02-30

June 30, 2003

Mr. Geoffrey Griffis, Chairman
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th St. N.W. Suite 210 South
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. Griffis:

The following testimony was mailed to the Zoning Commission in reference to a hearing concerning the Georgetown Boat House. Then I happened to read an article in the Northwest Current about GW student housing. In that testimony you will see that student housing and boat houses might have more in common than first appears.

In addition to living off Wisconsin Avenue in the District, I have worked many years in commercial real estate and for the last ten years as part of the management of a sizeable rental community in SW. So sometimes I see the District in way that others may not have the opportunity to see it.

Perhaps the enclosed option might be of interest.

Sincerely,

Paul G. Pollinger

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cc: Judge Farell

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ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-30
Exhibit 371

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-30
EXHIBIT NO.371

OPTION B, GLOBAL D.C. INCLUSIVE ROWING AND PADDLING

At earlier Zoning hearings there was a reference to a smaller George Washington Boat House in the designated area downstream in Georgetown, that reference is not inclusive. Who is to say that American University will not want a boat house there as well as say Howard University? Is there an assumption that these schools will never have a graduate who has $15 million to build a boat house or that their graduates as a whole can't give that much money? The is not a valid assumption. What about Gallaudet University? Now there are other schools such as UDC, Catholic University, and Columbia Union. Then how many rowing spots are available anywhere for high schools? Also why shouldn't there be provisions for other canoe clubs? What about Virginia rowers who supported rowing in the District for all these years? Should we chase them away?

Also, no one make the statement that 25 or so opened slots at Thompsons will really address rowing in the District of Columbia. Is that all there is?

So at recent hearings there were a lot of complaints about boathouse problems but no positive options. The Global Option is a solution that addresses almost all of the District and is even in part of the District Development Plans. It has been stated the District recently opened up of a boathouse facility upstream on the Anacostia River. More importantly there are planned boat houses on the downstream part of the Anacostia River in SW/SE at the proposed South Capitol Street gateway entrance to the District. There are developers anxious to promote that area. This opportunity was never discussed as an option nor were the developers invited to any rowing organization hearings or so I hear.

Then one wonders why it isn't happening? Perhaps it is because not many people live there now and it is a distance from the Georgetown University main campus.

But distance has a way of changing. Georgetown University has for many years bused students a distance to Virginia apartments. (They have not helped SW/SE District of Columbia apartments in this way.) Then George Washington University seems to be always in a dormitory dispute with their DC neighbors. They also end up forcing students to the suburbs. It seems like even Georgetown Law got out of the business of housing students on what little land that had left. Not only that, while not technically students, Congress brings many interns into the District where there is only the most expensive three or four month housing. Is Congress against housing in the District for these individuals? That is unlikely.

Continue on a bit and there will be "the" boathouse connection. The City Council and the Mayor agree unanimously that the District needs 100,000 more residents. That is a rare event.

Of this about 10,000 units are planned for SW/SE waterfront. Right now what are needed for students, some of who might be rowers, are about 1,000 housing units. But the developers are encouraged by the District to wait for more profitable residents because students don't have a lot of money and don't pay taxes. So if everyone waits another 10 or 15 years as already been the case there will be upscale residents on the SW/SE waterfront, no students, and little rowing or paddling. On the other hand the developers can help out now the same way they already help theaters/arts downtown. Instead of theatres the District gets college and high school boat houses.

While Georgetown University seems to have size-able funds for their boat house there is no reason why they shouldn't get some site help in SW/SE for their boat house there. The busing will

be shorter than most subway rides to the suburbs and maybe only a mile or so longer than the Northern Virginia GUTS bus routes. Most importantly the land is already zoned. For Georgetown Law School the housing would be much closer.

For the many students who would be otherwise forced to long commutes and the host of rowers and paddlers who will use the boat houses, including Georgetown, this option would become the center of the universe at the Gateway to the City.

The above are reasons that I ask the Zoning Commission to vote against the Georgetown boat house zoning change and variation.