Testimony & Letter

4000 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Apt. 1510
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Re: Case 02-31

As a District apartment dweller, I especially treasure any wild open spaces. I have spent many hours with my family walking the canal and enjoying the river wildlife trying to escape the bustle of city life.

Obviously, I am not the first to recognize the unique character of this area. The1987 plan for the Georgetown Waterfront Park & C&O Canal National Historic Park states, "The Potomac River above Key Bridge is one of the main scenic treasures of the Nation's Capital, and no new development will be permitted in this area."

This area should remain undeveloped. Alternative boathouse sites exist below the Key Bridge. However, if the commission must consider new development for the waterfront area, any proposal should require extraordinary scrutiny, especially for the area above the Key Bridge. **"Boathouse" should not be added to the Waterfront Zone as a "matter-of-right" use.** This is a special area for our city and requires particular zoning review. Neither private institutions nor public use development should be allowed free reign over development in this area. Does this new definition also apply to George Washington University and their boathouse would then receive no review? There are many considerations that the commission should consider in future developments due to the unique qualities of this waterfront area.

Parking/Traffic/Size Concerns

Parking is already a concern in the area. Any project should evaluate the number of vehicle trips and parking needs in relation to impacts on the Capital Crescent trail and historic C&O Canal.

The Georgetown University facility is almost the length of a football field and obviously would not be built without consideration for use by GU for major events in spite of their contention otherwise. At one time the GU web site mentioned a bar. It now touts " a perfect setting for future crew alumni and parent events." The vague definition of "boathouse" includes the wording "other events." Where is the analysis of traffic and parking needs for the likely wedding reception or fundraiser?

Comparing the parking needs of marinas and boathouses as implied in #4 of 02-31 is not appropriate. Crew members need land transportation to the site. They do not arrive by

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Exhibit 110

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EXHIBIT NO.110

boat as marina users. It is untenable to allow construction of such a building without facing the fact that the boathouse will require parking, at least for cleaning, security, and maintenance crews. It is my understanding that Washington Canoe Club members will no longer be allowed to park on their site under the new park proposal. A parking need evaluation should take this into consideration in projecting the new proposed lot use.

Size

The "boathouse" definition should limit uses strictly to rowing activities. With the increased demand for boat space, the size of boathouses along this waterfront should be limited in height, length and depth as to what is needed for boat storage, showers, and bathrooms in order to accommodate the many rowing groups needing space. It is unclear to what extent several of the appropriate commissions and boards have reviewed the current plans for this proposal. Size restrictions should consider view impacts on the historic C&O Canal and Capital Crescent Trail as well as views from the river and the impact on national parkland.

Safety, Security and Environmental Issues-Rowing Tank and Dock

The rowing tank requires review of many safety, security, and environmental issues. This property is flooded often. The use of chlorine for the tank or ammonia for the cooling system certainly would pose a hazard in the floodplain and pose a threat to Potomac water quality. The rowing tank should not be located on the site due to considerations of increased size of structure, increased traffic for use, and environmental concerns. The Yale rowing tank is located away from the river as are many other universities'. A rowing tank is not a dependent use of the river and does not belong in a boathouse as a "matter of right" or special exception. A rowing tank should require a variance.

Boathouses require docks and the many environmental considerations in siting, size, and construction materials need evaluation. Will the dock impact structures or land use downstream by causing erosion or sedimentation?

The location of rip rap along the river bank needs analysis as it may alter water flow and thereby cause erosion or otherwise effect the river banks downstream.

The issues of parking, traffic, size of building, and any environmental impacts all need careful scrutiny by the commission. Private institutional boathouses should not be given carte blanche to develop as they see fit as a "matter of right." The Georgetown University boathouse building is expected to be 15 million dollar project that has not seen any environmental review as required by the National Environmental Quality Act. At least provide the citizens of the area an opportunity for input through the public zoning process.

Thank you for your consideration.
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Gerardine M. Albers