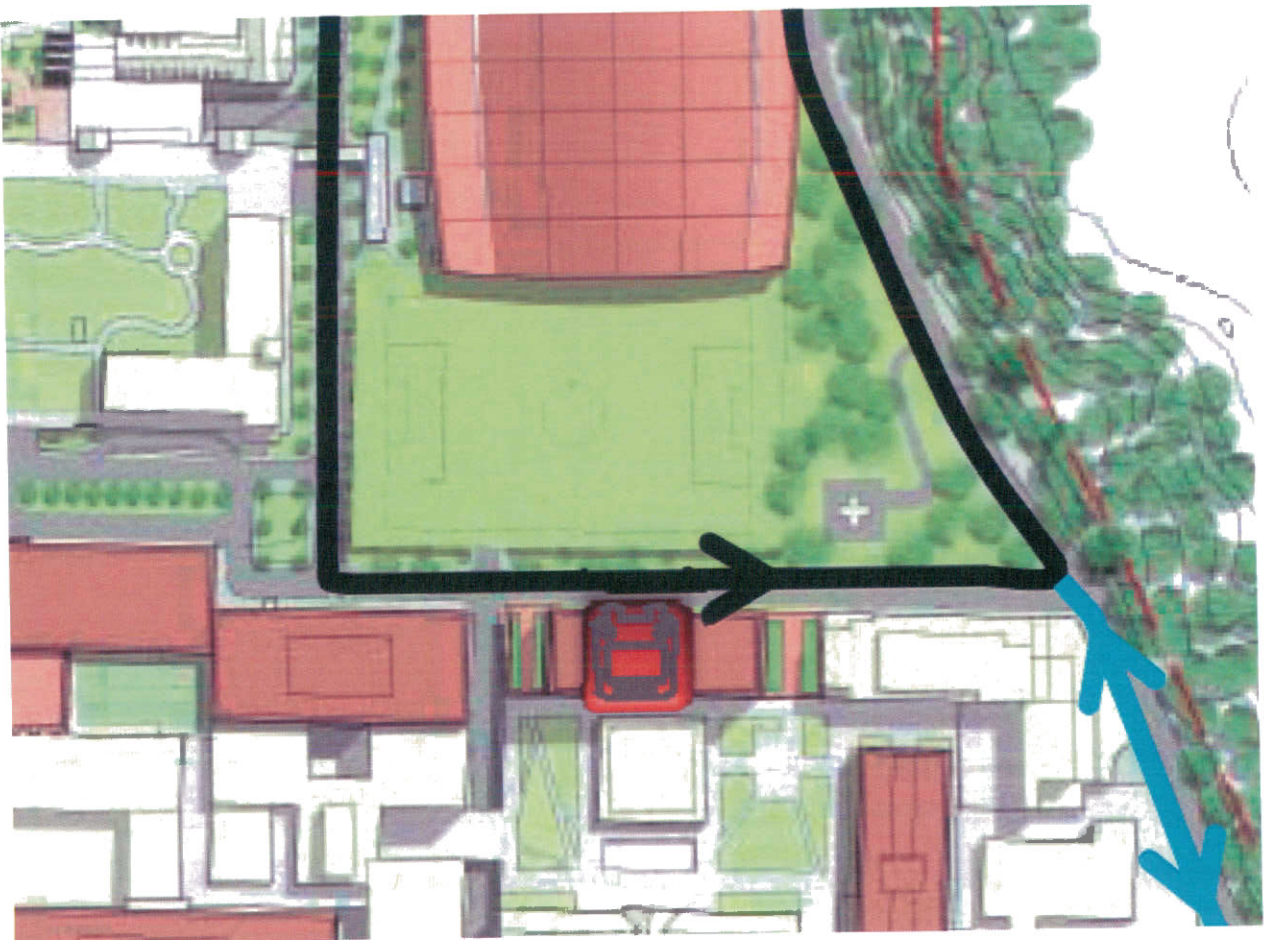
Now we are faced with the reverse flow—Georgetown proposes to add 967 new graduate students with no additional on-campus housing. Their economist argues that this will only have a diminimous effect and doesn't even bother to calculate the loss of revenue to the District.

Further, they make very selective use of the data. They focus only on the 4 percent of graduate students that live in West Georgetown and Burleith and ignore the large graduate student populations in Foxhall and Glover Park which push the figure to 15 percent. Without taking into account which departments will grow, they assume that the additional graduate students will look and live just like the graduate students added since 2000 rather than, for example, like the Georgetown Med students—60 percent of which live in the 20007 Zipcode neighborhoods versus the 15 percent figure for other graduate students.

Our neighborhoods are in delicate balance. As shown in slide 3, modest adjustments in the GU expert assumptions imply that 122 houses in our neighborhoods could be converted to student occupancy by Georgetown's proposed 21 percent increase in graduate students rather than the mere 6 or 7 suggested by Georgetown's expert. Further, using the logic of Georgetown's own expert firm, not only would such a conversion have a potentially catastrophic impact on our neighborhoods, it would lead to a direct loss in revenue to the District of over \$1.2 million per year.

Thank You





Additional Student Projections

		Current (Fall 2010)		Current (Fall 2010)		Added Graduate Students by 2020	
		Graduate Students		Medical Students		Using Current Allocation	Using Med/Grad Average
Burleith/West Georgetown		186	4.1%	116	14.1%	40	88
Foxhall		119	2.7%	186	22.6%	26	122
Glover Park		269	6.0%	170	20.7%	58	129
Other Zip 20007		101	2.3%	24	2.9%	22	25
Total Zip 2007		675	15.1%	496	60.3%	146	365
Grand Total		4485	100.0%	822	100.0%	967	967
Houses Converted to student occupancy in Zip 20007 using GU 1010 plan assumptions						26	64
Annual Cost to District at \$10,000 per house using GU 2000 plan assumptions						\$260,000	\$640,000
Houses Converted to student occupancy in Zip 20007 using 3 students per house						49	122
Annual Cost to District at \$10,000 per house using GU 2000 plan assumptions						\$490,000	\$1,220,000