

Good evening. (My name is Eric Sims. I live in the community of Burleith.) I would first like to say thank you very much to the Zoning Commission for hearing the cases of the neighborhood associations opposing the Georgetown University Campus Plan. I am in full support of the position presented to the Zoning Commission by the Burleith Citizens Association and do not support Georgetown University's Campus Plan. Further, I would like to represent all of my friends and neighbors who cannot be here tonight but asked me to present their opposition as well.

If I could please leave the commission with two "take home" messages this evening I would like them to be the numbers of Georgetown University students living in Burleith and the concept of community.

Regarding numbers, there are simply far too many Georgetown University students living in Burleith. I have only lived in Burleith for 5 years, but have very clearly observed these numbers to be increasing with each passing year. I have personally witnessed a number of previously family occupied houses be converted into 5 and 6 bedroom de facto boarding houses and rented to student groups.

The request of the citizens associations surrounding GU for the university to house 100%, or certainly a large majority, of their undergraduate student population on campus is not at all extreme. The only extremes to have occurred are Georgetown's unquestionable over-enrollment and externalization of the problem of where to house this large number of students to the neighborhoods surrounding the campus.

I would like the Zoning Commission to please understand what a crucial turning point Burleith is facing. We can either return to / begin a new generation of family households and cohesive community, or the neighborhood can steadily, year after year, become quite literally overrun by the increasing GU student population.

Regarding community: The overall reason such a strong opposition has formed to Georgetown's negative impact on the surrounding neighborhoods is to stand up for the concept of a true community. I do not dislike students in any way. I just recognize that they are young and temporary and are not committed to their neighbors or the communities in which they live. I do not consider students to be true members of a community by any classic definition. Over the years, as more and more of the houses, on more and more of our streets, become occupied by students this is statistically and conceptually the destruction of the community of Burleith.

Testimony presented from the side of the university stated that if houses were not rented to undergraduate students, then they would certainly be occupied by unsupervised and potentially unruly young professionals. I would like to present a case in which quite the

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opposite occurred. For the first two years I lived in Burleith my direct neighbor was a group rental house. After increasing complaints from the tenants about the house falling apart and mold issues, the owner of the house decided to invest in repairing and remodeling it. He searched specifically for responsible young professionals and found exactly that. My neighbors for the past 3 years have been Dutch diplomats and I honestly could not ask for better neighbors and friends. At the end of their 4 year assignment, by the way, they are going to pass the house to another group from the embassy.

I would very much like to make Burleith my home for the next 50 years. Burleith has such an enormous amount of potential to be a positive and thriving community, but we are missing the one piece to that end which matters the most. We are missing our sense of community and we are fighting to recover it before it is lost forever. I ask the Zoning Commission to please understand with us the enormous importance of your rulings to the future direction of our communities. We have such an incredible amount to lose, or to gain, from the outcome of these proceedings.

Thank you very much for your time.