

Statement of Ann Carper
1935 39th Street NW
Washington, DC 20007

Ann Carper
6.6.11

My name is Ann Carper, and I've lived in Washington since 1980. After renting apartments on Capitol Hill and Woodley Park and buying and then selling my condo in the West End, I moved to 39th Street in Burleith in 2001. My partner purchased our house in 1997.

When I lived in other parts of DC, I'd read about town-gown conflicts in the neighborhood newspapers and thought the residents must be exaggerating and be a bunch of whiners. But a few years after moving to 39th Street, a group of young male Georgetown students rented a house a few doors up and I finally realized what people were complaining about. They hosted loud parties, groups of their friends congregated outside the house and in the alley after 10 p.m. on week nights and after midnight on weekends, and walked in loud packs up the street. My neighbors and I tried to address these problems in several ways—talking directly to the students while the party was going on, calling GU, contacting the landlord, and finally calling the police (several times). Nothing provided a permanent solution other than the expiration of their lease.

(AC) Luckily that only lasted a year, and any other student rentals on our street have not been a problem. In fact, our next-door neighbor, Tom Strike, who testified last week in favor of Georgetown's plan, annually rents his basement to ~~GU~~ graduate students. The house next door to them has been continuously rented to medical students, who have caused no problems other than not shoveling snow, mowing the tree boxes, or cleaning up spilled trash on trash days.

Now my negative experience with noisy Georgetown students are those who live a block away, on 38th Street. We can hear their parties at night, and when I cut through the alley on my way to the bus on Wisconsin Avenue on Monday mornings, the trashcans near the houses and their yards are littered with red plastic beer cups and beer cartons and cans. Our other experience is talking with neighbors who do live near students and testify to their experiences at community meetings.

I am not opposed to students or Georgetown in general but I am against being held hostage—or indoors with my windows closed—by short-term residents, whose parents, I'm sure, would react to their behavior the same way most of Burleith is. The tranquility and lushness of Burleith, the community feeling, and the convenience of grocery stores, public transportation, and services are what I like about Burleith. I will like it even more when the community can rally against something other than the university's insensitivity to its neighbors.

My partner and I were shocked to discover the current extraordinarily high percentage of rental housing and the amount occupied by GU students. Now that the zoning issue has been so well publicized, I'm afraid potential buyers, not investors, will think twice about buying here. And frankly, if friends were interested in buying here, I would tell them to avoid large sections of the neighborhood.

My partner and I are lucky that we live on 39th Street, on a dead end street across from the gated community of Hillandale. But if student rentals encroach on 39th, the noise situation on 38th gets worse, or the value of our most important investment declines, we will think twice about spending our retirement in Burleith as planned. And if we move, it will definitely be out of DC.

I urge you to reject the Georgetown plan as submitted. Thank you.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 10-32
EXHIBIT NO. 239