May 5, 2003

4912 "W" Street N.W
Washington DC 20007

D.C. Zoning Commission
Attn: Ms. Carol Mitten, Chair
441 4th Street N.W. #210
Washington D.C. 20001

Dear Commissioners:

I was shocked to hear that the Commission is taking under serious consideration the proposal by Georgetown University to build a massive boathouse upon National Park land. The site they propose for their 300 x 60 x 60 ft. structure is part of the C&O Canal National Historical Park, which should be completely off-limits to development by any private party, whether profit or nonprofit. Such a structure would seriously impair the recreational value of one of our very best urban resources, the C&O Canal towpath and its adjacent Capital Crescent Trail. The associated 85-foot pier would add insult to injury.

Through the years considerable effort has been invested in restoring the banks of the Potomac to a natural state, eliminating step by step the incursions of rendering plants, power plants, factories, rail lines, slaughterhouses and the like. Now in one step the Georgetown University proposes to degrade the natural character of the riverbank again, blocking the wonderful view of our handsome Key Bridge and turning the towpath and the trail into mere shadowed and crowded passageways.

Believe me, if I could be reincarnated I would choose to return as a school. In recent years the various private schools of our northwest quadrant of the District of Columbia, none of which pay a penny in taxes, continually threaten to impose their own special requirements on the citizens upon whose property taxes the District depends. I think it is time to draw a decisive line, and the boundary of a long-established, heavily used, much loved National Park is the self-evident place to draw it. Turn down Georgetown University's brazen incursion into a public recreational and cultural resource!

Sincerely,

David M. Paul, Jr.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-31
Exhibit 85

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ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-31
EXHIBIT NO.85