A. David Conner
4702 Reservoir Road, Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20007
July 15, 2000

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

Dear Ms. Cross-Reid:

I am writing about your consideration of the upcoming Georgetown University 10 year plan. I was a resident of Burleith from 1970 until 1996. I believe it is in the best interest of the city of Washington, DC to stop the adverse impact of students living off campus by not allowing any increase in enrollment without additional beds on campus for them to sleep.

My wife and I raised our two sons in Burleith. When we arrived it was a wonderful family neighborhood with an occasional college student occupying a room in a widow's home. It stayed that way until the 1980's. About that time real estate speculators capitalized on the fact that Georgetown University was increasing enrollment without beds on campus. This coupled with the fact that DC housing laws allow 6 unrelated individuals to live in a single family house gave them a captive and lucrative market. Suddenly the Burk family house, next door to me, was sold to a Georgetown father and had 6 students living in it. When girl friends would spend the night the occupancy could double. The Kaps house 2 doors away from me was sold to investors from Maryland. They often had 8-10 students living there. Weekend parties with tons of students from campus caused havoc. Even the everyday living of 6 students sharing a party wall with me created noise that could be heard through the wall and prevented me from a peaceful enjoyment of my own home.

BZA
Case No. 16566
Exhibit No. 129

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16566
EXHIBIT NO.129

During the later part of my years in Burleith I became active in the Citizens Association because of my concern for the decay the students were causing in the neighborhood. I served on the Board for several years. I served for 2 years as Vice President and for 3 years as President. In 1990 I was one of 3 official representatives from Burleith negotiating with Georgetown University over its 1990 Master Plan. At that time we had one message: "The students are ruining our neighborhood. Build some dormitories to get some of these students back on campus."

I testified at the Master Plan presentation before the BZA in 1990. Closing comments from the BZA said that it was clear that the students living off campus had damaged the neighborhood of Burleith. Further the BZA said that they would allow a limited increase in enrollment during the next 10 years but wanted a new bed for each new student.

Since then there has not been much improvement. I am sure the University will argue that they have made progress. What they give with one hand they take away with another. They add beds by converting the LXR buildings to a dormitory. They follow by closing St. Mary's Dormitory. They add 200 undergraduate beds on campus by kicking out 200 graduate students. They then say that they are becoming the ideal neighbor by building a new dormitory with 700 beds that will take students out of the neighborhood. But with the 90's enrollment increase allowing 320 new students and now the additional 500 they want for the millenium we are stepping back. Instead of improving the problem, they are making it worse.

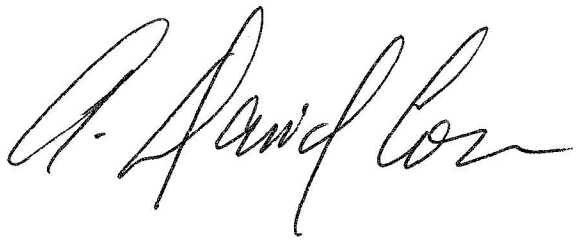
In 1996 I made a decision. I had lived in my house for 26 years. I had a Hugh Jacobsen inspired addition along with an exquisite new patio. I had planned to live here into retirement. But I sold my home in Burleith to move away from the deterioration in living conditions that had been caused by increasing students living off campus.

I would ask that you look at the big picture. I have moved 10 blocks west but the same thing could happen here with George Washington University's takeover of Mount Vernon College and it's voracious appetite for growth. I suggest that you do not let these tax-exempt colleges add a student without building an on-campus bed. This does not mean taking a commercial hotel like Howard Johnson's off of the tax rolls. Whenever a student is added without an on-campus bed, it means a student takes a bed in the neighborhood and displaces a tax-paying resident.

Washington with predetermined boundaries does not have the ability of other cities to annex countryside to make up for lost revenue this would cause. I ask you to protect the livability of our neighborhoods and the financial health of our city by requiring a new on-campus bed for every new undergraduate or graduate student at Georgetown or George Washington Universities.

With best regards.

Sincerely yours,



Cc: Mayor Anthony William
Councilman Jack Evans
Chairman Alice Rivlin