3624 T Street NW
Washington, DC 20007
July 17, 2000

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

Re: "The City requires that a University in a residential area shall not become objectionable to neighboring property because of: NOISE – NUMBER OF STUDENTS – TRAFFIC OR OTHER OBJECTIONABLE CONDITIONS"

Dear Ms. Cross-Reid:

My name is Lili Froehling. I live in Burleith, at 3624 T Street, NW. I am writing in reference to your hearing on July 18 on Georgetown University's proposed Ten Year Plan and in support of the Burleith Citizens Association's opposition to the plan.

The problem with Georgetown's 10-year plan and increasing student enrollment is simple, from my perspective. Georgetown University **cannot** or **will not** take the steps necessary to control the drinking, partying and related noise problems associated with the number of students we already deal with.

I doubt there are many people in Burleith who have experienced the downside of having student neighbors for the length of time and at the intensity that I have. I moved into my house on August 1, 1998. I had one month of blessed quiet and then all hell broke loose when the occupants (5-6 guys) of 3622 T Street NW moved in around September 1, 1998. For the rest of the school year, except for the last two weeks of May and two weeks in August, I lived with constant and excessive noise and other problems generated by the occupants of this group house. The guys acted like it was a frat house. On a daily basis, I was subjected to loud TV sports and foul-mouthed yelling and screaming, sometimes until the wee hours of the morning. The serious partying started on Thursday nights -- keg parties at their house; if they went to a party somewhere else in the neighborhood or to bars, they would come back at 3:00 am (conveniently just when

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the hotline hours ended), have food delivered, and continue partying. On one occasion, I returned around midnight from a trip to New York with a friend and took her out to my deck to look at my new patio. The guys were having a party, and there was someone standing there by their deck, urinating. On another occasion, one of the occupants got up at noon and ran down the street to another group house, wearing nothing but his underwear. When they had the front door open, I once heard one guy giving another sexual advice in very offensive, anti-women language. I worried about the girls they brought there.

As I had been told the absentee landlord was uncooperative, I tried to work with the hotline and with the Office of Off-Campus Affairs. Jeanne Lord was sympathetic and as helpful as she could be under the rules she had to work with. She talked to the guys, she called them in more than once, they were threatened, cajoled, admonished and nothing really changed until they were finally threatened with eviction by the landlord's agent. They seemed to think it was their right to party, my bad luck we kept such "different hours" and I was supposed to feel sorry for them when they were forbidden to have any more parties on the premises. My ideas of permitted noise were fairly lenient -- **Reasonable** noise (if it got too loud I would ask them to turn it down) until 12:00 and then more quiet than noise.

This group of seniors finally moved out in May of 1998; the place was rented again and sublet for the summer to a group of nursing students. I was relieved to have girls instead of guys, but it turned out they were worse than the guys had been. These girls were 18 and 19, first time away from home. They ran around with neo-Nazi's from the Marine Barracks and sat on their deck playing loud music, making racial slurs and jokes and talking about sex in the most graphic and outrageous way. They didn't seem to care that I was working in my garden having to listen to all of this. They constantly threw beer cans, broken beer bottles, cigarette butts and other trash into my backyard. They would sit on their front stoop at 1, 2, and 3 am, chattering, laughing and drinking. Again, the situation did not improve until they were threatened with eviction by the landlord's agent. They reported this to their parents who told them they couldn't be evicted and the kids told me they could live with it if they were.

At one point, I was dumbfounded to learn from Jeanne Lord of the Off-Campus Affairs that she could not contact the parents until the student is put on probation. This doesn't make sense. These kids are **boasting** about drinking and passing out, there's a lot of drinking and driving, sex goes without saying, I heard mention of party drugs, they're terrorizing their neighbors and they can't call the parents? I have to collar the parents on

their visits or track down license numbers or military passes on the boyfriends' cars and call the Marine Barracks?

Even if you don't have a frat house situation next door to you, that doesn't eliminate the problems. This spring a group house across from me had a loud, large party. I finally called the police after 1:00 am, when they broke up the party well over 100 students poured out into the street -- no exaggeration and that's not counting students who had left earlier. Apart from parties, we still have students driving (with windows open or tops down and radio or CD full blast), running, walking through the streets after midnight, drunk and screaming for the fun of it, students throwing up on our front lawns at 3:00 am, students literally dragging passed-out friends home, students turning over trashcans. Yes, we can call the hotline (during certain hours and days); yes, we can call the police. But by then, you're already awake and may have to put on clothes or a robe and go out in the alley or out to the street to find out which house the noise is coming from. If it's late, and you're a woman alone, you think twice about going outside and confronting a group of drunk guys.

If Georgetown wants to house **any** students in our neighborhood, they should start taking real, tangible steps to solve these problems like changing the rules on when parents can be contacted, and having some work-study students or other people live in the neighborhood and police the problems. We shouldn't have to do it for them. Georgetown University should **NOT** be allowed to increase their enrollment by one student unless they have dorm space or they have shown willingness and ability to do something concrete to alleviate the problems their students cause. So far they shown neither. More students would only exacerbate our problems.

I was surprised to hear someone in favor of the plan at the ANC meeting on this issue refer to Georgetown University as a "jewel" in our community. When they use our neighborhood as a dormitory without taking responsibility for the ensuing problems, the residents do not think of Georgetown University as a "jewel." Burleith is a wonderful neighborhood and has the makings of being a "jewel," too. Isn't this neighborhood as important as Georgetown University?

It was unfortunate that some members of the ANC board seemed to have made up their minds to support the plan before they even heard from the citizens. The vast majority of the citizens who spoke cited similar problems to the ones described here, and some of our representatives elected to ignore this. The Georgetown architect and other representatives painted glowing pictures of how little Burleith would be impacted by the

increased enrollment. Well, at the meetings for the previous Georgetown 10-year plan, Georgetown University committed to housing 100% of its students – it hasn't happened, not even close. We continue to co-exist with the students and the problems they cause. **Please vote against the plan as it stands.** Allowing Georgetown to increase its enrollment without the dorm space for the increase in existence will only allow the terrorizing and harrassment of the citizens of Burleith and Georgetown to increase and our neighborhoods to deteriorate. Students come and go; we and our tax dollars are here for the long run unless we're forced by untenable conditions to move to the suburbs or elsewhere in the city. I certainly have considered moving and that was before the real estate market got hot.

Please support the livability of the Burleith and Georgetown neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Lili Froehling

Lili Froehling

cc: Councilmember Jack Evans
Pat Scolaro, President, Burleith Citizens Association
Mayor Anthony Williams