potomac conservancy

1730 North Lynn Street • Suite 403 • Arlington, VA 22209 • 703.276.2777 • Fax 703.276.1098

www.potomac.org

May 22, 2003

Ms. Carol J. Mitten
Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia
441 4th St., NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

D.C. ZONING COMMISSION
2003 MAY 23 A 10:04

RE: Case Number 02-30 (Georgetown University & U.S. National Park Service – Map Amendment)

Dear Ms. Mitten:

Potomac Conservancy submits this written testimony for the record pertaining to Case Number 02-30, regarding the request for a map amendment for the property proposed for the Georgetown Boathouse. Potomac Conservancy is a regional non-profit that protects lands vital to the health, beauty and enjoyment of the Potomac River and its tributaries. Though our focus now encompasses the entire 15,000 square mile watershed, we deem the Potomac Gorge an area of special concern. In fact, following our nomination, Scenic America recently designated the Potomac River from Point of Rocks, Maryland to its confluence with Rock Creek as one of the nation's "Last Chance Landscapes."

Potomac Conservancy supports the Waterfront Open Space (W-O) classification for the subject property. The proposed boathouse is consistent with the low-density, recreation, and open space uses permitted by W-O zoning.

As I'm sure you are aware, the threat of inappropriate riverfront development is one of the major challenges faced by the Potomac River. While the Georgetown Boathouse proposal is largely consistent with our mission because it will provide much needed recreational access, we urge Georgetown University and the DC Zoning Commission to consider the following suggestions in order to preserve the scenic and ecological integrity of the Potomac riverfront:

1. ***Design a structure that is appropriate for the site and is harmonious with the natural surroundings***
   - Reduce the width and height of the structure to be consistent with the other boathouses along the Georgetown waterfront and eliminate blocking views from the C&O Canal towpath
   - Eliminate features that are not water-dependent and could be located in a facility not on the riverfront

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-30
Exhibit 220

Printed on Recycled Paper

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-30
EXHIBIT NO.220

- Incorporate a visual cue to definitively mark the upstream end of development along the Georgetown waterfront

2. ***Mitigate scenic and environmental disturbance to the shoreline***
   - Landscape with rain gardens, native trees and other vegetation to soften the view while providing stormwater filtration functions

3. ***Incorporate a public use aspect to the project***
   - Provide a public walkway to the river for viewing the river and launching private boats

Thank you for your consideration of our suggestions. Our staff is available to provide you and your colleagues any technical assistance needed for the protection of the Potomac River. Please do not hesitate to call me with your questions, concerns, or to arrange assistance.

Sincerely,

Meredith Lathbury
General Counsel
Director of Land Protection

D.C. OFFICE OF PLANNING
2003 MAY 22 PM 3:04