FOGGY BOTTOM
ASSOCIATION

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



February 18, 2004

Ms. Carol Mitten, Chair
District of Columbia Zoning Commission
441 Fourth Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chairman Mitten:

Re: Z. C. Case No. 02-26 -- The George Washington University Health and Wellness Center -- 2301 G Street, NW (Square 42, Lot 847)

This is to advise that the Foggy Bottom Association -- a neighborhood organization representing nearly 500 residents of Foggy Bottom/West End -- continues to oppose any expansion of membership or extension of hours for the University's Health and Wellness Center as expressed in the Association's letter of November 25, and testimony of December 2, 2002.

FBA's objections center upon the fact that original approval for construction of this oversize building on the periphery of the campus was granted with specific reservations and guidelines that limited membership and hours of operation so as to conform with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan and thus minimize disruption and disorder in the surrounding residential neighborhood.

At the initial hearing, community members expressed their concern over the size and placement of the building, and related issues of noise, numbers of students, traffic and parking. The University argued that the building size was predicated upon expected student use and that negative impact on the permanent residential community would be minimal.

This is not the case. As on-campus housing for students is inadequate, many students live in nearby privately owned apartments and townhouses -- as well as such GW controlled off-Campus housing as the Aston, Columbia Plaza, the Hall on Virginia Avenue, City Hall and Pennsylvania House. As a result, student comings and goings at late hours are particularly troublesome to permanent residents. Opening this facility until 1 am would be very disruptive.

Now the University claims the building is under-utilized. Yet, the January 26, 2004, issue of the student newspaper, *The Hatchet,* reports that "Students must sign up for first-floor elliptical machines and trainers starting Monday in the Health & Wellness Center," with a 30 minute time limit on machine use. Is this not an apparent incongruity?

Use of the building for its students is appropriate by this non-profit, tax-supported institution. Competing with the private sector for the business of non-students is not. The harm done to the Foggy Bottom residential neighborhood by any increase in number of users and to the District coffers by providing unfair competition with area commercial health clubs, far outweighs any good done for a small number of our residents.

We urge the Commission to protect the FB/WE community by denying this request.

Sincerely,

Ron Cocome

Ron Cocome
President

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-26
EXHIBIT NO.68