1005 Aster Blvd.
Rockville, MD 20850
April 30, 2003

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

Re: Case No. 02-30

Dear Ms. Mitten and members of the Commission:

I am writing to strongly object to the application from Georgetown University and the U.S. Park Service for a zoning map amendment to allow construction of a boathouse upriver from the Key Bridge. The parkland along the Potomac River in Washington, DC upriver from Georgetown is a gem, enjoyed by thousands of people daily. I find it hard to fathom why you would consider degrading it in order to build a facility for which the public would lack access and which would primarily benefit a private entity (Georgetown University).

I am a daily user of the Capital Crescent Trail, which I use for commuting purposes. The many walkers, bikers, and rollerbladers who use the trail daily as well as the many occasional users take great pleasure from the natural state of the land adjacent to the trail and the views of the river. The riverfront in question is home of abundant wildlife and also frequented by fisherman. Not only would the proposed boathouse destroy public parkland, it would obstruct river views, destroy animal habitat, and jeopardize the safety of trail users.

While I object to any building in parkland along the river, the scale of the proposed facility is particularly objectionable, as it would be on the scale of a warehouse. The proposed structure would be the length of a football field and over 3 stories tall. It would not only ruin the aesthetic enjoyment of those who use that segment of the Capital Crescent Trail, but it would obstruct the view of the river from those walking, running, or bicycling on the C&O towpath. Moreover, the boathouse would introduce vehicular traffic to the final 400 yards of the Capital Crescent Trail, raising safety concerns.

I do not wish to discourage use of the river for those who wish to row on it. I enjoy watching the crew teams practice during my daily commutes. However, there are less environmentally damaging locations where Georgetown University could construct a boathouse. The waterfront downriver from the Key Bridge is only occupied by a parking lot, which is rarely fully used.

Finally, I strongly object to the lack of public notice regarding this proposed zoning change. Although there are no immediate residential neighbors to the property, there are thousands of park users who would be impacted. These park users could have been easily notified by signs set up along the Capital Crescent Trail and C&O towpath, informing them of the zoning map

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amendment application and the public hearing. It is only by happenstance that I learned about the proposed text amendment.

I strongly urge you to turn down this request and leave the land unzoned, with no new construction. There is clearly no public benefit to the proposed boathouse, but considerable public cost.

Sincerely,

James Reschovsky