

Edward T. Mulrenin, Esq.
1001 26th Street NW
Washington DC 20037

November 15, 2007

District of Columbia Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001

Re: GWU Health and Wellness Center, Case #02-26A

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to support of the initiative of George Washington University (GWU) before the Zoning Commission to open up its health and wellness center to a limited number of users from the community. I am offering this support as a 31-year resident of Foggy Bottom/West End, as a retiree who spent my career working in the Foggy Bottom area (at the Federal Reserve), as an alumnus of GWU (LAW, '75), as the frequent president of a West End condominium in which many GWU students have resided, and as someone who has retired to the area. I am also offering this support as someone who has been a daily user of health/athletic facilities since, literally, my first day at college, 45 years ago. I respectfully request that the Zoning Commission grant GWU its requested initiative for the below reason.

Since moving to the Foggy Bottom area decades ago, I have been perplexed --- if not amazed --- by the almost-impenetrable wall that exists between GWU and the community in which it resides. It seems that the university's presence in the community has been felt *only* by way of the many students who have resided here, for better or for worse. As the result, the university has been criticized --- even by its alumni in the area --- for not doing more to open its doors to invite in the community. Making its health and wellness facilities available to the community would help tear down that wall in a large way and engender much good-will and mutual understanding. In the three decades I have lived here, I have not met a single person in the community whom I could characterize as a staunch supporter of GWU because of this wall. It truly is time for this wall to come down.

As an alumnus of GWU, I have been occasionally invited to audit certain academic programs there, an invitation I have accepted

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. **02-26A**
ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
EXHIBIT NO. **02-26A**
EXHIBIT NO.21

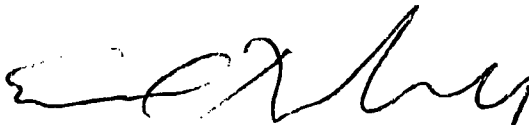
from time to time. And, of course, I am entitled to use the university's library facilities, which I have done from time to time. But because this is Washington, I have many other options available to me for these more substantive matters and, of course, time is usually the big deterrent in being able to take advantage of them at the University. But because many of us, especially those of us who live and know the benefit of living downtown, take the time each day to exercise, we would most certainly avail ourselves more readily of the health and wellness facility more than any of the others we have been offered. Again, it is now time, I believe, to take down the walls of the health center too, especially since it is well known that physical exercise is as important to one's mental health as anything else. (There were articles on this very subject last week in both *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post*).

For the many of us in the Foggy Bottom area who do exercise daily, there are, of course, a number of local private facilities we could join, and we have. However, being able to use a facility at the University we attended, located literally next door to some of us, would have more meaning for us (and the University), especially for those of us who retired to the area and may not be interested in all of the frills offered by the private clubs, who charge accordingly for those frills.

When I worked at the Federal Reserve, I recall being thrilled to learn that the then-new Smith Center when it opened in the 1980's would be opened to alumni too. How convenient that would have been for me, I remember thinking, since it was located on my walking route home. Unfortunately, that was not to be and I wasted perhaps one hundred hours a year driving or trekking to other facilities, time which could have been spent on more productive things. Please do not repeat the same mistake made by others back then. This is a win-win situation for the university and the community, not to mention those of us who would join up.

Thank you for permitting me to offer this letter in support of GWU's initiative.

Sincerely,



FAX

TO: DC Zoning Commission,
202-727-6311, FAX: 202-727-6072

ATTENTION: Sharon Schellin

FROM: Ed Mulrenin, 202-342-0498

RE: Case #02-261 (GWU)

This fax consists of this cover page plus one two pages.