APPLICATION OF GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
TO THE ZONING COMMISSION FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL UNDER THE CAMPUS PLAN PROVISIONS

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

August 8, 2002

This application by the President and Directors of Georgetown College, also known as Georgetown University (the "University" or "Georgetown"), requests special exception approval under 11 DCMR §§ 3104.1 and 210 of the Zoning Regulations for further processing of a proposed project within Georgetown's approved campus plan. The specific request is for a renovation and enlargement of the existing Ryan Administration Building to convert it to a Performing Arts Center (the "Center").

The Campus Plan and the Proposed Use

The University submitted its proposed campus plan for the period, 2000 to 2010, on January 31, 2000, showing the location, height and bulk of all present and proposed improvements as required by the 11 DCMR § 210.4. After public hearings, the Board of Zoning Adjustment ("BZA") approved that plan by BZA Order No. 16566 on December 5, 2000.[1]

The "Land Use Plan" of the campus plan designates Site AA-5 for future "Academic/Administration" use. This site is further designated for a "Future Academic

[1] Motions for reconsideration and for a stay of parts of the decision resulted in BZA Orders 16566A and 16566B.

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EXHIBIT NO.3

Addition" on page 16 of the University's campus plan document, with a projected building height of 75 feet, building coverage of 16,400 square feet and a gross floor area ("g.f.a.") of 55,300 square feet. The proposed renovation of the Ryan Building plus an addition of three stories and 61feet in height will, if approved, enlarge the building to a total of 39,600 g.f.a. Thus, the specific project utilizes less height and building bulk than authorized in the campus plan, but is the same proposed use.

The site for the Performing Arts Center consists of the existing Ryan Administration Building and a small parcel of adjacent vacant land to the west of Ryan. The two-story Ryan Building is constructed of masonry exterior walls and concrete slab floors, and the existing gross floor area is 20,302 square feet. One floor is vacant and one is occupied by Student Financial Affairs. This building is located in the south-central part of the Main Campus, to the south of the Jesuit Cemetery, to the north of Healy Hall and the Old North buildings, to the west of Copley Hall and to the east of Harbin Hall. (See the copy of the "Land Use Plan" from the Campus Plan booklet attached as *Exhibit A* and the photographs of the site in *Exhibit B*.)

Building Design and Functional Layout[2]

The new Performing Arts Center will combine the existing Ryan Administration Building with an addition, constructed to the west of the Ryan building, on the steeply sloped site which leads down to the existing Jesuit Cemetery. The new, 230-seat proscenium theater utilizes this slope as the audience chamber inclines down from the lobby to the stage level. Patrons of this theater and the Studio Theater (see below) will

[2] See the set of plans attached to this Statement as *Exhibit D*.

enter the new lobby, which is located at the main level of the Ryan building and which rises up to the roof trusses and restores the height of the original gymnasium.

The stage level, one floor down from the lobby, accommodates a variety of other functions and spaces. These include the Studio Theater of 80 to 100 seats, the scene shop, the costume shop, the theater program's academic offices and the public restrooms. This level is serviced by a large service elevator that descends to the basement, which has two large rehearsal rooms, the student lounge and the dressing rooms. The slope of the site permits a large cellar, which is used for storage and mechanical equipment. The facility is designed for theater arts and not musical performances.

In appearance, the new addition builds on important elements of the Ryan building. The material is brick, the predominant campus building material. Stone courses and recessed brick panels are motifs taken from the Ryan building. Very large window areas, similar to Ryan, are also used extensively. The sloping site permits construction of the new theater and its stage house to be at a lower level than the fronting street, thereby minimizing the apparent size of the stage house.

Project Goals

Georgetown University is committed to creating and sustaining an environment in which students can develop physically, emotionally, intellectually, morally, and spiritually. The mission is to build a community that serves as a context for building character. The idea that education takes place within the context of a community is deeply rooted in the Catholic and Jesuit tradition upon which this University is built.

The Georgetown University Performing Arts Center will serve as the education center for campus theater, supporting Georgetown's curricular goals in the arts.

Instruction will be offered in theater arts, and stagecraft (lighting, technical and set design, costume design, etc.) Academic ensembles will be offered to complement work in the classroom. The Center is an essential creative space filling what has been an enormous gap on Georgetown's campus. This academic and student activities performing arts center is an essential step in the expanding arts education opportunities for Georgetown's undergraduate students.

- Students will be able to write, direct, produce and perform original compositions and theses in the laboratory component of classroom instruction.

- Periodic performances of theater provide critical support through instruction and training, and prepare students for auditions, performance, competition and professional employment in other venues in Washington, D.C. and beyond. Professional visiting artists will be invited specifically to share work and serve as role models. Master classes could take place during class times, with a performance for all students who wish to explore the dramatic arts in the heart of the campus.

- Faculty and advanced students will direct and design full departmental major theater productions three or four times annually; 10 to 50 students each time will have the opportunity to participate in all aspects of the production.

- Georgetown University's performing arts related clubs and projects will use the Center for student activity performing arts.

Physical Planning Goal

The principal physical planning goal is to centralize in one well-designed facility the various teaching and small performance venues that are now scattered around the main campus. The creation of the Performing Arts Center will help strengthen the arts department with improved teaching, rehearsal space and campus performance space. Indeed, this proposed facility helps carry out five of the University's six goals from the campus plan for new space planning, including:

- *Co-locating programs whose operations are physically separated because of lack of space.*
- *Creating functionally appropriate space.*
- *Creating sufficient space to meet current needs and alleviate overcrowding.*
- *Increasing space devoted to student activities and campus life.*
- *Renovating existing spaces to meet user needs.* (Campus Plan, p. 13)

Thus, the consolidation of space will enhance the performing arts program in terms of quality and extent of facilities, while achieving the convenience of a central location.

Compliance with the Zoning Regulations and the Campus Plan

The proposed Performing Arts Center is consistent with the city's applicable planning policies and with the college and university special exception standards of the Zoning Regulations at 11 DCMR 210. The proposed renovation and enlargement of the Ryan Building is also consistent with the University's adopted campus plan and will not cause any objectionable conditions affecting neighboring properties.

Comprehensive Plan – Land Use Policy. The Georgetown University main campus is designated as "Institutional" on the Generalized Land Map of the Land Use Element of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capitol* (the "Comprehensive Plan"). The Institutional designation is designed to substantially coincide with the campus plan boundaries. The proposed use is clearly part of the institution of the University and in accordance with the land use policies of the city's Comprehensive Plan.

No Adverse Neighborhood Effects. Subsection 210.2 of the Zoning Regulations requires that the proposed campus use shall be "not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or other objectionable

conditions." The Performing Arts Center proposed in this case will not create objectionable conditions for several reasons:

- Nearly all of the programs and performances that will take place in the Performing Arts Center already occur somewhere on the campus. Many of the performances will occur in daytime hours, with participation and attendance substantially by students and faculty already on the campus, so that there will be very limited vehicular travel to attend performances. The new facility will accommodate activities in one, improved facility.

- The proposed Performing Arts Center is situated on the interior of the campus, so that external effects on nearby neighborhood residents will be negligible. For evening performances there will be a limited number of non-University attendees arriving by automobile -- primarily family members of student participants. To avoid any parking or traffic problems, the University has agreed in the adopted campus plan to provide campus personnel as necessary to direct visitors to campus parking areas at the Southwest Quadrangle and the Leavey Center.

- The University has also agreed in Condition 11 of the Campus Plan to avoid scheduling events in the Center that attract visitors to the campus between the peak traffic times of 7:00 – 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. All "weekday and evening performances at the Performing Arts Center" expected to draw more than 100 visitors must begin at 7:00 p.m. or later. In the evening hours traffic will be light and parking spaces ample. Because of the limited audience capacity of this facility, traffic and overspill parking effects on the surrounding neighborhood will be extremely minor.

- Finally, Condition 12 of the Campus Plan order requires that events at the Performing Arts Center shall be "for purposes related to the University or the community, and not for non-University events whose primary purpose is revenue generation."

In summary, because of the indicated operational characteristics and because the University will comply with Conditions 11 and 12 of the Campus Plan order, the proposed facility is highly unlikely to have any adverse effects on the surrounding neighborhood. Indeed, as a matter of aesthetics, the handsome, traditional design character of the new facility will enhance the visual quality of the campus for University students, faculty and staff as well as visitors to the campus.

Campus FAR. Subsection 210.8 of the campus plan special exception provisions requires the applicant for new building construction under a campus plan to certify and document that the proposed building is within the FAR limit for the campus as a whole. The campus is located in the R-3 and C-1 zone districts and therefore has a maximum floor area ratio ("FAR") limit of 1.8 FAR. The existing campus gross floor area is 4,906,634 square feet, or 1.12 FAR. With the addition of the 19,298 g.f.a. proposed in this application, the total will be 4,925,932 square feet, or 1.13 FAR. Clearly, this is well within the maximum 1.8 FAR allowed and well within the additional space authorized by the Campus Plan. BZA Order No. 16566 authorizes new projects that will bring total campus FAR to 1.41 FAR (Preliminary Matter No. 7, page 2). This is the first project since approval of the Campus Plan, 2000-2010.

Consistency with Adopted Campus Plan. As indicated on page one above, the existing Ryan Administration building and adjacent land are designated in the Campus Plan as Site AA-5 to be devoted to an "Academic Addition." The proposed use is an academic use and therefore is consistent with the Campus Plan land use plan. Moreover, as indicated previously in this statement, the Performing Arts Center exemplifies most of the University's functional planning goals for the campus, including: co-locating programs that are currently scattered; creating functionally appropriate spaces; creating sufficient space to meet current needs and alleviate overcrowding; increasing space for student activities and campus life; and renovating existing spaces to meet user needs.

Required Information. Condition 19 of BZA Order No. 16566 states, "No special exception application filed by the University for further processing under this plan may be granted unless the University proves that it has consistently remained in

substantial compliance with Conditions 1 through 18 set forth in this Order." (p. 15) The University has in fact remained continuously in compliance with Order No. 16566 and will provide specific information as part of the Pre-Hearing Submission in this case.

Commission of Fine Arts/Old Georgetown Board Review

Because the Georgetown University campus is located within the Old Georgetown Historic District, the exterior design of proposed new construction is subject to exterior design review by the Old Georgetown Board ("OGB"), a panel of three architects appointed by the Commission of Fine Arts ("CFA") to review projects in Georgetown and make recommendations to the CFA for its consideration in formal review. The architects presented the plans to OGB on July 8, 2002 and to the CFA on July 18. The Commission of Fine Arts granted concept design approval at its meeting and by letter dated August 5, 2002, a copy of which is attached is attached in *Exhibit C.*

Community Comment

Georgetown University representatives have presented the plans for the Performing Arts Center to Advisory Neighborhood Commission ("ANC") 2E. Also, over a period of many months the University engaged in extensive meetings with various community organizations and other interests as it prepared its campus plan for submission. The proposal for the Performing Arts Center was fully discussed in that process and received quite favorable comments from the community.

Conclusion

The Applicant submits that the proposed renovation and addition to the Ryan Building to transform it into the Performing Arts Center fully complies with the special exception standards of Section 210 governing college and university uses. The project

will benefit the theater arts program as well as extracurricular theater groups on campus. The attractive design of the building will be a beneficial aesthetic addition to the campus and the neighborhood, and will impose no adverse effects on the surrounding neighborhood. The proposed use and development are in harmony with the purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Map. For all of the reasons cited in this application, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Board grant the requested special exception.

Respectfully submitted,
ARNOLD & PORTER

Nathan W. Gross, AICP

Cynthia A. Giordano

Attachments

Exhibit A: Campus Plan: Land Use Plan



FIGURE 05

TEN YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

JANUARY 01, 2000

LAND USE PLAN

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ROBERT A.M. STERN ARCHITECTS
EDAW INC. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

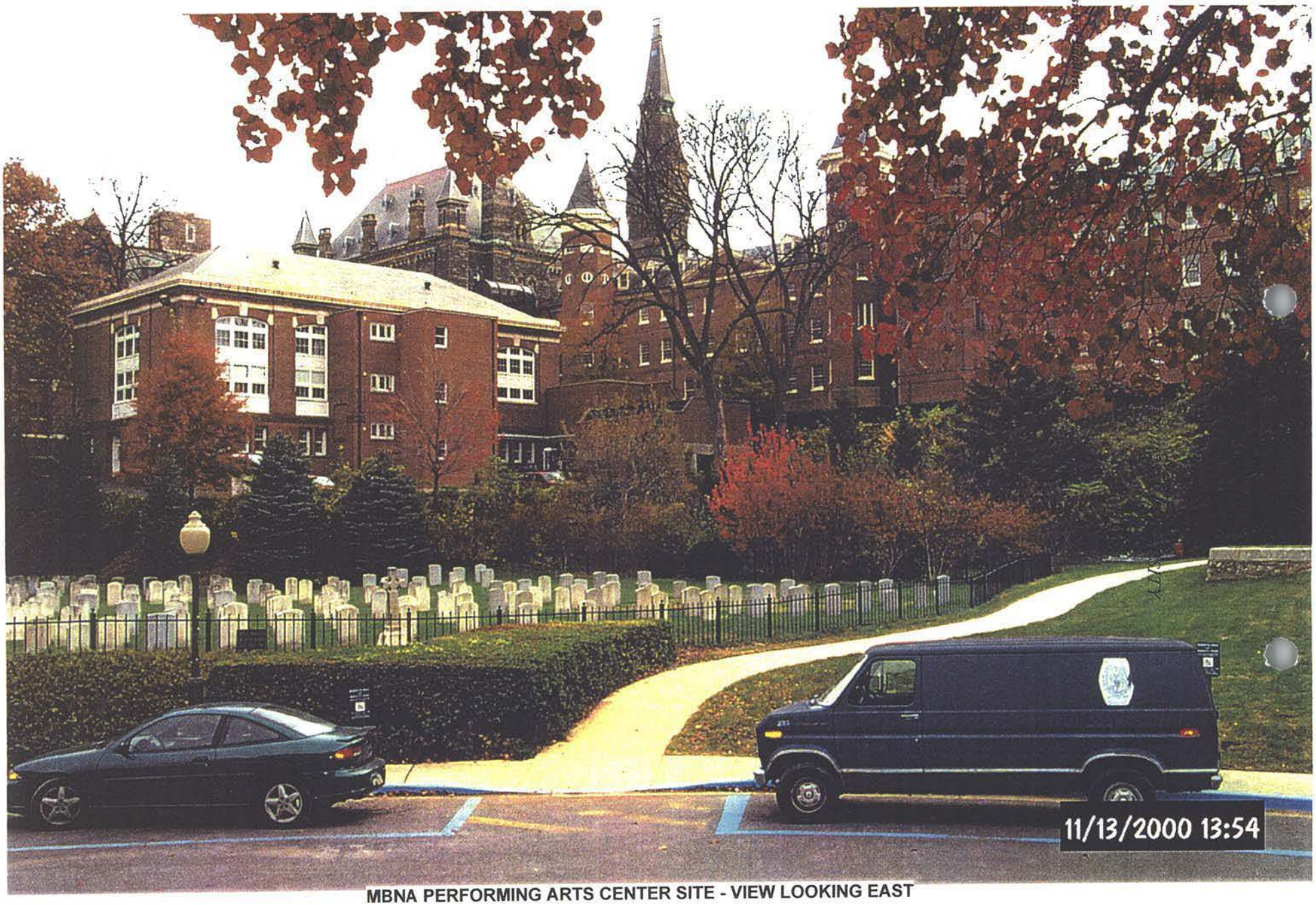
ACADEMIC/ADMINISTRATION

RESIDENTIAL/CAMPUS LIFE/ATHLETIC

MEDICAL/HEALTH CARE

COMMERCIAL

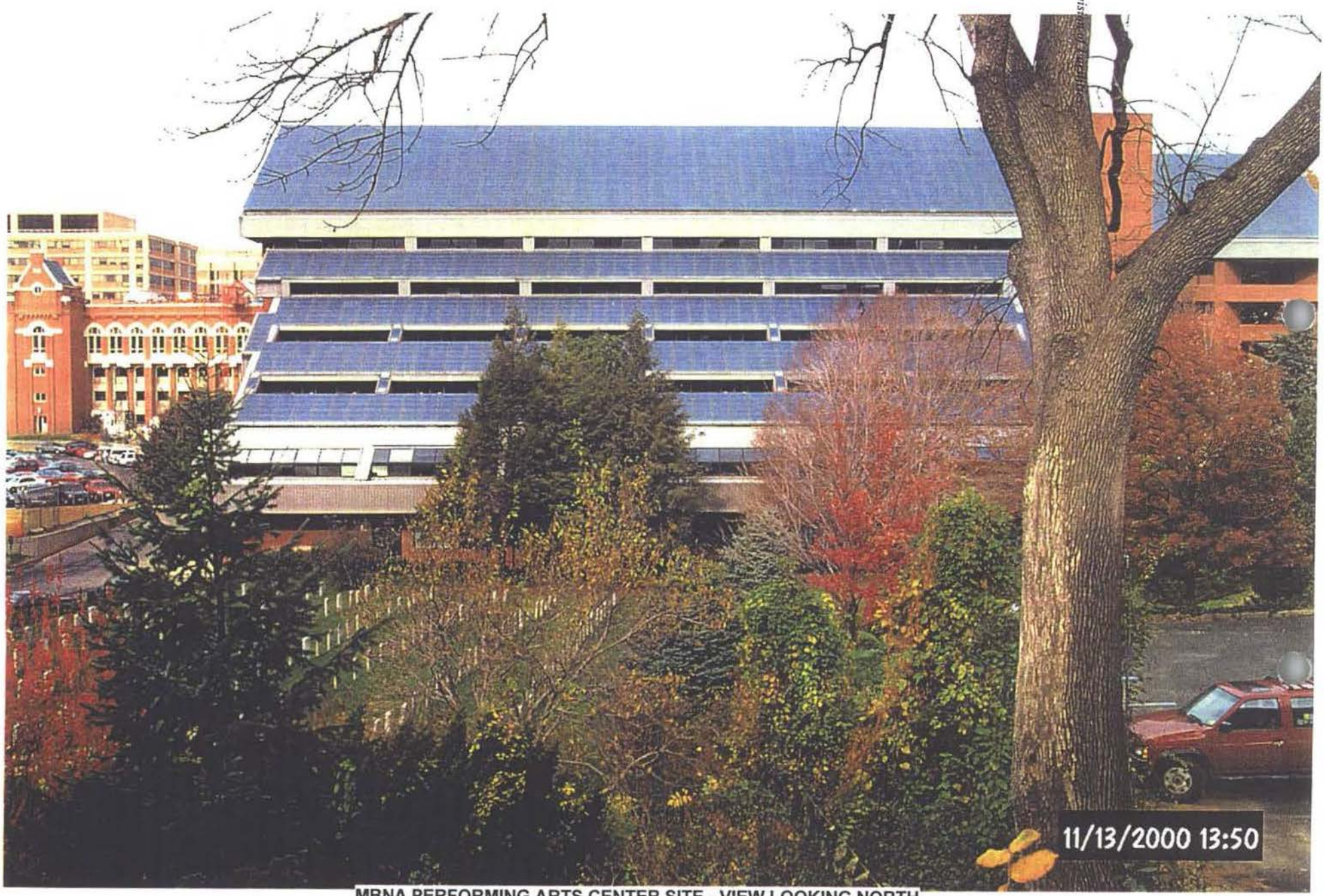
Exhibit B: Photographs of the Site



MBNA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER SITE - VIEW LOOKING EAST



MBNA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER SITE - VIEW LOOKING NORTHWEST



MBNA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER SITE - VIEW LOOKING NORTH

Exhibit C: Concept Design Approval, Commission of Fine Arts

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS 17 MAY 1910

NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM
441 F STREET, N.W., SUITE 312
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001-2728

202-504-2200
202-504-2195 FAX

5 August 2002

Dear Mr. Brangman:

The Commission reviewed and approved the revised concept designs for the proposed MBNA Performing Arts Center at Georgetown University during its meeting on 18 July. We are delighted that a sponsor came forward to fund the additional facilities needed to bring the proposed Performing Arts Center up to the standards expected of Georgetown University.

Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates has provided three very different schemes, all of which have received our approval. We encourage the architect to continue to study the angled wall corridor, particularly in the detailing of its windows, to relate it to the other elements of the structure, while maintaining its distinct character expressive of a more public function.

We look forward to the review of the development of the concept design and material selection when they are ready.

Sincerely,

Harry G. Robinson III, FAIA
Chairman

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Exhibit D: Project Plans