

TESTIMONY TO THE ZONING COMMISSION
THE GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS PLAN

Good evening. My name is Karen Cruse. I live on 35th Street directly across from the Georgetown University dorm farthest out in the residential community.

In April, 1990, ANC2E called a special Town Hall meeting, the focus of which was Town-Gown relations. The night of the meeting, the hall was packed, and throughout the evening, one resident after another recited a litany of complaints similar to what you are hearing tonight. Near the end of the meeting, one woman stood up and said "I'd like you to listen to what I hear from my third floor bedroom window." She turned on a tape recorder, and what came out were shouts, howls, screams, obscenities - complete bedlam. She pressed the off button and there was stunned silence in the room.

The meeting broke up not long after, but before it did, the Georgetown administrators who were there told us that they would go to their legal department to see if there were a way to extend the code of conduct off-campus. We had begged the University to take ownership of student behavior, but were always told there was no longer *In loco parentis*, that they did not have the jurisdiction. (They had repeated it that night.) However, they soon came back to the community and told us that they had found a way to extend the code, that it would be done at registration. We were ecstatic. We thought: here is the tool; we'll now begin to see an end to our problems. WE DIDN'T. As a result of the 1990 Campus Plan, we had BZA-mandated quarterly meetings. Again we thought: we have the tool, here's the forum. Working together, we'll find a solution to our problems. WE DIDN'T. We started the Alliance for Local Living meetings. I attended the first one, and what we discussed at that meeting and at meetings throughout the ensuing years – as late as fall semester, 2010 – were the same problems we discussed in 1990. We were spinning our wheels. The frustration was such that most people had opted out of the program. The last ALL meeting I attended, there were three residents; the month before, there was one.

Georgetown has reported that the number of calls to SNAP has gone down. The same frustration that eroded participation in the ALL program factors here, as well. It's demoralizing to call month after month, year after year, about the same

problems. You reach a point where you no longer bother – you just pull the pillow over your head and hope the disturbance will soon go away.

We in the community are living with conditions that are untenable. We should not have to dread Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, anticipating the kind of behavior we are routinely subjected to. We should not be awakened by the sound of broken glass as recycling bins are over-turned. We should not have to listen to the party that goes on too long and too loud. We should not have newly planted trees stripped of their branches. We should not see rats jump from uncovered trash cans. We should not have scarce parking spaces occupied by cars with out-of-state license plates (not Virginia or Maryland) that are not in compliance with District law. (A car must be registered in the District if here for more than 31 days.) We should not have to deal with a heavy mailbox muscled from the sidewalk into the street. A dark blue mailbox in a dimly-lit intersection is not a prank; it is a serious accident waiting to happen. We should not have to deal with any of these situations. Unfortunately, though, this is the sad reality for residents living in close proximity to the university.

Before you make your decision on Georgetown's Campus Plan, I ask that you put yourselves in our shoes and imagine living in our neighborhood.

When the 1990 Campus Plan was under review at the BZA, I spoke for the University. When there were hearings on the LXR project, I spoke for the University. When the Canal Road project was discussed, I spoke for the University. I cannot speak for the University and its 2010 Campus Plan.

Finally, my husband graduated from the Georgetown School of Foreign Service and we both did our graduate there.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you tonight.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Cruse