Washington, D.C.
May 7, 2003

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

Dear Ms. Mitten:

Re: Cases 02-30 and 02-31

As a (DC resident, biker, hiker, and nature lover), I am writing to express my opposition to a change in zoning that would allow Georgetown University (GU) to construct a large boathouse on park land west of Key Bridge. I believe the land should remain unzoned and undeveloped, for the following reasons:

- The Potomac River area west of Key Bridge is one of the most scenic treasures of the nation's capital, and no new development should be permitted there.

- The land at this location forms part of a public "gateway" at the entrance to the C&O National Historical Park and is valued by hikers, bikers, boaters, tourists and others.

- The land -- on a flood plain and therefore a wetland area -- should remain untouched and in the public domain.

- Public land should not be used for private development, especially in this case when a reasonable alternative is available east of Key Bridge.

- The enormous size of the proposed structure would interfere with the scenic views of the surrounding area from the River, the C&O Canal Towpath and the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT).

- There would be many unknown negative impacts -- including safety issues for CCT users -- during and following the construction period, as well as potential damage to a historic structure adjacent to the proposed site of the GU boathouse.

- The environmental assessment for a land exchange related to the GU boathouse proposal -- produced before the size of the boathouse structure was known -- is over five years old and needs updating.

- The private docks extending into the river would restrict boat traffic.

Thank you for considering these views in opposition to the proposed GU boathouse.

Sincerely,

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-30
Exhibit 107

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-30
EXHIBIT NO.107

Georgetown University Boathouse Proposal

Background:

Georgetown University (GU) would like to build a large boathouse upstream of Key Bridge, on unzoned land within the C&O Canal National Historical Park, between the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) and the Potomac River. The structure would be 300 feet long, 60 feet high, and 60 feet wide, blocking the view of Key Bridge and the river from a section of the Towpath. Vehicles required for building, servicing and maintaining the structure would use the CCT to access the site. Docks would extend 85 feet out into the river. (See www.palisadesdc.org for details.)

On May 19, the DC Zoning Commission will consider GU's request to zone the park land (Cases No. 02-30 and 02-31) to allow for the construction of a boathouse. (See www.dcoz.dcgov.org/services/zoning/schedule/2003/05.shtm for zoning documents.)

While the concept of a university boathouse may be good, the location and size of the boathouse proposed by GU are inappropriate, according to many conservation groups, bikers, hikers, boaters and nature lovers in the area.

What you can do:

If you agree that the land west of Key Bridge should remain **unzoned and undeveloped,** please send a signed letter to the DC Zoning Commission expressing your opposition to the GU boathouse proposal (letters received by May 12 will be read by the Commissioners prior to the hearing). Ask that the land remain unzoned; Tell why park land and scenic views are important to you; Mention the impact of a boathouse at this particular location along the river; State how you appreciate the C&O Canal National Historical Park and how you want there to be no future development west of Key Bridge.

Address letters to: Carol Mitten, Chair, DC Zoning Commission
441 4th St., NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Secondly, attend the Zoning Commission hearing on May 19, 6:30 PM, Room 220 South, One Judiciary Square, 441 4th St., NW. (If you are willing to testify, please so indicate in your letter or when you "sign in" at the door at the time of the hearing. See zoning documents for special cases such as "party" or ANC status.)

Your letter and/or participation at the hearing will help to preserve and protect a unique section of park land.

Sally Strain, seawalk@starpower.net - See over for sample letter