3735 Winfield Lane, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
July 18, 2000

By Hand Delivery

Government of the District of Columbia
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W., Suite 210
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: BZA Application ~~16565~~ 16566 - St. Mary's Hall

Dear Board Members:

This letter is to urge you to approve Georgetown University's proposed academic uses for St. Mary's Hall as part of its 10-year campus plan. I am a resident and homeowner living in Cloister's West. St. Mary's is behind my house, about 50 feet from my property line. I am, thus, directly affected by its renovation and use.

I support GU's plan, and oppose the alternative that some neighborhood activists have proposed, of turning St. Mary's into a dorm, for four reasons:

1. Using St. Mary's for the nursing program makes sense given its location on the medical campus right next to the hospital.

2. St. Mary's is not needed as a dorm by any objective measure. GU already has a very high campus housing rate for undergraduate students -- the best in the District, and better than most or all other urban schools in the country. With the SW Quadrangle that rate will be 84-91% depending on enrollment increases, which I view as astonishing given the limited ability of GU to expand into the highly developed urban area that surrounds it. The demands of some neighborhood activists to move an even higher percentage of students into campus housing is not realistic.

3. GU has already considered and rejected St. Mary's as a dorm for sensible reasons, which I understand are its less desirable location than the SW Quadrangle and the prohibitive cost of renovation into a dorm.

4. Most personally, the dorm would have an unacceptable impact on the tranquillity (and perhaps the value) of my home. A dorm in a backyard is not the same thing as a group house in the neighborhood. The two GU student group houses on my block do not make an unacceptable amount of noise. A dorm, however, unquestionably would, considering the prospects of music, cars, foot traffic, and parties.

BZA
Case No. 16566
Exhibit No. 144

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16566
EXHIBIT NO.144

Thank you very much for considering my views and approving the St. Mary's Hall project as GU has proposed it, as part of your (I hope) approval of the GU campus plan.

Sincerely,

Catherine Curtiss

Catherine Curtiss

cc: Ms. Linda Greenan
Georgetown University

Ms. Diane Fecteau, President
Cloisters West Homeowners Association