3618 Whitehaven Parkway N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
July 16,2000

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

'00 JUL 18 P3:12

OF
DIST

My name is Sara Page Smith and I have been a resident of the small community of Burleith for 30 years. I have been a homeowner here for the past 20 years.

I am writing to you to file my vehement opposition to the Georgetown University Ten Year Plan that will come before you and the Board of Zoning and Adjustment.

To give you some background that may give more credance to my letter, I was an employee of Georgetown University for 28 years. I know, from experience and from listening to the powers that be at Georgetown University, that concern for their impact on neighboring communities is negligible. They say they are concerned and have put measures and people in place to deal with community complaints and problems caused by students, but , in reality, these measures have been and are a mere "drop in the bucket" to solve the problems. Georgetown University , in spite of what it says to you or to its' neighbors, still considers the complaints and problems of the neighboring communities more as whining children who need to be appeased in the easiest manner possible. They make promises they do not keep or intend to keep, they leave it up to the community residents to either solve the problems or to learn to live with them.

If I were to document all the horrible situations that just I, as ONE person, have had to endure over the years due to Georgetown students living in my neighborhood, you would be presented with a document so large it would take you days to read it. Consequently, I will attempt to relay the most memorable events and the constant , on-going events that are the direct result of having groups of Georgetown students living in the houses around me.

---VANDALISM---I have had my car scraped with a key. I have had flowers and shrubs in my garden trampled to the ground . Both incidences occurred in the middle of the night shortly after I had gone to a student filled house having a keg party and had loudspeakers of RAP music playing at top volume in the backyard. I went to their door at midnight and asked them kindly to turn the music off and to lower the noise. They did neither. But, lo and behold, I awoke to a scratched car and a ruined (expensive) garden. A representative of the University came out to see the damage as did the president of the citizens association but, since I had not seen the students do the damage, nothing could be done except to leave me with damage AND the group of students still nearby...who continued to have similar parties.

Another vandalism act perpretated on my home occurred when there was a loud, drunken party of Georgetown students going on next door to me. Another neighbor had called them several times to request quiet. However, one of the girls who lived in the house, and who was QUITE drunk, thought I had been the one who called them. She came to my door, banging wildly. Since I recognized her, I opened the door to her and as I did, she began cursing at me and proceeded to throw and entire cup of beer into my house...it soaked the carpet and parts of my furniture. I told her to get off my property or I would call the police. Stupidly, I did not call the police.

---NOISE---This has been and is a never-ending situation. Student houses have loud, boisterous parties any time of day and any day of the week. There is a total disregard for their neighbors need for sleep time, the fact that most residents have jobs during the weekdays that requires rest, that there are many older, ill neighbors they are disturbing, that the majority of neighbors would also like to enjoy some peace where we live. It is a futile effort, one I have made hudreds of times, to meet the students, explain the closeness of the

BZA
Case No. 16566
Exhibit No. 125

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16566
EXHIBIT NO.125

homes in the neighborhood, hence, anyone's noise effects as many as 50-80 people. Usually they just nod and laugh. To this day, the loud parties and yelling noises go on!

I and my neighbors call the police dispatchers at least twice a week to come and quell a loud student party. We consider this a misuse of our police force but it is the ONLY alternative we usually have since the so-called "Hot-line" at the University has such limited hours , and are ONLY available September until the first part of May. Their "hot-line" hours are then ONLY Friday and Saturday nights from 9p.m until 3a.m. Even when the hot-line is called, little is done at the time the party is in full swing....action by the Off-campus Student Affairs Office waits until the following week or longer to take action if any. The offending students are aware of this so they party on.

Another on-going noise problem is that of students roving (usually drunk) from party to party. They rove down the sidewalks, through the alley ways, in the middle of the street. Mind you, roving is not a quiet sport. It involves loud yelling, laughing, cursing, fighting and, of course, throwing their beer bottle and cups anywhere and at whatever suits them.

Then, we have horn blowing! Whether night or day, students use the car horn as their method of greeting while riding by a friend's house or to pick some one up at their house. If the party is not ready for pick-up, the horn continues to be blown until the person gets to the car. This usually takes place after midnight.

---GARBAGE--- Well, just come take a look! Students are under the impression, even though they have been versed in proper garbage disposal by university orientation, that they can toss, yes, I mean TOSS, anything and everything into the alley behind their house! Without any thought to public health or cleanliness, they toss unbagged raw garbage, paper galore, clothes, old luggage, multiple beer bottles and beer cans , and anything else they deem tossable. Many times they make piles of trash and garbage so large, it blocks the passage of cars through the alley.

It is their neighbors who take plastic gloves and plastic bags and clean up their messes. This is usually a weekly activity for the neighbors since the manner in which student group houses toss their mess, the regular sanitation people often ignore it. So, if neighbors do not clean it up, then it stays for the rats and other animals.

---PARKING---Georgetown students park wherever and whenever they wish in this neighborhood. I have lived here long enough to know. Most Georgetown students who live in Burleith houses , usually 5-6 per house, DO have cars. This is contrary to a statement made by Ms. Linda Greenan in the Georgetown current, that most Georgetown students do not have cars. She made the statement in an article discussing the building Georgetown has bought at Wisconsin Avenue and 44th Place, and plan to use as a dormitory. Well, I am not sure what statistics Ms. Geenan is using but in OUR neighborhood, there are at least 3 -4 cars per student house. Needless to say, that creates a major parking crunch on our streets, in our alley ways and, they even deem the open space at fire hydrants as their private parking place if no other can be found.

The students attitude here again is, "so what"? One student blatently told me after I asked him not to park at the fire hydrant, "Lady, I will park where I want! If I get a ticket, I'll either tear it up or my father will take care of it, so...buzz off!".

I could go on for many more pages with specific situations and problems that dramatically alter the quality of life here in Burleith as a direct result of Georgetown students who live in group house situations. One I have not even mentioned is the deplorable conditions in which these houses are kept year after year so I will add that now. The students literally trash the houses, the yards, the streets. Overgrown weeds, grass, vines are rarely touched. Fencing falling over, inappropriate furniture on front porches, etc. Part of this problem is the blind eyes and laziness of the absentee landlords. Rarely do they care or inspect their properties or advise the group of students moving in and out that there are any expectations beyond getting the rent sent on time!

Many of us in this community have considered leaving, many already have as a direct result of student housing and all it brings with it. But, why should WE be the ones forced to leave?? We continue the fight because we love our homes, have invested in them, and we should be protected by the governmental agencies such as yours against a force and foe such as Georgetown University.

The Ten Year Plan that Georgetown University is now presenting is once again trying its clout against the surrounding communities. Not only are they trying to have you pass on their request to increase enrollment, which would simply perpetuate Georgetown student housing in this neighborhood for years to come, but it is also violates their previous assurance to neighboring communities that there would be no increase in enrollment until they had built the on-campus housing to accommodate students.

Now they wish to change ENTRANCE and EXIT ONE so that THEIR traffic is directed straight up and down 38th Street, in the heart of our residenual neighborhood! I know the congestion of that entrance/exit well and the only purpose for realligning it would be to relieve congestion on their property and into our neighborhood. I would rather have 38th Street closed off at Reservoir Road than to have it become a major artery for Georgetown Hospital employees. There are alternatives if Georgetown University was willing to even consider altering some of its own grassy, well-maintained acreage to build more roadways on their campus creating more entrances and exits in various locations for their patients and staff. They must be stopped from using Burleith as if they owned our property and therefore can do as they wish with it!!!!!!

In conclusion, I submit my total support to the oppositions of the Georgetown University Ten Year Plan that will be submitted by the Burleith Citizens Association to your board on July 18, 2000.

I only hope and pray that THIS time, the taxpaying , permanent , hardworking residents of D.C. will be heard loudly and clearly. Do not allow Georgetown University kick us around anymore OR to kick us out of D.C.

Sincerely,

Sara Page Smith

Sara Page Smith