May 1, 2003

DC ZONING COMMISSION
2003 MAY -2 AM 3:49

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

Dear Ms. Mitten,

I am writing about Georgetown University's proposed boathouse on the Potomac river.

I have a special interest in the university's plan. I have been a Georgetown professor of African studies since 1984 and I have had several young male and female students who have greatly benefitted from their Georgetown crewing experience. I have been a member of the Washington Canoe Club since 1988. I use the Club's facilities regularly. Needless to say, I am writing in my private capacity.

Overall, I oppose my school's plan. To be fair, the boathouse will greatly benefit Georgetown's crew by attracting more alumni funding and even better rowers to Georgetown. An important, although intangible, effect will be greater pride by some students in their university. A strengthened program will inspire other local teams, both secondary school and university, to upgrade their skills and physical plant. I strongly approve of wider student participation in athletics, especially since young people increasingly are desk-bound in front of computers and televisions.

But the plan's ambitiousness comes at a price: a few will benefit but many more will lose out. A building *eight times* larger than the Washington Canoe Club will consume parkland, worsen the Potomac's visual appeal to the thousands of daily DC-bound commuters, bikers, walkers and boaters, and may worsen downstream pollution and silt buildup.

Of particular concern to me is the planned-fifty foot dock that will block some boat traffic and be a visual eyesore. The dock will force present canoe traffic (including numerous neophyte paddlers afraid of deeper water) into the Potomac's midsection which is presently, albeit informally, reserved for crew shells and motor boats. Fast-moving crew shells cannot turn quickly and easily could cause accidents in the increasingly congested river.

The Potomac is one of the District's great wonders and should be available to all. The planned boathouse is of a size that will lessen many peoples' enjoyment while certainly benefitting the relatively small number of Georgetown rowers. My school certainly needs better rowing facilities. I wish that it had proposed a smaller boathouse that would have balanced the

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-30
Exhibit 61

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-30
EXHIBIT NO.61

school's needs with those of the much larger community. Perhaps the Zoning Commission could seek such a scaled-down version.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Herb Howe

Herbert M. Howe