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May 3, 2003

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D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
2003 MAY -6 PM 3:20

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

Dear Ms. Mitten:

I write in strong opposition to the rezoning of Tract 102-114 (Case # 02-30). I also oppose the proposed land exchange between the National Park Service and Georgetown University.

For ten years I volunteered my time to help create the Capital Crescent Trail and helped lead a coalition to advocate for this wonderful new greenway. Once the Georgetown Spur was abandoned in the mid-80's, the railroad right-of-way, already wild land (and within a National Park), became a virtual jungle. From just west of Key Bridge, all the way to the DC border (and beyond), a walker could pass through forest, with excellent views of the river and remnants of 19th century buildings. It was – and is – a spectacular and very charming location for a trail which has become a nationally-known rail-trail and a prominent addition to Washington's greenway system. These natural features should not be compromised without good cause.

Having Georgetown University – a private institution – build a monstrous boathouse hard up against the trail, closing off its views, pinching it as a broad thoroughfare for joggers and bicyclists in the best of time and actually obstructing it (with trucks and traffic) during what are certainly to be frequent sporting and social events, hardly constitutes a "good cause." It feels like a betrayal for those of us who worked so hard to preserve this land as trail and green space. That this construction would take place with the acquiescence of the National Park Service, on public parkland, is doubly disappointing.

The idea that Georgetown University and NPS are going to do an even-up land swap is equally of concern. There is no way Georgetown's narrow, remote, most likely unbuildable lot (Tract 102-109) is of equal value to Tract 102-114. The National Park Service needs to much more fully justify why such a trade is in the public interest.

ZONING COMMISSION
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Exhibit. 85

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-30
EXHIBIT NO.85

Finally, NPS prepared it environmental documentation well before any details of the size and siting of the Georgetown University boathouse were known. The public either never saw the proposal or Environmental Assessment, or, if they did, the information on the scale of the boathouse was completely inadequate to make an informed decision on its impact.

I strongly urge that the Zoning Commission take no action until new and adequate environmental documentation on the impacts of the boathouse is assembled and given thorough public review.

Sincerely,



Chris Brown