STATEMENT BY FRANK MILWEE

BEFORE THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENTS

REGARDING CASE NUMBER 16974

22 April 2003

Good Morning, my name is Frank Milwee. My address is 2912 M Street, N. W. I have a business in Georgetown at which I sell fine antiques, notably silver. Also, since the Appraisal Studies Program was organized in Washington with the American Society of Appraisers about eight years ago, I have been the lecturer on silver.

When that program began, we had to travel to museums in other cities to see any significant collection of antique silver.

Now, at Tudor Place, Washington possesses a large collection of superb quality silver that was assembled over five generations by one family-- six if you count its Mount Vernon inheritance. Visitors see the silver not in some artfully contrived model room, but in its original setting, surrounded by all the china, linens, furniture, and personal objects with which the silver has always been associated. Shaped as it was by the evolving needs of an historically important family, their sometimes dramatically changing economic fortunes, their travels, changeable American domestic fashions, and, very importantly, five generations of personal gift exchanges, the Tudor Place silver

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collection is absolutely unique in the United States -- without exaggeration, a national treasure.

In the broader sense, because the people at Tudor Place were both members of George Washington's family and prominent Washingtonians at every stage of this city's development, the gift of Tudor Place as a museum has resulted in the opening of a unique window through which to view the city's own history.

Since 1967, the most consistently available open parking space condition I have ever found in Georgetown is the one created by the Tudor Place footprint. Not so convenient as private garage and driveway parking, of course, but very favorable as street parking in Georgetown comes.

Operated as a museum, Tudor Place permanently lessens the number of people in that area who will rely on public-street parking instead of driveways. This observed, at least passing thought is also due to what could have happened to traffic and parking had the estate not been established as a museum -- had it, instead, been made into an embassy residence, or an official residence for the mayor or the secretary of state, or, worse, had it been sold and then made into a school or into a townhouse development. By any fair standard, the continued operation of Tudor Place as a museum seems very beneficial.

While I am sympathetic about the periodic inconveniences felt by some Tudor Place neighbors, I am sure each will receive the thoughtful attention of present and future

museum managers. As compared with benefits, it is difficult to see that the level of burden for the neighborhood actually rises even to a level to cause concern to a would-be buyer of real estate in that area, still less to a seller.

Clearly, Tudor Place is a permanent part of the Washington scene and it is not going to go away. I urge that this board allow terms for its operation as a museum that are as flexible, as generous, and, as practical as it has allowed for any other museum in this city.

Thank you.