Tom Schneidermann
Julia Falconer
3615 'O' Street N.W.
Washington D.C. 20007
tel. 202-338-3707

16566

00 JUL 14 P3:53

July 13, 2000

Ms. Sheila Cross Reid
Chair, Board of Zoning Administration
441 Fourth Street N.W.
Washington D.C. 20001

Re: Georgetown University Campus Master Plan

Dear Ms. Reid:

In January of 1997 Julia Falconer and I moved to Washington D.C., having spent our previous four years living in West Africa. Our decision of where to live came down to two houses in Georgetown. One house was on 'R' Street in east Georgetown, directly across from Montrose Park, and the other is the house in which we currently reside. The houses were approximately the same size, while the house on 'R' Street had off-street parking, which our current house does not. But we were charmed by the house itself and chose to live on 'O' Street, near Georgetown University, little suspecting that we were officially on the campus of Georgetown University.

I do not exaggerate in the least when I say that this was the worst decision either of us have made in our entire lives. During the past year, in particular, we have experienced noise and disruption emanating from Georgetown University property to a degree that beggars belief. The situation is so bad and the university so incompetent at dealing with this problem that we have retained the law firm of Rosenau & Rosenau in a desperate attempt to compel Georgetown University to obey the noise laws of the District. A notice of intent to sue will be filed in the next few days, in all likelihood before the BZA hearing on July 18.

Following is a summary of some of the issues I would like to raise, based on the problems which Georgetown University presented us with between August 26, 1999 and May 4, 2000.

1) Student noise on University property. During the eight month school year 1999-2000, from August 28, 1999 to May 4, 2000, we made fifty-two calls of complaint about fifty separate incidents of noise emanating from university undergraduate housing; every single incident occurred during what is legally defined as 'night time' in the District, and every single incident occurred on University property. This number is all the more astonishing when one considers the lengthy and numerous breaks in the University calendar, th

BZA
Case No. 16566
Exhibit No. 95

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16566
EXHIBIT NO.95

occasional weekend we spent out of town, and the fact that we were absent from Washington for nearly two full months last fall.

With the exception of two sub-freezing weekends -- one in January and another in February -- we had to complain about noise every single weekend which the students and we were present from the beginning of the 1999-2000 academic year until the end. No effort we made -- whether writing letters, making phone calls, meeting with University officials, nor attending meetings -- seems to have produced the slightest bit of effective action on the University's part to prevent these repeated emanations of pollution from their property.

See Appendix A for a brief listing of noise problems and action taken from August 1999 to May 2000.

2) Student noise on public streets. Virtually every Friday night and Saturday night during the academic year our front bedroom, which faces onto O Street, is uninhabitable. Beginning around 11 p.m. processions of students leave the campus headed for Georgetown. They do not merely talk loudly; they bellow, whoop, and shout as loud as they can. The procession begins the other way at about 1 a.m. and continues sporadically until 2:30 or 3:00 a.m. Any person of normal sensibilities who tries to sleep in that room on those nights will be repeatedly woken up.

I understand that the University cannot and should not be held responsible for everything its students do everywhere, but this is a serious problem, one that takes place, according to the university, on its campus. Moreover, it is entirely predictable, recurring almost every week at the same time and at the same place. Yet I have stood at my doorway and watched as bands of yelling students pass by my house while University policemen stand fifty yards away, at 37th and O Streets, and do nothing.

3) University noise. The University noise policy (Appendix K of the Campus Plan), adopted last fall, states that "adequate controls will be in place to monitor excessive noise and to respond to complaints." Such is not the case and our problems with University noise were considerably worse than in years past. In the space of two months, there were at least six occasions of excessive noise emanating from university-sanctioned functions on the campus proper, and we had an incredibly difficult time obtaining any relief. A Metropolitan Police dispatcher (wrongly) refused to respond to anything on the campus, Metropolitan Police officers have (wrongly) refused to do anything beyond bringing the problem to the attention of University police officers, while University police officers simply will not

do anything about anything that is 'official,' no matter how loud or raucous the noise.

In the one case where I know that a University official was successfully contacted, the University official -- who was in charge of a nine hour concert held 200 yards from our bedroom -- quoted, from the noise policy, the 'right' of the university to have amplified sound until 11:00 p.m. on weeknights and ignored the 'responsibility' of event organizers not to disrupt others. She further claimed to a Metropolitan police officer that this University noise policy, selectively quoted and liberally interpreted, has the force of law.

See Appendix B for a close description of this latter incident.

4) University hotline. The University claims that its hotline is an effective tool for dealing with noise problems, which is patently untrue. The phone number does not operate most nights; it is, in my experience, not answered before midnight, and those who do answer demand an exact, correct address -- not easy to ascertain if the noise is in the unlit back yard of a house. The people who answer the hotline have made it clear that they wish to do no more than make a single telephone call. Furthermore, if the hotline does not have the phone number for the stated address, if the residents do not answer their phone, or if the residents do not answer their front door, then that seems to be sufficient cause for them to cease any and all efforts.

I stopped calling the hot line because I found it to be little more than a cruel joke. The only remotely effective means for dealing with student noise problems, I have found, have been the University or Metropolitan police.

See Appendix C for a description of times and results of my calls to the University hotline.

5) University police. University police do an almost adequate job of quieting down noise, once alerted. However, they are swamped virtually every weekend, with response times typically over an hour on a warm night. They never quiet down noise on their own initiative, they have refused to respond to complaints if a party is "registered," and they have called me back in the middle of the night to complain that there was no noise at a particular address when they arrived -- unfortunately, the students do not give us warning beforehand of how long they intend to scream in their back yards. Like the hot line, the University police can act very put out if not provided with an exact, correct address. This often entails dressing and walking around the block late at night, though not always: I made so many calls about 36th Street this past year that I knew exactly which

back yard went with which address, and even got so that I could recognize the shouts of the residents of one house.

In April of this year, I approached two officers who had responded to one of my complaints. In trying to enlist their sympathy, I said that I had made forty complaints about noise during the school year. The response I received from one officer was: "Thanks to them, I've got a job." That is an exact quote. The second officer then said: "You say you made forty calls this year? You're going to make forty calls next year, unless your move." That, too, is an exact quote. The first police officer then asked if I had gone to college. When I said I had, he answered, "Well, you partied when you were at school. Now it's their turn."

At another point in the conversation, I asked who they would submit their reports to; the officer told me that they write no report whatsoever unless they respond to the same house three times in a single night. However, with response times of an hour or more, and with parties typically commencing at 11:00 p.m., it is almost impossible to get the University police to respond three times in a night.

Given that there are about 40 university-owned, undergraduate-occupied townhouses within a hundred yards of my house (and completely ignoring the dormitory directly across the street), and based on what I was told by the University police officer, I could theoretically make more than 16,000 [sic] complaints in the course of an academic year and the University police would not write a single report (40 houses X 2 times per night X 200 nights), meaning not a single student would be so much as lectured by the University administration.

While this statistic is somewhat fanciful, it does give an idea of the laxness of the university's procedures and attitudes toward this problem. A stark fact is that we never, during the course of the year, went more than 12 consecutive days with the students present without having to make a noise complaint. Yet I am unaware of any action that was taken against any student for any behavior about which we had to complain last academic year -- a startling contrast with the full weight of the University's machinery that was brought to bear on a student who, about 250 yards from our house, committed $35 worth of vandalism last December.

What is beyond doubt in my mind, from what I've seen, is that the University police do not consider any party, no matter how loud, or how late it commences, as a serious problem, as long as they quiet down a bit when the police come by. What this means is that there is no practical motivation whatsoever for students to practice restraint prior to the initial appearance of the University police -- otherwise we would not have had to make so many repeated complaints about the same houses.

6) Supervision. The University's negligence in supervising the undergraduates who live "on campus" but off the campus proper -- namely, between 37th Street and 35th Street -- would be comical were it not so depressing. The students are there largely because Georgetown University students in other parts of Washington have caused an unconscionable amount of noise. But in evicting graduate students and replacing them with undergraduates, as has happened on 36th Street, they have not solved any problems, they have merely moved the problem.

In my own college experience, student residences -- even a graduate student residence at an Ivy League college -- always had resident advisors or head residents. I assume they exist in the dormitories on campus, but they do not seem to exist in any form for the students in these townhouses which are theoretically "on campus" but in fact only a few feet away from private houses. With kitchens and back yards, these students have the houses "on campus" best suited for parties, they are closer to the Georgetown community than any other students and hence the one most likely to cause noise problems, yet they are the ones under the least supervision "on campus."

To make the problem worse, the University unilaterally imposes its generous internal standards for noise on its neighbors in Georgetown. According to a university document sent to students this year, 'quiet hours' begin at 11:00 p.m. during the week and at midnight on Fridays and Saturdays. The clear meaning, both from this document and from what I have been personally told by a university official, is that any amount of noise is deemed acceptable up until those times. If I wish to go to sleep before midnight on Saturday -- then I am out of luck, because Georgetown University quiet hours haven't started yet.

7) Registering parties. The noise problem is exacerbated further by the university's policy of requiring students to 'register parties.' While a reasonable notion in theory, it is counterproductive in practice.

In registering a party, the University thereby grants explicit permission to have 25+ people in houses that are often only 1200 square feet (24 people in such a house is not a party at all, by the University's definition). Our house is well over 2000 square feet and I cannot imagine having 25 people in our house -- without, that is, disturbing our neighbors. Parties are typically given official sanction to continue until 2 a.m., and they are permitted a keg of beer. Registration is often understood by students -- and sometimes the university police -- as a literal license to make noise. On one memorable occasion in early 1999 I personally asked a student to turn music down; she stood on the public sidewalk of 36th Street, refused

and

point blank, claiming that a.) by registering her party she had the right to play her music at any volume until 2 a.m.; and b.) that because she was on university property the Metropolitan Police had no jurisdiction. It was then suggested that the problem lay not with their noise but my choice of place of residence.

Permission also appears to be given indiscriminately, without any past regard for past behavior. In September of last year, after less than a month in residence, I complained, in writing, about the residents of a particular house as persistent offenders. I reiterated this in person shortly afterward, feeling, personally, that they had already done enough to warrant eviction. In December I reiterated it again, in writing. Yet in February, after even more complaints from us, they were given permission to hold a party until 1 a.m. Of course the party immediately got out of hand, and we complained, though to no avail -- the party continued until past 1 a.m.

Similarly, university officials have admitted to me three different times that they do not receive incident reports from the University police. There suggests strongly that there is no oversight as to whether students behaved themselves at their parties, unless, that is, someone like me brings each individual instance to the administration's attention.

Leaf blowers

Compared with the other noise problems, this is a minor one, but it is a problem and a violation nonetheless. During spring, summer, and fall, leaf blowers are operated on the sidewalks and in the backyards of houses on our block, sometimes beginning far too early. On Thusday, May 4, I had to make two separate complaints about noise and we were kept awake until after midght. At 7:30 a.m. the following morning two leaf blowers were used in the back yards of the houses on our block. This is direct violation of the District noise ordinance, which specifically forbids the operation of leaf blowers before 8:00 a.m.

The obvious solution to this problem is to recognize the facts as they are: that the university housing between 35th Streets and 37th Streets are not now and never will be "on campus." Shifting the problem from Burleith and other neighborhoods to Georgetown and then declaring part of Georgetown "the campus" is no solution, it is calling a spade a club and then saying you've got a flush. Accordingly, the University should not be permitted to count this housing as "on campus," nor should they be allowed to increase enrollment until a stop is put to the University's violations of their neighbors rights, as provided under District law, of "ambient noise levels that are not detrimental to life, health, and enjoyment of his or her

property." The prospect of an additional 500 drunken undergraduates passing by my door, yelling, each Saturday night, quite frankly gives me the willies.

I recognize, however, that this obvious, cheap, simple and just solution is not likely to come to pass.

Absent the above solution, I believe the BZA should insist on the following provisos:

Student townhouses.

1) Resident Advisors. The University should institute some form of resident advisor, head resident, prefect, or similar position for various groupings of student townhouses. In the case of my block, there could be a resident advisor responsible for the townhouses on 36th Street and the one house east of us on O Street, another for the townhouses on 37th Street and to the west of us on O Street. These people could be points of contact for members of the community, students, and University administration, and a voice of authority to the students that is also one of them.

2) There should be a simple, but strict limit on the number of people allowed in a house (including its back yard) at any one time. Forty students in a 1200 square foot house with a keg of beer and a warm Saturday evening is a foolproof recipe for disaster. One could use simple multipliers (say 100 square feet for each person) to determine occupancy, an equally simple multiplier (say $50 per person over the limit) to fix penalty for violation.

3) A similar limit should be placed on the number of people allowed in the back yard after 9 p.m. This number should be very small, as the yards are very small and the houses are very close together -- say five or six. Our bedroom is about eight feet from our nearest (student) neighbor's backyard, and about 120 feet from the backs of the houses on 36th and 37th Streets. Three or four garrulous drunks can easily keep us up all night.

4) The University must be contractually able and spiritually willing to evict rowdy students, and promptly. The townhouses are considered desirable residences by the students and I don't believe that a hundred or so well-behaved students cannot be found. If there's a housing shortage, then surely the evicted student could swap with the student that replaces him. In enforcing this, the University should have a zero-tolerance policy, meaning eviction on the first violation. This may seem harsh, but if we have to complain just once about every house on our block, then we're complaining every single weekend in the school year, followed the next year by another batch of students, all of whom get at least one 'Get Out of Jail Free Card.'

5) This may seem silly, but I guarantee that it's necessary: tell the students, and tell them more than once, that they themselves have a right to a quiet night, that they have a right to complain if their neighbors are making too much noise, and tell them who they can complain to. Of course hypocrisy is nothing to encourage, but I know from my own experience in college (and first two years here when I was reluctant to complain) that one can feel guilty if one's right and need to sleep is in conflict with 30 people's wish to have loud fun.

6) Most important is University police enforcement. Though it may have some use for houses not owned by the University, the hot line is, in my opinion, a waste of time in dealing with University-owned properties. The University police should do the following:

a) Be instructed on the specifics of the District noise ordinance, not the University's unilateral noise policy, and told to enforce it.

b) Respond proactively (a horrible buzzword, but the right one here) to noise problems.

c) Act firmly at the beginning of an academic year; this means less work later.

d) Issue on the spot $300 noise citations, without warnings, just as the Metropolitan police do. Even if it's a purely internal fine, the University has plenty of leverage on students to collect.

e) Each time they respond to a complaint, they should check for underage drinkers. An underage drinker is also the responsibility of the host, who should be disciplined accordingly.

f) Each time they respond to a complaint, make a report. This report should go to a member of the administration for review.

7) External Oversight. There must be some external oversight, because the university simply cannot be trusted to do this properly. I am not in any way accusing the University of bad faith on this issue. However, I'm reminded of a friend who is an Associate Professor at Ohio State University who approaches all administrative matters by asking the question: "What response to your problem will get you out of my office the quickest?"

Though not all of us are as self-aware as this man, we all, at times, approach problems with essentially the same attitude. And without doubt the time will come when a Georgetown University official brings this attitude to the problem.

University noise.

The University should cease using the quad at 37th and O Street for any night time functions. Even if the function itself is not objectionable, large numbers of students milling around outside on a pleasant night will inevitably make too much noise.

It should consider alternatives, whenever possible, to all large gatherings in the same quad.

I hope this letter, and the attached appendices, will give the Board of Zoning an idea of the realities of life at the western edge of Georgetown and perhaps make our lawsuit unnecessary. If you so desire, I can provide even more information about our repeated and continuing problems with University noise -- I have documented virtually every instance since last August and have a tape recording of an incident that has occurred since May 4. We are both unable to attend the hearing in person, as we were both out of Washington in mid-June and will both be abroad on July 18, and I hope the Board takes this testimony into account when making its decision.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Schneidermann

Tom Schneidermann

Appendix A

BRIEF LISTING OF NOISE PROBLEMS AND ACTION TAKEN

25 AUGUST 1999 TO 4 MAY 2000

Incident and date	address	authority contacted	approx. time of contact
1. 25 Aug	1414 36th Street		
2. 26 Aug	1414 36th Street		
3. 1 Sep	1414 36th Street		
4. 2 Sep	3609 O Street	1. U. police 2. U. police	11:15 p.m. 12:30 a.m.
5. 3 Sep	1412 36th Street	3. U. police	11:45 p.m.
6. 5 Sep	36th Street		
7. 10 Sep	1412 36th Street	4. U. police	12:15 a.m.
8. 13 Sep	1418 36th Street		
9. 17 Sep	1412 36th Street	5. U. police	11:30 p.m.
10. 18 Sep	1414 36th Street	6. U. police	1:25 a.m.

21 September -- I called the office of Jeanne Lord, Assistant Dean, asking to speak to her about this problem. My call was never returned.

11. 22 Sep	1412 36th Street		
12. 24 Sep	3621 O Street	7. U. police	12:15 a.m.
13. 25 Sep	1422 36th Street	8. U. police	10:45 p.m.
14. 25 Sep	1414 36th Street	9. U. police	11:30 p.m.
15. 25 Sep	1422 36th Street	10. U. police	1:30 a.m.

Incident and date	address	authority contacted	approx. time of contact

26 September -- I personally delivered a letter of complaint to the University President's office about this problem.

29 September -- Meeting with Jeanne Lord and Todd Harris. I specifically mentioned 1412 and 1414 36th Street as persistent offenders, asked if they could be evicted or moved. I was promised that special attention would be paid to 36th Street, and that I should call to report any problems the following weekend.

16.	2 Oct	1414 36th Street	11.	U. police	11:15 p.m.
			12.	U. hotline	11:15 p.m.
			13.	U. police	12:25 a.m.

4 October -- I called Ms. Lord's office to report the noise problem of the previous weekend. This call was never responded to.

Approximately October 8 to November 30, Julia and I were both out of town.

17.	3 Dec	1410 36th Street	14.	U. police	1:15 a.m.
			15.	U. hotline	1:50 a.m.
18.	4 Dec	1412 36th Street	16.	U. police	1:45 a.m.

8 December -- Follow up letter of complaint sent to J. Lord.

19.	10 Dec	1416 36th Street	17.	U. police	12:30 a.m.
			18.	U. hotline	12:20 a.m.
20.	15 Dec	1412 36th Street			
21.	11 Jan	1412 36th Street	19.	U. police	12:30 a.m.
22.	16 Jan	1412 36th Street	20.	U. police	1:40 a.m.

Incident and date	address		authority contacted	approx. time of contact

20 January -- Response to my December 8 letter not posted before this date. No action reported; only action planned was a 'talk' to tenants of 1410 36th Street and 1412 36th Street.

23.	29 Jan	36th Street	21.	U. police	1:00 a.m.
24.	11 Feb	1412 36th Street	22.	U. police	11:40 p.m.
			23.	U. hotline	11:40 p.m.
25.	12 Feb	1424 36th Street	24.	U. police	11:45 p.m.
			25.	D.C. police	12:10 a.m.
			26.	U. hotline	12:10 a.m.
			27.	U. police	1:15 a.m.
			28.	U. hotline	1:15 a.m.

14 February -- I went to Mr. Harris's office. He readily admitted he had 'registered' (i.e. given official university permission for) the February 11 party at 1412 36th Street. No action had been taken against any student, nor was any promised. An attempt was made to schedule meeting with J. Lord. This meeting never happened. Rather, I was invited to a public meeting.

17 February -- Public meeting. I and some other members of the public were permitted to air our grievances about student behavior. This meeting was entirely voluntary for the students and I was generally appalled by their collective attitudes. No concrete action was promised; the students were merely told they should 'get the word out.' At the conclusion of the meeting Ms. Lord said she would arrange a meeting between herself, the head of the University Police, and me. They determined between themselves that the meeting could not take place before Feb. 22. I said that was fine as long as we had a quiet weekend. Ms. Lord promised we would. We did not.

26.	19 Feb	1412 36th Street	29.	U. police	11:10 p.m.
27.	19 Feb	1408 36th Street	30.	U. police	1:15 a.m.

23 or 24 February -- I called J. Lord's office to learn when the promised meeting might happen. She was not available.

Incident and date	address	authority contacted	approx. time of contact

24 February, late afternoon -- J. Lord called. Subject of meeting was avoided. She said T. Harris was issuing a memo to the students. A copy was put through our mailbox. I have heard nothing more from any member of the university administration.

28.	25 Feb	1414 36th Street	31.	U. police	12:20 a.m.
29.	25 Feb	1422 36th Street			
30.	26 Feb	1415 37th Street			

Weekend of March 3-4 we were out of town; weekend of March 11-12 students were on Spring Break.

31.	17 Mar	Campus			
32.	17 Mar	1412 36th Street	32.	D.C. police	11:30 p.m.
			33.	U. police	11:30 p.m.
33.	17 Mar	36th Street	34.	U. police	4:10 a.m.
34.	18 Mar	Campus			
35.	24 Mar	Campus	35.	D.C. police	11:15 p.m.
36.	24 Mar	1422 36th Street	36.	U. police	12:30 a.m.
37.	25 Mar	1412 36th Street	37.	D.C. police	11:35 p.m.
38.	25 Mar	3617 O Street			
39.	31 Mar	3623 O Street	38.	D.C. police	12:15 a.m.
			39.	U. police	12:20 a.m.
40.	31 Mar	3623 O Street			
41.	9 Apr	Campus	40.	D.C. police	4:45 p.m.
			41.	U. police	4:50 p.m.
42.	14 Apr	1310 or 1312 36th	42.	D.C. police	9:15 p.m.

Incident and date	address	authority contacted	approx. time of contact
43. 15 Apr	1416 36th St.	43. D.C. police	2:45 a.m.
		44. U. police	2:45 a.m.
44. 15 Apr	1416 36th St.	45. U. police	4:00 a.m.
45. 16 Apr	1416 36th St.	46. D.C. police	11:15 p.m.
		47. U. police	11:15 p.m.
46. 18 Apr	1409 37th St.	48. U. police	11:10 p.m.

Wednesday 19 April until Monday 24 April, the students were away on Easter Break.

47. 30 Apr	Campus	49. D.C. police	10:15 p.m.
48. 2 May	1400 blk 36th St.	50. U. police	11:30 p.m.
49. 2 May	1400 blk 37th St.		1:15 a.m.
50. 3 May	Campus	51. D.C. police	9:20 p.m.
51. 3 May	3600 blk O St.	52. U. police	10:25 p.m.
52. 3 May	1416 36th St.	53. D.C. police	10:40 p.m.
		54. U. police	11:20 p.m.
		55. D.C. police	11:55 p.m.
53. 4 May	1422 36th St.	56. D.C. police	10:15 p.m.
54. 4 May	1422 36th St.	57. D.C. police	11:30 p.m.

Notes:

'Date' refers to the date as of the evening, rather than taking into account the date change at midnight.

All incidents have taken place on university-owned and -administered property.

In a some cases authorities did not answer their phones. In all instances, however, we eventually reached an authority.

APPENDIX B

Events of Wednesday May 3, 2000

At about 12:30 p.m. live music began to be played on the steps of White-Gravenor Hall. This is about 200 yards from our house and it was, I believe, the sixth time we had been subjected to loud live concerts from the steps of White-Gravenor Hall in less than two months; each of the previous occasions had gone on until after midnight. Though there was a respite beginning about 1 p.m., the music resumed at about 1:30 p.m. and, for the next nine hours never once stopped for more than a few minutes. Though the sound level fluctuated (presumably with the different performers) it was always loud enough to be clearly audible in our house, in every room, with all the windows closed.

At four o'clock I went out to run some errands, though I would have preferred to remain at home. At six o'clock I went running, in part to get away from the noise.

At 9:20 p.m. I called the D.C. police. I said that there was a live band at 37th and O Streets, and that they had been playing for eight hours. The dispatcher said the first available unit would respond. Almost immediately I went onto the campus to observe. The first thing I saw was a female university police officer walking around, completely unconcerned with the noise level.

Between 9:20 and 9:35 I waited, mostly outside, for the District police. During this time one of the rooms on the second floor of the dormitories directly across 'O' street from our house had its windows open and music was blaring out onto the street.

At about 9:30 p.m. I noticed the sound of a loud stereo and screaming from the back yard of a house on 36th Street. I believe the noise was coming from 1416 36th Street, but I am not certain.

At about 9:35 p.m. I saw a D.C. police cruiser arrive at 37th and O Streets. I approached the car and spoke to Officer Felicia Hope and to Officer T. Will. I explained that I was the one who had called, and that the noise had been going on since lunch time. They said they would ask how long the music was supposed to go on and see what they could do. They asked me if I'd like to know the disposition and I said I would.

I returned home. Noise was still coming from both 36th Street and from the opposite side of O Street as well as from the live band, but I felt there was little point in doing much about them for the time being, as they were considerably less noisy than the din emanating from the campus.

At 10:25 p.m. I called the university police about the dormitory on O Street. The dispatcher took my name, address and phone number, and said he would send somebody.

At about 10:40 p.m. Officers Hope and Will came to my door. As I opened my front door, I noticed that the window on the dormitory across the street was closed and noise was no longer coming from it. At just about this time, too, the music from the campus stopped.

Officer Hope apologized for taking so long, saying they had been dealing with the university people for all this time (about an hour). According to Officer Hope, the person she was dealing with, a Ms. Mary Kay Schneider, Director of Student Programs, was "most unhelpful."

Bizarrely, Ms. Schneider, in response to the officers' concerns about the noise, gave them a card on which she wrote the telephone numbers for the University Police and the University hotline. One can only assume that she wanted the officers, or me, to call the hotline (which would not be answered, as it was Wednesday), or the University police (who were already present and entirely unconcerned about the noise level).

Officer Hope gave me the card, which was useless to me: I had concluded the hot line is a waste of time, while I've called the University police so many times I know their number by heart. Officer Hope went on to say that she had initially been inclined to allow the music to continue until 11 p.m., but that Ms. Schneider's behavior had "ticked her off." According to Officer Hope, Ms. Schneider appeared to be stalling her, and that at some point she went away and returned with a document which purported to be the official university noise policy, claiming that it had been signed off on by the university president and by city officials.

Officer Hope showed me the document, which was nothing more than a paragraph printed on plain white paper; it contained no letterhead, no signatures and two typographical errors which had been corrected by hand. The document claimed that the university could have events with amplified music until 11:00 p.m. on weekdays and until 1 a.m. on weekends, but said nothing about any responsibility toward others. Officer Hope expressed the suspicion to me that Ms. Schneider had simply gone off and typed up the document. Officer Hope said she told Ms. Schneider that the document had no standing as far as she was concerned and stated: "If I knew where to pull the plug, I would have, but I don't know anything about music." She also said that Ms. Schneider had told her there would be another such 'event' very soon. Officer Hope also said that, even if the document was real, they should have announced the concert on "every door, tree and lightpole around here," I believe was her phrase. Of course we there was no notification of any kind.

I asked if they could leave the 'document' with me, but after some consideration they decided that they should keep it to show to Lieutenant Pat Burke.

As the officers were leaving, I asked them to quiet down the students on 36th Street, that I thought the address was 1416 36th Street. I said they were in the back yard screaming, or had been a few minutes before, and described the alley behind the houses. They said they would.

I presume they went behind the houses, heard nothing or little and left, as there was a lull in the noise a few minutes later. But at about 11:00 p.m. they were making more noise than ever -- there were ten to fifteen people screaming, occasionally singing at full throat, and the stereo was played at volume so loud that it was possible to make out the lyrics to the songs inside our living room, with all the windows closed. This was the loudest noise from any group of students since last fall.

At 11:05 p.m. I walked around the block, though it didn't help me figure out where the noise was coming from. At 11:20 p.m. I called the University police and gave them what I thought was the address. The dispatcher sounded in a hurry, but said they would send somebody. With no improvement a half an hour later, I called the District police at 11:55 p.m. and gave them the address. The dispatcher said she would send a unit.

Somebody quieted them down at about 12:05 a.m.

The following night, Thursday May 4, I had to make another complaint. I called the Metropolitan Police and was able to get Lt. Pat Burke to come to my door. In addition to reporting the current noise problem, I spoke with him about the events of the previous night. I described the 'document' which had been presented to Officers Hope and Will and asked if he knew anything about an official agreement permitting the university to have amplified music until 11:00 p.m. on weekday nights and 1 a.m. on weekend nights. Lt. Burke stated that no such agreement existed, that both he and the Captain would have had to sign off on any such agreement, and that he had not.

APPENDIX C -- EXPERIENCES WITH THE UNIVERSITY HOTLINE

Saturday/Sunday October 2/3, 1999

In reponse to a loud party at 1414 36th Street, I called the university hotline at approximately 11:15 p.m. Nobody answered. The call bounced to a voice mailbox, which told me that the voice mail had not been installed. I succeeded in reaching the University police.

Friday/Saturday December 3/4

At 1:50 a.m., in reponse to a party at 1410 36th Street, I called the University hot line -- a previous call at to the University police at 1:15 a.m. had produced no results. When the phone was answered I told the woman that there was a loud party and gave her the address. She said that she would look up who lived at the house, telephone them, and ask them 'what was going on.' She then told me to call her back 'in a little while' if things hadn't gotten any better -- this for a party which had commenced at around 1 a.m. and about which I had made a complaint more than half an hour previous. I asked her if she couldn't please send someone to the house, she somewhat reluctantly agreed and hung up.

At 2:10 a.m., nearly an hour after we had been woken up, I dressed and went outside to physically look for the police. I went to the corner of 36th and O Streets and, saw a university police car in front of the house and returned home. A few minutes later the noise stopped. However, shortly after the police left, the stereo was turned on again; I was not able to sleep until around 3 a.m.

Friday/Saturday December 10/11, 1999

At about 11:30 p.m. a number of students went into the back yard of 1416 36th Street and began talking loudly. At around midnight the talking had degenerated into the sporadic shouting of, by my estimate, 8-12 students. At 12:30 a.m. I called the university police and the university student conduct hotline. The students were quiet by about 12:45 a.m.

Friday/Saturday February 11/12, 2000

There was a loud party in the back yard of 1412 36th Street. At about 11:40 p.m. I put in calls to the University police and to the hotline. There was no answer at the hot line. The police answered and promised to dispatch an officer. The noise quieted down somewhat around 1:00 a.m., though the shouting continued sporadically until at least 1:30 a.m.

Saturday/Sunday February 12/13, 2000

In response to raucous party on 36th Street, I called the university police at about 11:45 p.m and the dispatcher promised to send somebody. With no improvement at around 12:10 a.m., I called the Metropolitan police to complain, then I called the university hotline. I told the phone receptionist that I believed the noise was at 1424, certainly from one of the houses in the vicinity, stated that the students were in the back yard, and that they should go to the alley behind the houses on 36th Street. She said she would 'talk to the on-site operator.'

At 1:15 a.m. there was no improvement, so I called the university police again and gave them the address again. I called the university hotline again and gave them the address again, then asked them what they had done. The receptionist said that they has no listing for 1422 36th Street, that 1424 were not answering their telephone, nor were they answering their front door. I explained for the second time that night that all they had to do was go to the alley behind the houses and follow the noise and gave them exact instructions on how to get there.

It was nearly 2:00 a.m. before things got quiet; I do not know who, if anybody, was responsible for the end of the party. I did, however, decide that my calls to the University hotline were a waste of time, that the University police were a far better bet.