Testimony of Chisolm C. McAvoy before the D.C. Zoning Commission
Case #02-30 on May l9, 2003

My name is Chisolm McAvoy, a proud Defender of Potomac River Parkland. I have engaged in various uses of the Potomac River and its environs for over 45 years. I have sailed, swum, rowed, and paddled the river and have run and walked along its shoreline and C&O Canal Towpath. I am the current Commodore of the National Yacht Club, and a member of the Washington Canoe Club, the Potomac Pedalers' Touring Club, and the C&O National Park Bicycle Towpath Patrol.

I am pleased to appear before this Zoning Commission. Thank you all for this opportunity to bring the clear light of day to the matter of the Georgetown University Boathouse. The construction of this oversized, private facility on National Parkland will dramatically alter the current natural state along the north bank of the Potomac River.

My opposition to a Georgetown University rowing facility at this site at this time is based on its impact on Capital Crescent Trail users, Potomac River recreational and competitive rowing and paddling activities, and physical damage to the tender walls of the Towpath and C&O Canal.

The May 9, 2003 Office of Planning Final Report for Zoning Commission Case No. 02-30 makes a number of points to which I take issue.

- Access to the facility would be a ten-foot wide service road adjacent to the Crescent Trail. --- To the contrary, access would effectively include the Crescent Trail. The road would be used by Emergency Vehicles, service vehicles for the facility, boat trailers for hauling 8-oar shells in an out of the Boathouse, and shuttle buses making their way back and forth to the head of the Crescent Trail to load and unload parents, alumni, students, fans of Georgetown University rowing to Regattas and other events. At any or all of these times use of the Capital Crescent Trail would be seriously impaired.
- Design for the Boathouse would benefit users of Crescent Trail and Towpath. --- I cannot image passersby standing in rapt-awe pointing out to each other the features of the nearly 7-story boathouse, especially as it is a private facility on National Parkland with limited access to the general public.
- Flood Control, Wetlands, etc. --- The site was under water during high Potomac River crests in May. Despite the pass-through design of the structure, the resulting river flow would result in havoc downstream.

This Zoning Commission should have, must have, the courage, fortitude, conscience and good sense to defend the Public Interest. I urge the Commission to turn down the Georgetown University request for a zoning change that would clear the way for construction of the Boathouse.

In light of the expert testimony that you have heard, please vote NO to the Zoning Change. Thank you once again for this opportunity to testify.

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ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-30
EXHIBIT NO. 301