FOGGY BOTTOM
ASSOCIATION

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



October 17, 2003

Ms. Carol Mitten
Chairperson
Zoning Commission
441 4th Street NW
Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Zoning Commission Case No. 02-26—The George Washington University Health and Wellness Center

Dear Chairperson Mitten and Commission Members:

On October 14, 2003, at our regular monthly meeting, the Board of Directors of the Foggy Bottom Association—which represents nearly 500 residents throughout the Foggy Bottom/West End neighborhoods—voted unanimously to oppose the reopening of the record and to urge no further consideration of this project by the Zoning Commission.

As we outlined, point-by-point, in our November 25, 2002 letter to the Commission, the limitations that GWU wants waived are part of a finely crafted compromise with the community that the University has been attempting to alter almost from the minute the H&WC opened. Had the University not agreed to these conditions, its application for the H&WC would not have been approved.

There is an extensive record in GWU's original submission of this project for approval by the Board of Zoning Adjustment. This record bears out the fact that, once again, the University was allowed to deliberately create an objectionable situation by building a now admittedly over-capacity, non-residential building and by sidestepping the campus planning process to locate the facility where it now stands. Among other changes, the University wants to hide its self-created problem of "undercapacity" and "underuse" of this building behind an amenity for a very few non-University-affiliated members.

The H&WC property, at the western boundary of GWU's campus, was constructed on land that was designated under the 1985 Campus Plan for residential dormitory use, not a recreational fitness facility. After obtaining approval for this project, the University then proceeded to increase its undergraduate enrollment by 50%, flooding Foggy Bottom/West End with thousands of students and converting our residential neighborhood into a de facto campus. As we have been stating repeatedly, this is a violation of our Comprehensive Plan.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-26
Exhibit 64

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-26
EXHIBIT NO.64

The most troubling provision in GWU's proposal to revisit this case is its request to have the ZC sanction the inclusion in the order of its nearly 450 undergraduate students (most likely all freshman) from the Mount Vernon College campus, a purportedly independent college with a separate campus plan. At the same time, for purposes of its compliance with the BZA Order, the University wants to pretend that these students are not part of the mandated cap, a claim we do not accept. GWU would like the ZC to think these students are invisible and are not flooding the Foggy Bottom/West End neighborhood and adding to the already substantial negative impact of 22,000+ students attending the Foggy Bottom Campus. This request strikes at the heart of the whole campus planning process.

In closing, we would like to reiterate that our residential community has been, and continues to be, gravely affected by GWU's over-expansion and over-enrollment policies. We believe that this request is untimely and inappropriate, and that, if the Commission is not prepared to reject GWU's application outright, it should set aside any consideration of this project until after the D.C. Court of Appeals has responded to D.C. Corporation Council's request for rehearing on the final order of the GWU 2000-2009 Campus Plan.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and concerns.

Sincerely,

Ron Cocome

Ron Cocome
President