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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
'00 MAY 16 P4:24

May 13, 2000

Ms. Sheila Cross-Reid
Chairperson
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W.
Suite 210
Washington, DC, 20001

Dear Ms. Cross-Reid,
There is a conflict. I hope that the Board will, with much wisdom, help to solve it. Foggy Bottom is a small neighborhood tucked into a corner of Northwest. It includes homes, apartments, businesses, and the George Washington University. A vibrant city needs all of these elements and it needs them to exist in some degree of harmony.

Basically, the city is people. Washington has lost many residents and must strive to keep citizens here and to welcome new people to the city. We must be sure that local people are not bulldozed out of their homes without there being very good cause for the city as a whole.

We need vision for the future and planning to ascertain that the vision is brought to fruition. Until recent years, G.W. University was a modest group of buildings in the neighborhood. It has now become a behemoth that wishes to grow further. I hope that the BZA and the DC government in general will examine the needs of the city and make a decision as to the merits of the wishes of the residents of Foggy Bottom in contrast to the wishes of the university. For some years now, there has been a laissez-faire attitude and the university leaped across 23rd Street and has purchased the Howard Johnson's on Virginia Avenue, the Inn at Foggy Bottom on 25th , and is presently constructing buildings on 23rd and Eye, 23rd and G, and 23rd and Virginia (proposed). Students have flooded into the local apartment buildings providing a culture that is sometimes at odds with that of the older, working population.

Therefore, I view it as important that the Board of Zoning Adjustment provide specific guidelines as to the limits of George Washington University insuring that the Foggy Bottom neighborhood might be retained, together with its (rapidly disappearing) charm. I note here with some chagrin that some of the past decisions of the BZA lacked "teeth". I hope that such will not be the case for Foggy Bottom.

BZA
Case No. 16553
Exhibit No. 163

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16553
EXHIBIT NO.163

Recent situations in which alley closings were granted for the World Bank, the IMF, the IFC, and the Ritz-Carlton did not result in the required compensations to the citizenry of the District. The IFC stands as a great wall covering a whole city block, deadening all city life around it. This is true of the World Bank Buildings, in general. I would note that the Millennium Company, builders of the Ritz, closed off the Washington Circle for an inordinate period of months, during most of which time, little or no work was performed. The changes in the circle were slight. There should have been a redesign of the pathways, required by new usage by pedestrians since the opening of the Metro many years ago.

I wish the Board the wisdom and foresight to make a decision that would allow G.W to continue to perform its functions well and would allow the neighborhood to remain secure, knowing that what we plant this season will not be crushed by earth-movers next season.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely yours,

Morris J. Chalick, M.D.

cc. Jack Evans, City Council
Ellie Becker, Foggy Bottom Assn.