GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Policy and Planning Administration

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Memorandum

TO: Andrew Altman
Director
Office of Planning

FROM: Kenneth Laden
Associate Director, Transportation
Policy and Planning Administration

DATE: SEP 12 2002

SUBJECT: Zoning Commission Case No. 02-20 The Catholic University of America requests special exception approval for review and approval of a new Master Plan for the 10-year 2002-2012

The Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the application and other material submitted by the applicant requesting a special exception for approval of the updated campus plan from 2002 to 2012. This memorandum addresses the transportation elements of the proposal.

The Proposal

The Catholic University of America is located in the northeast quadrant of the District of Columbia in Ward Five. The main campus plan covers the area bounded by Michigan Avenue to the south, Taylor Street to the north, Harewood Road to the west and John McCormack Road to the east. In addition, the north campus is located north of Taylor Street and is bordered by McCormack Road, Hawaii Avenue, and the Fort Totten Transfer Station. The south campus is located south of Michigan Avenue and west of the B & O Railroad line.

According to the applicant, the proposed Campus Plan (2002-2012) will have an enrollment of approximately 3,319 full time equivalent (FTE) undergraduates and 2,847

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District of Columbia
Case 02-20
Exhibit 49

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CASE NO.02-20
EXHIBIT NO.49

full-time equivalent graduate students for a total enrollment of 6,166. Faculty and staff may increase to approximately 400 (FTE) faculty and 1,307 (FTE) staff respectively. The number of parking spaces will increase from the current 1,942 to 2,340 spaces over the life of this campus plan. It should be noted that most of these parking spaces are located at various parking lots and within campus roadways. To support the proposed enrollment, the updated campus will add 640,000 square feet of gross floor area of new construction and 95,500 square feet of addition to existing buildings.

The Transportation System

The applicant has furnished a detailed description of the local street system serving the campus. The description includes the number of lanes, turning movements, functional classification, traffic volume counts and signalized intersections leading to and from the campus. The most significant change to the updated campus plan proposal is to cul-de-sac or to install a traffic circle at McCormack Road at its south end (exhibit 18). This treatment of McCormack Road, if implemented, would appear to be for the exclusive use of the University related traffic. The University should indicate if they would seek further restriction of traffic on this segment of McCormack Road. In addition, the applicant's transportation assessment includes an accurate description of the public transportation facilities serving the campus and the surrounding area. These facilities include the Brookland/CU Metrorail Station located across John McCormack Road on the southeast side of the main campus. Also, several Metrobus routes operate along Michigan Avenue and Taylor Street. In addition, the University provides shuttle bus service from the Metrorail Station to the campus. Bicycle racks are installed in several points in the campus. We conclude that the University is ideally located with respect to the public transportation system.

It should be noted that the campus is adjacent to the Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT), a regional bike trail. DDOT is planning to connect the Metropolitan Branch Trail to 8th Street NE over Monroe Street to the existing trail segment on John McCormack Road.

The Impact of the Proposal

Our transportation impact analysis incorporates but not limited to the following factors:

- Effort to reduce vehicle miles of travel to and from the main campus and effort to minimize the impact of the University generated traffic on the adjacent streets around the campus,
- Traffic generation and level of service, and
- Parking facilities to accommodate the future population.

Minimizing Traffic Volume and Impacts

The Department believes that one of the best and most effective way to minimize traffic to and from the campus is to provide on-campus housing for students presently living off-campus.

Currently, the University has 2,100 beds on-campus. Student population data provided by the University indicates that there were 2,360 undergraduate students who would have been required to live on-campus but only 1,910 contracted for and were assigned to campus residences compared to the available 2,100 beds on-campus.

Theoretically, the University could house approximately 88.9 percent of its undergraduate students. This would have been quite a performance to reduce vehicle miles of travel to and from the campus. We recommend for this updated campus plan that the University undertake an extra effort to encourage or require all qualified undergraduate students to live on campus.

A second most effective way to decrease traffic volume to and from the campus is to encourage the use of the existing public transportation system, which is conveniently located and readily accessible to the campus population. According to the University's transportation modal split for the campus, approximately 45 percent arrive by public transportation (Metrrail, Metrobus and Shuttle), 40 percent drive alone, 5 percent arrive by carpool/vanpool and 10 percent walk/bicycle. The Department believes that there are ample room for improvement to the transit use and the attainment of higher vehicle occupancy. It should be noted that, currently, auto occupancy is only 1.12 persons per car. Through the campus parking management, the University should strive to decrease traffic volume to and from the campus by increasing car occupancy to1.4 persons per car.

The Department supports much of the Transportation Management Plan as outlined by the University, including a vigorous promotion of public transportation use, Metrorail and Metrobus to reduce dependency upon the automobile by faculty, staff and visitors. In addition, the implementation of a strong parking management program with preferential treatment for high occupancy vehicles would decrease vehicular trips to and from the campus, thereby reducing vehicle miles of travel generated by the campus.

Traffic Generation and Level of Service

We have reviewed the applicant's transportation report with regard to trip generation and level of service calculations on the critical intersections leading to and from the campus. DDOT has requested additional data to include other proposed and approved development in the area as well as the impact of eliminating through traffic on McCormack Road. The applicant has done so in its supplemental report. The capacity analysis covers the existing pre-development traffic conditions and the post development traffic conditions.

The applicant's transportation study indicates that the updated University master plan would generate about 483 and 582 additional vehicle trips during the typical morning and evening peak hours respectively. Trip generation rates used for the above calculation were derived from the campus survey and they appear adequate and acceptable for traffic impact analysis.

We agree with the applicant's capacity analysis and level of service calculation at the critical intersections in the vicinity of the campus. The result of the analysis indicates that, of the 12 intersections analyzed, 10 will operate at level of service D or better. The intersections of Michigan Avenue at Fourth Street and at Harewood Road are currently operating at level of service F and will continue to fail with the implementation of the updated campus plan. Potential mitigation measures to improve the performance of these two intersections appear to be beyond the scope of this updated campus plan.

Parking Facilities

Currently, there are 1,942 parking spaces on the University campus plan composed of 602 spaces on parking structure and 1,341 on surface parking lots. The updated campus plan will add 398 spaces to the current inventory for a total of 2,340 parking spaces. In our judgment, this amount of parking supply is more than adequate to meet the needs of the campus (faculty, students, staff and visitors).

Summary

The Department supports most of the proposed campus plan changes, as presented. However, we recommend the following revisions to the campus plan.

Increase on-campus housing usage to accommodate up to 80 percent of the undergraduate students and further reduce traffic congestion and parking needs.

Implement policies to increase students use of transit and bicycle to a minimum of 50 percent of the undergraduate student population that do not live on campus.

Prepare feasibility studies for the proposed cul-de-sac or traffic circle on McCormack Road, taking into account the needs of the local residents to drop-off and pick-up Metrorail passengers to the Brookland/CU Station. Also, advise as to whether this section of John McCormack Road would continue as a public street.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

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FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TO:	FROM:
Sharon Sanchez	Justin Gray
COMPANY:	DATE: FEBRUARY 12, 2003
FAX NUMBER: 202-727-6072	TOTAL NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER: 5
PHONE NUMBER:	SENDER'S REFERENCE NUMBER:

RE: ZC 02-20 transportation memorandum for file

☐ URGENT ☑ FOR REVIEW ☐ PLEASE COMMENT ☐ PLEASE REPLY ☐ PLEASE RECYCLE

Sharon,

This is the memorandum David Mcgettigan gave me to be included in the ZC 02-20 mailout

Thanks,

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