July 16, 2000

Ms. Sheila Cross Reid
Director, Board of Zoning Adjustments
441 Fourth Street NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

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Re: Georgetown University Master Plan

Dear Ms. Reid:

I've hastily written this letter in response to the flyer distributed by The Citizens Association of Georgetown and it will have to do as is. I'll get right to the point, and then give both my background and the basis for my position.

I am in favor of just about anything this great University wants to do on campus. I could easily become a contributor. However, I am against anything – and I mean anything – this largest of Georgetown's enterprises wants to do off campus in this historic, residential community. Toward that end, I have made the decision to financially assist any reasonable adversarial issue against the university.

As the university has consumed its campus both horizontally and vertically, its long-term problems have become insurmountable within the historic, residential community of Georgetown. That should be obvious to everybody concerned – especially the university. Only through substantial destruction of the residential nature of this community would its needs even have a theoretical chance of being met (and at what a cost!).

There is only one answer that would allow this great university to expand to meet its needs and capability: increase the number of its campuses (as GWU and other schools have done). Only the most arrogant disregard would ignore the substantial merit of this alternative, especially when one examines every off-campus presence of the university today.

My Background.

My name is Patrick (Pat) McGettigan. I live at 3327 N Street, one of the historic, 1817 townhouses known as Cox's Row. I purchased it in April of 1998 for $1,600,000 and moved in the following June. We have been working on it almost continuously since that time. It is great to be back home (I'll get to that later).

By way of background, I realize now that I am very much one version of the "American Dream." I was born and raised in Washington DC and grew up – ironically – about ten blocks east of my home – on the other side of Rock Creek near Washington Circle. I am the first-born of both of my immigrant parents. On my birth certificate, my English

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mother was listed as a "domestic" and my Irish father was listed as a "laborer." We were very poor and I did not know a father after age 6.

One of my early credentials was playing on the first team ever coached by the now famous DeMatha High School coach, Morgan Wooten – at St. Joseph's Home for Boys in NE DC. Although often an honor student – I was first in my class academically as a sophomore at Mackin High School – my last year in school was the 11th grade (I got my diploma at night at Roosevelt High School). My best shot at a four-year institution of higher learning ended up being the United States Marine Corps (1961-1965). Artillery of all things! Fortunately, I just missed Vietnam.

I am the father of six and the grandfather of nine. I am also the Chairman of the Board – and founder – of Landmark Systems Corporation, a $51 million, Reston Virginia software company, founded in 1983 and public since late 1997. I was voted the High-Tech Entrepreneur of the Year for the Washington area in 1989 and 1991. Viva NASDAQ!

Obviously, there's a lot "between the lines" in this story but I'll just leave it here for now in the hope that it is enough to sketch my personal picture.

First Impressions.

Now, I'll talk about my experience with Georgetown University since I "came back home" in 1998.

As you might surmise, I occasionally roamed these streets as a kid from my home "across the creek." Believe me, the "West End" – as it is called today -- was a very different place then (40's and 50's). But I always said I would come back to the city someday and, after several lifetimes in the Maryland and Virginia suburbs, when Landmark went public in November of 1997 that day had come. Although theoretically Old Town Alexandria was an option, I chose DC – and Georgetown – even though it bothered me greatly to not have a normal citizen's rights (I love that proposed license plate slogan!), even though Georgetown "had all those bars", and, even though I would be living on the same side of Wisconsin Avenue as Georgetown University.

My first impression of the university presence was – and in some ways remains – very positive. In a neighborhood with various accomplished people of a certain age including one software entrepreneur -- not to mention the Secretary of State -- it was great to have the youthful presence of the "kids" coming and going along N Street, and ever-present in the community. I mean, after all, these kids had the ability and/or wealth to go to a school like Georgetown University so they weren't exactly misfits! And they were from all over the world too. The rowing teams, visiting parents, professors and neighbors at the Booeymonger Deli? Neat! Or at least it all was during the day -- most of the time.

Like many Georgetown residents, I walk these streets a lot. And over these two years, my exacting eye has known every block from 28th to 35th, K to Q. Every day I've walked

my various routes, to the Georgetown Bagelry, to the Booeymonger Deli, to Nathans, Key Bridge, the Post Office, the bank, etc. One walks a lot in Georgetown! Therefore, one also can't help but experiencing the inevitably negative side of a university. For these two years (that I have lived here), it hasn't been hard to find the small-to-large irritants that bore the university's name every day.

Off-Campus Student Housing.

The "animal houses" were most underfoot – every day, and, every night. To someone who had just purchased a multi-million dollar home in one of America's most historic residential communities, they stood out like a sore thumb and were even shocking. In the midst of a rampant economy where there were often multiple bids for multi-million dollar properties in an essentially wealthy community, you, oh-so-clearly, had the off-campus housing for these wealthy students that trashed its streets, perpetuated near-derelict properties, and knew none of the respect for the community with which they surely were raised. You could pick the student housing out by the trash, litter, and disrepair of the property. The rental properties stood out – especially those catering to Georgetown students.

Evidence of their presence – and total disrespect – was there, every day, and every night. Walk 33rd street from M Street, 34th from M Street, Prospect Street from 34th to Wisconsin, and just about anywhere else on the university side of Wisconsin, "The West Village" – and student presence -- will make itself known.

After all, this is college where you are supposed to do certain things, especially those that your parents would never have permitted, right? So what if your university – and residence – happens to be in a wealthy, historic, residential community. So what if your animal house is within doors of where Jack and Bobby Kennedy lived, where Madeleine Albright has lived for two decades, where Herman Wouk has thought it worthwhile enough to maintain a residence, where Georgetown mayor, John Cox, lived and built our lovely home, and where some of the most accomplished and wealthy residents of Washington DC just happen to live. So what!

But who is to blame for what is an all-too-accepted aspect of college life? The "kids?" I might well argue that these pampered and privileged young people might know much better, but, if I can assume the offenders constitute the small minority, and look to the proper level of responsibility, who would I address as the responsible party? The university, clearly, whether they own the property or not. And their track record as caretakers – if not landlords – within our historic, affluent, residential community speaks for itself.

Every day, this was all too obvious to all who walked these streets -- be they residents, visitors, tourists, the Secretary of State, or one Patrick McGettigan. When you had put so much into a home and in being a contributing member of the neighborhood as I had, it was impossible to ignore the negative side -- no matter how understanding you tried to be. It festered over time.

Traffic & Parking.

An even more irritating fallout from the university that plagues our neighborhood is the traffic and parking problems that are also part of our every day – and night.

This is such a common cliché these days that one would be tempted to skip over this section because it's normal, isn't it? But I think it terribly important to revisit this admittedly hopeless issue -- as it exists today, not to mention the future. It is also important to point out the university's role today -- not to mention in a theoretical future – even if there were not one retail establishment on either Wisconsin Avenue or M Street. Just as parking and traffic problems in Georgetown are a worn out cliché, so is the university's role.

First, let me recount over two years of daily commutes across Key Bridge. Beyond any shadow of a doubt, the university traffic -- today -- is the single most negative influence on the Key Bridge and M Street traffic patterns west of Wisconsin. Want to question that point? Stand on the north side of Prospect Street at either 33rd Street or, worst still, Banks Street (alley). Count the turns west toward the university. Count the kids combing the neighborhoods for parking spaces. No question at all.

The Banks Street alley is particularly infuriating and it is almost 100% university driven. My opinion (after at least one trip a day for over two years) is that the university traffic making both legal and illegal left turns from M Street at the Banks Street alley is the single greatest cause of backups of Key Bridge and M Street going east from Key Bridge. And this is with a legal left turn signal at 33rd Street (the only northbound road from Key Bridge west of Wisconsin). Even today, if all university traffic used 33rd as most of us residents do, it would need major change (no parking, at least two lanes north) that would probably just accommodate – at best. And that's today, not in an expanded future.

I should also mention parking in this historic, residential community, a situation about which the university can't be this ignorant. Arrogant: yes. Ignorant: no. Their attitude seems to be that it is somebody else's worry, perhaps the city's? And even though they run shuttle buses and have both faculty and students that must fight this mess each day, they can in good conscience, with a straight face, advocate expansion within our historic, residential village? The university is the single biggest cause of traffic and parking problems west of Wisconsin and they know it. Their faculty, students, parents, animal house residents, visitors and friends all crowd into our historic, residential community to learn, party – and park.

First Impressions Summary

So, to reduce the rhetoric, in my two years, like the kids or not, their negative presence, especially as residents of the community, quickly became a daily experience -- some days just the normal trash, beer bottles and puke, but all too often the destructive and

disrespectful presence that no neighborhood of this affluence would tolerate. But, the reality was that life went on with the ever-present university community – for better or for worse -- as well as the restaurant and entertainment district which also qualified as a mixed blessing – at best. Both were underfoot every day.

Then came the triggering experience that put me in this seemingly radical position. Until that day, I was definitely ambivalent on university issues, despite my daily experiences on our streets.

The Wormley School

On May 2, 2000, my wife, Gay Pirozzi, and I went to our first ANC 2E meeting, ostensibly to represent our building permit pending before the Fine Arts Commission. Little did we know it but we would come out of that excruciating four hours or so as radical opponents of Georgetown University's expansion within this community.

In the way of background, as I have already said, I went into that meeting totally neutral and even sympathetic to the university. I knew vaguely of the Wormley School changes and I knew that my neighbors (across N Street adjacent to the school property) had concerns, as most logically people would. I had no idea the Wormley issue was on the agenda at that ANC meeting.

I can only tell you I was absolutely shocked, even angered by the various school representatives, staff, architects, faculty and all. Either they were the most clueless, incompetent people on the planet (especially in terms of this community's daily issues), or they knew the problems all too well and were duty-bound to represent the university's hopeless situation, and achieve its ultimate goals – as best they could -- no matter what. And when I listened to the history of this transaction from my neighbors that testified – at least one was even a university alumnus -- whatever goodwill I felt toward the university evaporated. I went from being sympathetically neutral to being radically opposed.

After all was said and done, the one thing that was crystal clear to me after that meeting was that the university was going to do – and say – whatever it had to in order to gain its ends in a physical situation that is the next thing to impossible. To stand up in that meeting and to conduct themselves in such a ridiculously unaware, arrogant, or incompetent fashion – clear to every attendee – not only eliminated what sympathies I had for the university but also brought certain obvious facts alarmingly to focus.

Most fundamental among these is the hopeless situation the university logically faces in terms of future expansion bound by the geographic constraints of its campus. Once the possibilities of expansion within its campus have been exhausted, where is it to go? Were it GE, Microsoft, The Department of Justice, or any other major concern, its problems – and alternatives would be the same. However, which of these would even think of expanding piecemeal into a historic, residential community against the opposition of most of its residents?

Remember, I grew up here in NW DC and I can readily bring to mind two examples.

I lived right across the street (on 24th Street) from the Columbia Hospital For Women in the late 40's and through the 50's. Today, built out to the extremes of its bounding city streets, one might not believe that it had huge surrounding grounds when I was a kid. It did.

An even better example is George Washington University where I lived when John F. Kennedy was elected and from where I joined The Marine Corps in 1961.

We lived in a street of typical Washington row houses on F Street, between 22nd and 23rd. Then as now, I walked its streets a great deal. It has taken this incident to take me back and look again at what was overwhelmingly a residential community, albeit neither as historic, nor as affluent.

Our old house would be where the Smith Center is today. That whole block is gone as are many, many other homes between 17th and 24th Streets, Virginia and Pennsylvania Avenues, as the university expanded within the residential community within which it was founded. Today, the effect of this change is abundantly clear in terms of the transition of the community. But GW at least had a starting excuse: they had no campus; they were scattered literally within the community. Still, after all of these years, what did they finally do? They built a campus out in Loudon County, Virginia! Had they only had the sense to do that a couple of decades ago.

My point is that it has got to be obvious to anyone with half a brain that any – any – adequate expansion of the university outside of its campus will be to the everlasting detriment of this unique, historic, residential community. I mean, if you could view the entire Old Georgetown city grid from 28th to 36th, from the Potomac River to R, what chunk would meet the long-term needs of the university? And having made that decision, what could even theoretically preserve the historic, residential nature of this community? Is there anyone besides the university staff who really thinks that a piecemeal expansion within this historic, residential community will be to anyone's advantage at all -- save the university's? Georgetown too can look like the GWU campus in a decade or two.

When we think about it, we already have examples of the university's community due-diligence and integrational skills, don't we? We have our "off-campus student housing", what I so unkindly call "animal houses." They've been there for a while haven't they? How they have been managed by the university has been perfectly okay, hasn't it? Or, put another way, surely nothing else the school could do in the community could be worse? So why not expand on those lines?

Although I will not claim to know a whole lot more than the obvious, has anyone looked very closely at the wonderful, historically integrated university building nestled so inconspicuously within what was once a row of residences at 3240 Prospect, a short

distance from a few animal houses? It matches the Dominoes building across the street perfectly.

The Wormley School was unfortunately purchased by the university, ostensibly for use by a group of its faculty. Of course, now they plan to use it for students too including expansion of buildings within its compound. Can anyone with a straight face imagine how such a use will not encroach even further from the animal houses across Prospect into the character of still valuable residential property? Can anyone with a straight face say how the parking and traffic will be accommodated when today a deserted Wormley School's neighborhood is often hand-to-hand combat? More fundamental and important is this: can this slash by the university into this historic, residential community really meet its needs in any reasonable way long term regardless of its impact upon the community? How is not just a gash in the community's side? Within that context, the commercialized chaos of the expanded GWU campus does not seem that much of a stretch.

But how does this make sense either economically or operationally to the university? I'm a successful businessman. Explain it to me. How does a door-to-door, house-to-house guerilla war of piecemeal encroachment into one of the country's most valuable, and historic residential communities – against major opposition – meet the long-term needs of a great, popular, and always expanding university? How can that possibly be a better option for all concerned than whole, integrated campuses within the greater Washington region? Why destroy the historic, residential city of Georgetown to expand the university in the most difficult and expensive of ways? Explain the sense of it someone! Would its business school expand this way today in the classroom?

Perhaps the answer is the same as why one would use prime Georgetown real estate for rundown "animal houses" despite a real estate market that commands top dollar and where the buyer would certainly upgrade the community and its tax base?

Conclusion

I'll just leave it there. Let's not forget that Georgetown University is the largest commercial enterprise in this historic section of the city. It has shown disregard, bad faith, or incompetence repeatedly off of its campus, despite its rhetoric. Their tactic of expansion of the university infrastructure within the historic, residential community of Georgetown can't possibly make economic sense to anyone and would mean certain deterioration -- if not destruction -- of this unique urban legacy of our country's – and the university's -- origins.

Could **any** expansion of the university off campus contribute harmoniously to the architecture, real estate value, quality of life, or appeal of the historic, residential community of Georgetown? **Any?** A yes is not even theoretically possible.

Throughout my life, I have tried to occupy the flexible middle ground of reason between the extremes of black and white. Rarely in life does one of these fundamental positions present itself. This is one.

Sincerely,

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FAX COVER

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