HOWARD UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE
VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Rec'd.
JUL 10 2001

December 17, 1996

Mr. Scott Strauss
Chairman
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3F
3400 International Drive, NW, Suite 2J21
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Mr. Strauss:

I would like to thank the Commission for allowing Vice President Harry G. Robinson III, Dr. Hazel Edwards and I to present the Howard University West Campus Plan at the Commission's meeting last night.

One of the Commissioners asked me to look into the matter of the use of the West Campus for events unrelated to the Law School. I talked today with Denise Purdie, the Law School's Assistant Dean for Student Affairs. She indicated that the use of the buildings and grounds is restricted to Law School or Law School-related events, with one category of exceptions. The use of the Chapel is controlled by the Dean of the Chapel (and not the Law School) but Dean Purdie estimates that the Chapel is used for weddings about twice each month and occasionally for funerals.

Howard University looks forward to continuing the dialogue with the Commission and with interested community groups and individuals throughout December, January and beyond. While the hearing before the Board of Zoning Adjustment may be completed tomorrow, the BZA frequently keeps the record open for thirty or more days to receive additional comments and views. I look forward to working with the Commission and community representatives.

Please feel free to contact me at 806-2559 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Malson,
Consultant

BZA
Case No. 16611
Exhibit No. 196

2400 6th Street, N.W.
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Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16611
EXHIBIT NO.196

JAN 07 '97 11:46 AM

Before the Board of Zoning Adjustment, D. C.

Application No. 11669, of Howard University pursuant to Section 8207.2 of the Zoning Regulations, for a special exception to permit Howard University Graduate School/Professional Center (e.g. Law School) as provided by Section 3101.46, to use premise 2935 Upton Street, N. W., Lot 5, Squares 2049 and 2243, in the R-1-A and R-2 District, as a part of its campus plan.

HEARING DATE: May 15, 1974
EXECUTIVE SESSION: May 21, 1974

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. The subject property is located in the R-1-A and R-2 districts, and had been the campus of Dunbarton College until that institution recently terminated operations.

2. The property comprises approximately 20 acres and is improved by several buildings which had formerly served as the classrooms, dormitories and libraries of Dunbarton College.

3. Howard University acquired this property in March, 1974, with a view towards locating thereon its Law School and other graduate level activities having a projected daytime population of approximately 450 students, 41 faculty, and a non-teaching staff of 173. This is substantially the level of activity maintained by the former owner of the property, when Dunbarton College was in full operation.

4. Howard University, in conducting its operations, will utilize the existing buildings on the site, and has no present intention of constructing any new buildings. Applicant does, however, intend to remodel some of the existing buildings and to add a parking lot in the interior of the campus to provide a total of 224 on-campus parking spaces, although only 159 parking spaces are required by the Zoning Regulations.

5. Howard University will not maintain any athletic or comparable activities which will create unusual noise or traffic conditions which may adversely affect nearby residential uses.

6. On May 9, 1974, the National Capital Planning Commission, to whom this application had been referred, recommended that the Board approve this application. In addition, the D. C. Department of Highways and Traffic has determined that traffic to be generated by Howard University's use of the subject property will not have an adverse impact on existing traffic flows.

May 5 1993

classroom space is less than one percent of the campus area, less than .001 FAR and less than three percent of the gross building area on the west campus. The building materials, configuration and footprint will mirror the existing red brick classroom projection on the west so that the building is symmetrical in appearance. The classroom seating will be terraced to ensure a clear line of site to the podium.

In addition to the two new classrooms, the proposed addition will contain a two-story, barrel-vaulted atrium foyer, encased in glass, which will serve as the official entrance to the School of Law. The ambient space will be used as an art gallery adorned with marble floors and natural woodgrain wall finishes. A pedestrian plaza will be located at the entrance to the atrium. The plaza will be landscaped with plum, holly, and Japanese cherry trees; barberry, holly and winterberry shrubbery; and english ivy and periwinkle groundcover to complement the new addition.

8. On May 24, 1974, the Board approved the West Campus Plan ("West Campus Plan") by granting Howard University's application for a special exception to use the site for its Graduate School/ Professional Center (See Application No. 11669).

In support of its 1974 application, the University projected a daytime population of approximately 450 students, 41 faculty and 173 staff. The University stated that it planned to use the existing buildings on the site and had "no present intention" of constructing any new buildings. No athletic or comparable facilities were planned.

The 1974 West Campus Plan does not include the proposed addition to Charles Houston Hall. According to the University, law school accreditation officials have encouraged the University to discontinue use of an existing classroom for teaching activities because structural columns obstruct some students' line of site to the podium. As a consequence, the University proposes to add 6,000 square feet of accreditable classroom space in the form of a building addition to Houston Hall.

The University submitted an Amended West Campus Plan ("Amended Plan") on February 3, 1993. The Amended Plan does not propose to change the size of the student body, the faculty or the support staff, although the current census in each of these categories is less than what was approved in the West Campus Plan. The Amended Plan proposes a classroom addition to Charles Houston Hall, a request to use an existing maintenance structure located near the eastern boundary of the west campus on a permanent basis and a reduction in the number of off-street parking spaces. The Amended Plan remains the same as the West Campus Plan in all other material respects.

(c) Holy Cross Hall contains administrative offices and classrooms, is four stories in height with two basement levels and contains 51,032 square feet.

(d) The Daniels Law Library is one story in height with two basement levels and contains 26,298 square feet.

(e) The maintenance building is 15 feet in height (over two floors) and contains 4,934 square feet.

The subject property is also improved with a gazebo that is used by students, faculty and employees for passive recreational purposes.

The cluster of buildings that comprise the classrooms and administrative offices is located on the southern portion of the property. The maintenance building is located at the eastern boundary. The gazebo is located north of the Daniels Law Library structure. All of the structures, together with the surface parking lot, occupy less than ten percent of the west campus. The natural configuration and contour of the site, as well as the abundant landscaping, effectively screen the site from the surrounding neighborhood.

5. The site is not located in a historic district and there are no designated historic landmark buildings on the property.

6. The land uses that are located in the area immediately surrounding the west campus are: residential (single-family dwelling units and high-rise apartment houses); commercial (office buildings and retail goods and services); and open space (Soapstone Valley Park and Rock Creek Park). A number of institutional facilities are located nearby. These facilities include the main campus of the University of the District of Columbia, the Van Ness/UDC Metrorail Station, the Levine School of Music, and the Burke School.

7. There are two pedestrian/vehicular entrances that provide access to the campus. The Van Ness Street cul-de-sac entrance is the primary means of access. The Upton Street entrance is used infrequently, primarily for ceremonial events.

8. On May 24, 1974, the Board approved the West Campus Plan by granting Howard University's application for special exception to use the site for its Graduate School/Professional Center (see Application No. 11669).

In support of its 1974 application, the applicant projected a daytime population of approximately 450 students, 41 faculty and 173 staff. The applicant stated that it planned to use the existing buildings on the site and had "no present intention" of constructing any new buildings. No athletic or comparable facilities were planned.

9. On October 31, 1978, the Board approved a special exception to allow the applicant to replace a deteriorated maintenance building

Howard University

West Campus Master Plan

1997

Likewise, the University continues to limit traffic plans at its Upton Street entrance and provide major services and vehicular access off of Van Ness Street even though it is not required to do so. The School of Law has no plans to change this voluntary policy during the period of this 1997 West Campus Plan.

Existing Campus Usage and Activities

Since about 1995, the West Campus has been used exclusively for the School of Law. The West Campus operates between the hours of 7:00 am to midnight, seven days a week. A summary of special School of Law activities is included at Tab D. The campus is used primarily by the School of Law and most of its activities occur indoors. The primary outdoor activities consist of the graduation ceremony (in appropriate weather) and students studying and meeting on the grounds of the School of Law. There is no athletic program requirement for the School of Law and no athletic activities take place on the West Campus. No part of the West Campus is used by the University for outdoor activities.

Occasional, special events such as weddings, funerals, and graduations are also held on the Campus. During the past year, the West Campus Chapel was used on average four times a month for weddings, funerals, and other activities. The main activity of the West Campus Chapel is for weddings. (Tab D.) Other activities include the Christmas concert of the University's choirs and mass or services by local churches. In 1996, the St. Louis Cathedral held

7. Howard University shall take reasonable measures to mitigate the impact upon the community of all non-University events. Such events shall be limited to those approved by a University Dean or cabinet member. The University shall require security and parking control at events on the campus that are appropriate to the scope and scale of the event and the nature of the surrounding residential community.

8. The Upton Street entrance shall be opened as a relief valve for Van Ness Street when Howard University has graduation and other ceremonial events and/or the campus is being used for large groups or events.

9. The President's House on the West Campus shall not be rented or used for non-Howard University fundraising events.

10. Howard University School of Law shall identify a high-ranking University official who shall act as a point of contact with the ANC and the neighborhood. This person shall be available to mitigate and resolve neighborhood concerns about traffic and parking problems as well as other problems that the school activities may inadvertently cause.

11. Howard representation shall become a part of a neighborhood committee with the other major institutions in the area, and the scheduling of university related and non-university related events shall be made in conjunction with an overall neighborhood scheduling coordination plan to minimize conflicts among the University of the District of Columbia, Howard University, Levine School of Music, Intellsat, the Edmund Burke School, residential organizations and other major traffic generators in the neighborhood.

12. No outdoor events shall take place on the West Campus to cause excessive noise (e.g., music, loudspeakers, etc.), with the exception of graduation.

13. Howard University Law School shall maintain the portion of the West Campus bordering Soapstone Valley Park as open space for the term of this Updated West Campus Plan, consistent with the Parks and Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan.