FOGGY BOTTOM
ASSOCIATION

c/o West End Library
24th and L Streets, NW
Washington, DC 20037



November 25, 2002

Jerrily Kress, Director
Office of Zoning
441 Fourth Street, NW. Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Re: The George Washington University Health and Wellness Center
2301 G Street, NW (Square 42, Lot 847)

Dear Ms. Kress:

Once again, Foggy Bottom/West End is being asked to accommodate George Washington University's (GWU) incessant encroachment into its community by noise, number of students, and other objectional conditions. And, once again, the community is asking the Zoning Commission to use its good offices to contain the University and protect this fragile residential area.

Faced with the University's latest request to extend hours of operation and to open membership to a vastly wider public, the Board of the Foggy Bottom Association (FBA) at its regular meeting on October 15, 2002, voted to oppose any re-opening of the George Washington University Wellness Center agreement, and to insist that the University's original commitment to the neighborhood be maintained.

The limitations that the University wants waived are a part of a finely crafted compromise with the community, which has been in operation barely a year. The University made a commitment and should be held to its word.

At the heart of FBA's argument is the Board of Zoning Adjustment Order issued in response to the University's original application for construction of the Wellness Center; namely, that hours would be limited so as not to inflict undue noise in the surrounding neighborhood, and that use of the facility would be limited to full time students, again to lessen objectionable noise and traffic.

The community insisted that the building was too large and that being built for student use well into the evening hours, should be placed in the interior of the campus rather than on the perifery. It argued that this site was far better suited for dormitory use, which would house a specific number of students, rather than be available to the entire student body. But we did not prevail.

The fact that the University now finds that the facility is under-utilized (proclaimed by GWU Counsel Charles Barber at the October meeting of ANC-2A) is not the community's problem, but the result of poor planning by GWU and another example of the University's consistent habit of saying one thing to gain initial approval of a project, and then attempting to change the ground rules to fit its overall, but not previously enunciated, position.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-26
EXHIBIT NO.50
02-26
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The disruption to our residential community from possible extended hours of operation is particularly offensive. The University has chosen to house its students in our residential community; therefore, students leaving the Wellness Center after 1 a.m. would be moving through off-campus parts of our neighborhood.

Further, this non-profit, tax-supported sports center should not be put into competition with like tax-paying businesses.

It is time that everyone acknowledges that by law the University exists as a guest in our community. So, it should be the University that conforms to the needs and life styles of tax-paying Foggy Bottom/West End residents -- not the other way around.

Sincerely,

Ron Cocome
President