Ellen J. Vargyas
6112 29th Street, NW
Washington DC 20015

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December 22, 2003

Mr. Geoffrey Griffis
Chairman
Board of Zoning Adjustment
Suite 210S
441 Fourth Street, NW
Washington DC 20001

Re: Application No. 17055 filed by the Army Distaff Foundation

Dear Mr. Griffis:

I am writing in opposition to the expansion application of the Army Distaff Foundation now pending before the BZA. With my family, I have lived on 29th Street for 20 years and have treasured the quiet, residential and very child and family-friendly nature of the neighborhood. While we, of course, already live down the block from Knollwood, the current configuration of the Knollwood buildings fit into the neighborhood (although they already bring more traffic than we would prefer). In our strong view, the expansion proposal, including a large, luxury apartment building, is entirely inappropriate for our neighborhood and is inconsistent with the single-family home zoning and the very nature of the neighborhood.

More particularly, we are deeply concerned about the noise and lighting pollution that will result from the proposed structure, the significant expansion of the traffic burden on the neighborhood (which is already too heavy, witness the attention to new traffic calming devices throughout the neighborhood), and the years of construction that will bring heavy vehicles, noise and traffic to our quiet neighborhood. While my home does not abut the property, I am also deeply concerned about the impact on my neighbors who are not so fortunate and the resulting impact on the rest of us as the quality of life in our neighborhood declines.

Finally, along with my neighbors, I totally fail to understand how the BZA could even contemplate approving a proposal which so explicitly repudiates a commitment Knollwood made to secure approval of a previous building project -- that there would be no additional building for 25 years. There is no earthly reason to support a large luxury

BZA
Case No. 17055
Exhibit No. 53

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apartment building on the Knollwood grounds other than opportunistic economic gain for Knollwood. If the BZA permits the repudiation of such an explicit commitment in favor of the short-term enrichment of this facility at the expense of tax-paying residents of the surrounding neighborhood, it might as well tell the entire city that Washington DC does not value the single family communities that are so essential to bringing people back to the city and keeping them there.

I appreciate your consideration of my views and urge you to reject the Knollwood expansion proposal.

Sincerely yours,

Ellen J. Vargyas

Ellen J. Vargyas

cc: Chevy Chase ANC 3/4G
Knollwood Neighbors