May 14, 2003

Michael L. Aller
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D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
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Washington, DC Zoning Commission
Carol Mitten, Chair
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001

FAX: (202) 727-6072

Case # 02-30, Georgetown University Boathouse

Dear Chairwoman Mitten and Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the proposal to locate a new boathouse for Georgetown University immediately upstream of the present Washington Canoe Club boathouse (Case #02-30). I believe that additional boathouses are sorely needed to help relieve the overcrowding at Thompson's Boat Center, and this location and proposed boathouse are ideal in helping to alleviate some of that pressure.

As a current member of the US National Rowing Team who lives and works in Washington, DC and bases my training for national and international competition here on the Potomac River, I can tell you straightforwardly that a Georgetown University boathouse would be a great addition to the Georgetown waterfront, to the boating community on the Potomac, and to the Georgetown community as a whole, well beyond the university.

I am a 1999 graduate of Georgetown University and product of the Georgetown rowing program. I began rowing as a freshman at Georgetown almost 8 years ago, and served as co-captain of the Varsity Lightweights my senior year. Since my graduation, I have worked at the Brookings Institution and the Institute for International Economics near Dupont Circle, while training intensively (often twice a day) on the Potomac, based out of Potomac Boat Club. Last year at the World Championships in Seville, Spain I finished 6th overall representing the US in the Lightweight Men's Quadruple Sculls.

As an athlete representing Georgetown, it became quickly apparent to me that our facilities lagged behind all of our competitors. Georgetown is the only member of its league (the Eastern Association of Rowing Colleges - the premier rowing league in the nation) which does not have its own boathouse facility, or access to rowing tanks. It also is apparent that the available rowing facilities in the DC area (and especially in Georgetown) are vastly oversubscribed and that Thompson's especially is almost ridiculously overcrowded. Demand for rowing vastly outstrips supply of locations to

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house equipment and training facilities. As an athlete training for international competition on the Potomac, the lack of facilities impacts elite athletes as well as recreational, high school and collegiate rowers. DC is at a disadvantage to other training locations purely due to the dearth of facilities – in other aspects (the Potomac itself, the community and the opportunities afforded by the greater DC area) it is in large part superior to most other locations. Four Georgetown Rowing alumni or coaches and overall over a dozen members of the Potomac rowing community represented the US at the World Championships last year, though many of us had to go elsewhere to complete our preparations due to the lack of facilities. GU rowing alumni have won medals in at least the last 2 Olympics, and several world championships over the past 8 years. A Georgetown boathouse would go a long way toward making an even greater impression at the national and even international level.

As a resident of the community as well as a member of the rowing community on the Potomac, the site and proposal for a Georgetown Boathouse at the site above the Washington Canoe Club makes sense. The Park Service has envisioned boathouses at this location for many years, [I believe] that plan is also written into the master plan for a Georgetown waterfront park. It is directly under the spires of the Georgetown main campus, and will be a memorable landmark. I have often admired Philadelphia's Boathouse Row - along with Potomac Boat Club and the Washington Canoe Club, this would be a significant step toward creating a uniquely DC equivalent.

As someone who uses the Capital Crescent Trail every day (I commute year-round via bike from my apartment in the Palisades to the Potomac Boat Club for practice, and to Dupont Circle for work) for commuting as well as for recreation (jogging and riding along the waterfront to the monuments), I can honestly say that I think the proposed boathouse would have very little impact on the Capital Crescent Trail. Users of the trail already pass two boathouses at the end of Water Street. (WCC is already just past the "official" trailhead as it stands today) adding an additional boathouse would only extend that zone a couple of hundred yards at most (without obstructing the trail) and the adjacent parkland above the proposed boathouse would continue untouched for miles as it was before. I don't believe that another boathouse would make an appreciable difference, indeed might well be a good way to transition into the city, with the Whitehurst Freeway, and high-rises along Water Street a few hundred yards away.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to express my views on this subject, and I hope that you will see the value in having a first-class facility located above Washington Canoe Club on the Potomac.

I would greatly wish to be able to attend the hearing on May 19, but training for this year's national team (and next year's Olympics) will unfortunately keep me away from DC on that date.

Thank you very much,

Michael L. Aller

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[redacted]

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Fax

To: Washington, DC Zoning Commission — **From:** Michael Allen

Carol Mitten, Chair

Fax: 202-727-6072 — **Pages:** 3

Phone: 202-727-6311 — **Date:** 5/14/2003

Re: Case # 02-30 Georgetown Univ. Boathouse — **CC:**

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• **Comments:**

Attached is a letter in support of the proposal for the Georgetown University Boathouse (Case #02-30). Thank you very much for your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

Michael Allen

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