GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 10, 2003

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

THROUGH: Andrew Altman, Director OP
Ellen McCarthy, Deputy Director OP

FROM: David J. McGettigan, AICP

SUBJECT: Zoning Commission Case No. 02-20
Catholic University of America Campus Plan 2002-2012
620 Michigan Avenue, N.E.

Supplemental Report

This supplemental report reviews additional information provided by the Catholic University of America (CUA) for the above referenced application that is included in the record with the applicant's September 3rd submission regarding housing and environmental issues and additional information provided on historic preservation issues. In addition, supplemental information was provided to the Office of Planning regarding these issues on December 20, 2002.

Housing

At the request of the Office of Planning, the applicant has provided additional information on housing. The housing policy is important in assessing the extent of the impact of the number of students, which is a specific criterion to be used in evaluating a campus plan (11DCMR §210.2). CUA's housing policy has several elements designed to minimize the impacts of the university in its adjoining residential neighborhoods.

- CUA has a long-standing policy that requires traditional, full-time undergraduate, non-commuter freshmen and sophomores to live on campus.

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- CUA encourages juniors and seniors to reside on campus and renovation of Flather Hall and the construction of 348 suite and apartment style spaces in two structures on campus has provided more attractive living accommodations for upper classmen and graduate students.
- CUA has provided more amenities on campus for student residents, including the new student center, study rooms, lounges, computer labs, multi-purpose rooms, and special services such as local telephone, cable TV, fiber optic computer connections, and Internet access.
- CUA enforces its Standard of Student Conduct and provides an off-campus housing guide outlining expectations and special programs, including a Disciplined Properties program.
- CUA plans to pace campus housing renovations and expansions with enrollment projections.
- CUA has renovated and built modern more spacious housing to provide units that are more competitive with market rate housing

Currently, CUA provides 2100 beds on campus with a current occupancy of 97% or 2,030 beds (as of 8/7/02). Of the 2,030 occupied beds 1,910 are for undergraduates. Under CUA's current policy the 70 unoccupied beds are reserved for graduate students. The number of projected Fall 2002 fulltime, traditional, matriculated undergraduate students is 2,360. Thus, over 80% of the fulltime undergraduates are housed on campus, with 450 fulltime, traditional undergraduate students living off-campus.

The following table summarizes the enrollment and bed information provided by the applicant:

	Undergraduate Enrollment Headcount (FTE)	Graduate Enrollment Headcount (FTE)	Total Enrollment Headcount (FTE)	Available Number of Beds	%
2001 Academic Year	(2451)	(1906)	6,756 (4357)	2100	31%
2011 Academic Year	(3319)	(2847)	8000 (6166)	2500	31%
Campus Plan Maximum	(3770)	(3730)	11,400 (7500)	3100	27%

The headcount numbers include part-time students who do not typically use on-campus housing, so the projections should be adjusted down to determine the housing demand. The applicant indicates that for the academic year 2011-2012, the full-time, traditional

time, traditional undergraduate enrollment is projected to be 3,228. The applicant would provide additional beds, for a total of 2500 beds. This would provide undergraduate housing for about 77% of the students with 728 full-time, traditional undergraduate students living off-campus.

The applicant has provided a breakdown by zip code of the current off-campus student population. Generally, the student population is distributed throughout the metro area and tends to aggregate around Metrostations. This indicates that many students take advantage of the transit opportunities provided by the close proximity of the Brookland/CUA Metrostation to campus. The zip code data shows 817 students reside in the District, 1,115 students reside in Maryland and 869 students reside in Virginia. Of the 817 students residing in the District only 189 students reside in Brookland.

The applicant indicates that two apartment complexes can absorb additional off-campus students. Approximately 65 students live in The Heights, an apartment complex with 370 units and approximately 65 students live in The Cloisters, a complex that contains 352 units. Assuming an average of two students per unit, only about 10% of the units contain students. The applicant notes that these apartment complexes are a considerable walk from the Metrostation and that apartments in Silver Spring may be more appealing to students. Aside from the two apartment complexes, approximately 60 students reside in other areas of Brookland. Thus there does not seem to be an over concentration of students that are impacting the local residential neighborhoods.

Assuming that future enrollment growth will be distributed throughout the metro area in a similar pattern and the policies indicated are pursued the impact on the Brookland neighborhood should be minimal. In addition, the majority of the 941 FTE increase in graduate enrollment will be in part-time graduate students who will not be relocating in close proximity to the University and impact the housing market.

If CUA continues its housing policy and practices, it could mitigate the impacts of growth in enrollment on local residential neighborhoods. Provision of on-campus housing combined with the improvement the campus pedestrian and bicycle environment will also reduce parking and traffic impacts of enrollment growth. CUA will monitor demand for on-campus housing and has agreed to provide additional housing if needed to accommodate all freshman and sophmores. The applicant indicates that a sudden unexpected influx of students is unlikely because a majority of students is dependent on scholarships and financial aid, which is a known variable in anticipated student enrollment.

Environmental Issues

The applicant's main discussion of environmental issues was provided in section 4.11 of the campus plan entitled Landscape and Open Space Enhancements. This section states that the campus plan "promotes sustainable design practices through the reuse of existing

facilities where practical, the use of recycled materials, minimization of impervious surfaces, the introduction of innovative storm water management techniques and native plant material, and other landscape management practices" (pg. 53). The plan shows significant contributions in the replacement of surface parking with underground parking to create new and enhanced open spaces. In addition, a major contribution to environmental goals is preservation of the "Hilltop Woods". After a request for additional environmental information from the Office of Planning, the applicant provided a more detailed and impressive discussion of environmental issues, which are addressed below:

Conservation

The University has taken major steps in conservation and proposes to maintain a leadership role in environmental stewardship. The University has or will:

- Conducted a major lighting retrofit with new technology, high efficiency lamps and electronic ballasts;
- Done a total replacement of the central boiler plant, making it more efficient;
- Completed a major water efficiency upgrade to conserve water;
- Installed a major upgrade to the central energy management system that controls the buildings' heating, ventilating and air-conditioning systems;
- Continue to recycle 40-50% of its waste; and,
- Commit to purchase almost 12% of its electricity from a renewable "Green Power" source for the next five years.

The University can also conserve energy and resources by creating a responsible historic preservation element of the campus plan that will guide the preservation and reuse of existing buildings.

Air Quality

In addition to the substantial contributions to air quality from the energy conservation projects listed above, the University has reduced the stack emissions of the power plant and has submitted a detailed transportation management plan, which should not only reduce traffic impacts, but reduce air pollution as well. The plan will increase open space and has carefully placed new buildings and parking lots to minimize the impact on existing trees. Additionally, CUA has reduced the CUA is exploring using alternative fuel vehicles and has significantly reduced the vehicle fleet by changing to bicycles for security and reorganizing the maintenance schedules to reduce vehicle miles.

Water Quality

Water quality initiatives by the University include the following:

- An integrated pest management plan is in effect, which strives to reduce the use of pesticides by relying on less environmentally harmful means to control pests.
- In the spill prevention and containment area, the University reduced its underground fuel tanks from 15 to 5 and had new upgrades completed prior to the EPA deadline.

- The commitment to reduce impervious area is mentioned in the plan; however, an estimate of the amount of impervious area that is reduced by the plan would help quantify the value of this effort.
- The commitment to plant additional trees is shown graphically on the master plan;
- There is a commitment to use innovative stormwater management techniques.

The University will provide stormwater management on a project-by-project basis.

Urban Forestry Program

As mentioned above, tree planting and preservation can provide a substantial benefit to air and water quality. In addition, shade trees can reduce energy costs associated with air-conditioning. The applicant considers tree planting and maintenance an important program to maintain an attractive campus. New building and parking sites were selected to minimize disruption to existing landscaping. The preservation of the Hill Top Woods provides an important step in advancing air and water quality goals.

Historic Preservation

The applicant proposes to do the following regarding historic resources on the Catholic University campus:

- Consolidate information relating to the history of the University and the buildings and identified archaeological sites on the campus in a central location;
- Develop, in consultation with the Historic Preservation Office (HPO), an appropriate survey form to be used for the survey of buildings on the campus 50 years old or older and in consultation with the staff archaeologist of the HPO, a survey form for previously identified archaeological sites; and, for those areas containing potential archaeological sites;
- Complete, within a reasonable length of time and under appropriate professional supervision, a survey of buildings on the campus that are 50 years old or older and identify potential archaeological sites, and;
- Share the survey information with the HPO.

The survey will provide the University with a tool to direct its future campus planning. Once the survey is complete, CUA proposes to work with the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) to develop a Historic Preservation Policy. This Historic Preservation Policy will address buildings scheduled for demolition or rehabilitation in the campus plan. The applicant indicates that this study make take as long as a year and requests campus plan approval without this component completed. Provided that no demolition will occur until this component is completed the Commission may wish to consider this request.

Recommendation

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends the Zoning Commission give the campus plan favorable consideration provided the following items are incorporated in the plan.

- The housing policy should contain the following key components:

  - Continue to require 100% of the traditional, full-time undergraduate, non-commuter freshmen and sophomores to live on campus.
  - Continue to upgrade and provide new on-campus housing that is competitive in the market and encouraging juniors and seniors to live on-campus, so that at least 50% of the traditional, full-time undergraduate juniors and seniors live on-campus.
  - Continue to provide amenities on campus to make on-campus living as attractive as possible.
  - Continue programs to improve off-campus behavior including its Standard of Student Conduct rules, housing guide, and Disciplined Properties Program.
  - Continue to build housing to keep pace with enrollment so that all juniors and seniors who want to live on campus will have space available.
- A mechanism should be outlined to provide the Commission information that CUA's housing policies are being followed and are effective, the Office of Planning suggests the following:
  - A yearly report provided by CUA to the Zoning Commission documenting enrollment numbers, number of beds available and number utilized by undergraduates and graduates.
  - An enrollment trigger that would require CUA to initiate on-campus housing production.
- Continuation of the environmental polices and practices outlined above.
- CUA must submit to the Commission an historic preservation element to the Campus Plan by March of 2004. Until the element is submitted and adopted by the Commission, CUA will not demolish any structures other than Salve Regina and St. Bonaventure.

The Office of Planning will work with the applicant to develop this information and provide further analysis to the Commission.