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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF ZONING
2000 APR 10 P 3:55

Government of the District of Columbia
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Application Number 16565, St. Mary's Hall, Georgetown University

We live at the above address. Our property adjoins that of Georgetown University. More specifically, we are immediately adjacent to the portion of the Georgetown University campus where St. Mary's Hall is located. From our living room and bedroom floors we look directly at St. Mary's, the parking lot in front of it, and the exit road from St. Mary's to Reservoir Rd. Thus, we have a very compelling interest in the changes being proposed to St. Mary's.

For many years St. Mary's housed School of Nursing offices and classrooms and served as a dormitory. However, several years ago the antiquated dormitory facilities were replaced with student residences elsewhere on the campus. Since then, to the best of our knowledge, basically only the first floor of the building has been in use, still for offices and classrooms. The upper flooors are unused.

We understand that the University plans to renovate the currently unused portions of St. Mary's and use them essentially for various administrative and management purposes. To us, this seems a reasonable use of an existing facility for purposes that would seem to have little or no impact on the immediate neighborhood.

We are aware that some persons argue that the renovation should be aimed at adding dormitory rooms. However, we note that the large new residence hall the university plans to build is at a considerable distance from any perimiter bordering a residential area. We believe that sort of dormitory construction should be encouraged. To put it simply, we'd rather be living immediately next to what is essentially an "8am to 5pm, 5 day week" facility than next to one which is 24/7.

We are also aware that the perennial issue of traffic and parking impact and need for traffic studies has come up just as it did, for example, in the case of the recent nearby relocation of Washington International School. (The distance from where we live to the Washington International School is about the same--in a diagonally opposite direction across Reservoir Road--as it is to the St. Mary's building.) Although not experts in the arcane bureacratic world of traffic studies, we can state categorically that at least where we live there have been no noticeable traffic problems from the School relocation. Looking at the partially occupied parking area on the Georgetown campus directly in front of St. Mary's, and assuming that the additional occupants of St. Mary's after the proposed renovation are primarily already getting to work and parking cars, it is hard to believe that any problem exists.

Sidney D. Spencer Frances L. Spencer

Fax cc:
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Linda Greenan, Georgetown University
Joan McGough
Barbara Zartman, for ANC 2E

BZA
Case No. 16565
Exhibit No. 33

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16565
EXHIBIT NO.33