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Federation of Citizens Associations of the District of Columbia

ORGANIZED MARCH 5, 1910 • INCORPORATED JUNE 3, 1940

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April 18, 2000

Rec'd.
MAY 16 2000

TESTIMONY OF GUY GWYNNE, PRESIDENT, REGARDING APPLICATION NO. 16565: "APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO RENOVATE ST. MARY'S HALL, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

I am Guy Gwynne, president of the D.C. Federation of Citizens Associations, and I am speaking today for the Federation and its Consortium of Communities Impacted by Universities.

In spite of the apparent convolutedness of the background of this application, it is essentially not so complicated, and the case can be considered best within its wider context.

The salient facts concerning the St. Mary's Hall building are these:

1. The 1990 Georgetown University campus plan calls for construction for an addition of 200 beds to the dormitory, to augment the 200-odd bed spaces already there.

2. This work was not done.

3. In 1996 the university closed the St. Mary's dormitory for 217 persons and redistributed the resident students.

4. To make room for these it moved 200 graduate students off campus.

5. The top three floors of the building were then and are now vacant bedrooms.

6. The university now, in April 2000, wants to convert the sizable building permanently to non-residential use, diminishing the woefully insufficient on-campus housing stock.

7. This proposed action comes at a time when there are about 2,400 off-campus students without on-campus housing, and most of these have been pushed into the surrounding R-3 residential communities.

The impacted communities suffer from the now well-known problems with student engendered noise, parking problems, unkempt premises, and trash and garbage control problems, and even dilution of permanent-resident taxpayer

BZA
Case No. 16565
Exhibit No. 60

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16565
EXHIBIT NO.60

voting power. The small 540-house community of Burleith, for instance, has over 700 students residing in an estimated 170-200 houses. It is virtually destabilized, totally contrary to the zoning regulations.

Upcoming in a short month are:

1. A new proposed Georgetown University campus plan at the Board of Zoning Adjustment.

2. A planned university request for an additional 500 students.

3. A projected 780-bed new dormitory, possibly without adequate financing with which to build it. (The total of 215 former St. Mary's residents plus 500 new students would spell zero progress in 10-15 years in mitigating severe negative university impact on the community.)

Underlying these particulars is the fact that the university has a great and urgent debt to its surrounding community, especially Burleith and Georgetown, the proportionately most impacted areas. Overall, the university should house all 2,400 of the off-campus students it attracts to the area, get them out of the impacted taxbase residential neighborhoods, and not add to the problem by adding more students to the mix.

The best immediate for the Board, the community and the university itself would be to table this hurried application for a special exception to transform St. Mary's Hall dormitory, and allow it to be what it is, a normal part of the year 2000 campus plan. That will be considered next month. Then this matter can be considered in a clearer and broader context, to the benefit of all concerned.

Attachment: Georgetown University Students in Zip Code 20007

Attachment H

Georgetown University Students in Zip Code 20007

Undergraduate Students in Zip Code 20007

Community	Undergraduate Spring 1996	Undergraduate Spring 2000
Georgetown Waterfront & Park	41	47
East Georgetown	29	24
West Georgetown	622	533
Burleith	536	538
Foxhall	35	38
Cloisters	51	41
Hillandale	8	7
Georgetown Reservoir	13	9
Glover Park	88	90
Palisades	4	15
Total (ie. includes part-time, commuters, non-degree, Veterans, students over 25, returning RN's)	1427	1342
FT Traditional Undergraduate (Excludes part-time, commuters, non-degree, Veterans, students over 25, returning RN's)	1220	1041

Graduate and Medical Students in Zip Code 20007

Community	Graduates Spring 1996	Graduates Spring 2000	Medical Spring 1996	Medical Spring 2000
Georgetown Waterfront & Park	15	15	5	2
East Georgetown	50	49	17	11
West Georgetown	81	75	27	24
Burleith	99	102	76	60 - T700
Foxhall	98	57	135	123
Cloisters	1	3	7	3
Hillandale	2	6	0	10
Georgetown Reservoir	23	51	11	34
Glover Park	305	274	196	138
Palisades	5	26	64	9
Total (Includes all categories of graduate and medical students.)	679	658	538	414

- Of the 418 addresses occupied by GU undergraduates (all categories) in Spring 2000, 57% are occupied by one or two students and 43% are occupied by three or more students.
- When the Southwest Quadrangle comes on-line, the 1041 FT Traditional students will be reduced by 780 leaving approximately 260 students in the community. It is anticipated that the majority of these students will come from the neighborhoods of Burleith and West Georgetown.
- A recent survey of GUTS ridership reports 200 new students riders (did not ride last year) on the Arlington, Rosslyn and Dupont Circle GUTS routes.