1703 - 37th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
July 14, 2000

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Ms. Shelia Cross-Reid
Chairperson
Board of Zoning Adjustment
Suite 210
441 Fourth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

BZA
Case No. 16566
Exhibit No. 108

Dear Chairperson Cross-Reid:

This letter concerns Case # 16566 and is sent as public comment on the Georgetown University Ten Year Plan.

We are District homeowners and tax payers residing in the Burleith area directly north of the Georgetown University campus. During the 40 years we have lived here, the University's expansive development has been the most important factor impelling change in our neighborhood from single family residence to student group rental housing. In reviewing the University's proposed Ten Year Plan, we want you to know of chronic difficulties we already have with the increasing numbers of undergraduate students.

Our major difficulties, with specific examples from

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#108

our situation, are described in the paragraphs that follow:

1. More group rental houses with younger students

Our home on 37th Street, at the corner of P Street, is just a 10 minute walk away from the University classrooms. Three houses directly across 37th Street from us are now rented to undergraduate students, the house directly back of us is rented to more students, and even the townhouse sharing our northside wall and adjoining our yard is occupied by student renters. The number of students in each house varies from 6 to 8, and since most students are transients they show little concern for the effect of their conduct on neighbors or property.

2. Excessive noise, littered yards, alley trash

For our household, the most objectionable impact of student neighbors has been loud noise from large student parties and raucous behavior of students walking along 37th Street on their way home from parties and campus events. The time of this noise disruption is so unpredictable that we seldom can invite guests outside the family to visit anymore on weekends or holidays. Even our own 4th of July holidays have been spoiled twice by large unannounced "Open House" gatherings hosted by students next door. This year the mid-day celebration began with food, beer, and stereo,

then escalated to water sports with garden hose that reduced the grass to a mud lot. Trash was swept out to the alley, but six empty beer kegs still line the fence.

3. Parking and traffic problems

Since there is little off-street parking in our neighborhood, each University expansion adds more cars to the competition among neighborhood residents and commuters for curbside parking. Along this section of 37th Street, parking is limited to the east side, which makes it even more difficult for family, visitors, and repairmen to find parking space near our house during week-days. For late night student parties, however, all parking and departures take place on this side of the street, raising the level of noise outside our bedroom windows.

Considering that Georgetown University's development already has produced such objectionable conditions of noise, traffic, and disruptive numbers of students in our residential community, we strongly support the Burleith Citizens Association in opposing any increase in the University's student enrollment and in requiring more specific identification by the University of the uses of the buildings on campus.

Sincerely yours,
Elizabeth Thompson
Ronald Thompson