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The D.C. Zoning Commission
441 - 4th St., NW
Washington, D.C.

Subject: Hearing: 12/02/2002 re: GWU Health and Wellness Center.

Dear Zoning Commissioners,

I would like to urge the Commission to give due consideration to the application of the George Washington University regarding the use of the Health and Wellness Center.

It is unfortunate that the differences about other matters the Foggy Bottom neighborhood has with the George Washington University should hinder any change the University would like to make regarding the use of and longer hours for the GWU Health and Wellness Center.

Before the BZA approved the project in 1998, the community had participated in many meetings with GWU about it and, originally, GW was willing to open the use of the facilities at the center to nonstudent neighbors, but due to the unreasonable opposition, strong objections, and nastiness of some residents, the offer was withdrawn by the university. Now that the university is again making this overture to the community, one would have expected a more gracious response; however, there are neighborhood residents that do not support that hardline approach and would welcome a change in the regulations allowing use of the center.

If the residents are not permitted membership, nevertheless, I would like to make a case for some compromise: at least, let the GW alumni, parents and family of students be granted that, and allow the center to operate until 12:00 p.m. instead of 1:00 p.m. It is unimaginable that a large number of persons would be leaving the center at that hour, nor that there would be any appreciable increase in noise or disruption.

Furthermore, the argument that the center would deprive commercial fitness centers of business is not a strong one as the closest one to it, the Watergate gym, is an exclusive "club" not necessarily affordable by all residents; the other gym in the immediate vicinity is at the corner of 21st and L Streets, NW, about five blocks further north.

Thank you for your attention.

Respectfully,

Laetitia H. Combrinck
Foggy Bottom neighbor.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-26
Exhibit 48

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-26
EXHIBIT NO.48