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February 18, 2004

Ms. Carol Mitten
Chairperson
District of Columbia Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Zoning Commission Case No. 03-29 (Square 103)

Dear Chairperson Mitten and Members of the Commission:

I am a resident of Foggy Bottom and an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for the area. I was present during the presentations The George Washington University made to ANC 2A, and I spoke in support of this project to the Commission of Fine Arts. I would like to address the position taken by our ANC chair. Our chair serves our community and has my admiration and respect based on our close work together. I must respectfully, however, offer this differing view.

I live in an apartment building directly across the street from the proposed residence hall. Therefore, I am in an excellent position to evaluate both the current and potential impacts of the proposed university use. GW is working effectively, with this building, to house students on campus. I am writing to express my full and unmitigated support for GW's application to build the new residence hall at 2025 F Street, N.W.

The proposed location is appropriate for a residence hall and was approved in the Campus Plan. It is adjacent to an existing residence hall and will complement the residential high-rise apartment uses in the area. Some Foggy Bottom residents expressed concern about student noise. I do not believe there is a serious noise problem. Nonetheless, the construction of a new residence hall will alleviate some of the noise because students will be able to congregate inside the building rather than outside. Some residents also expressed concern that the rooms are not attractive enough, which will encourage students to seek housing off-campus. After viewing the plans for the building, I feel the rooms are appropriate for freshmen housing and are similar to other urban dormitory rooms. I also think the proposed retail space in the building will be a welcome benefit for the residents of my building and the surrounding area. I do not believe the presence of publicly-accessible retail operations in the building would cause "intolerable" noise to my building. Rather, the retail will be a convenience to me and my neighbors.

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EXHIBIT NO.36

GW should be granted the requested flexibility in developing this residence hall. The application will allow GW to provide an additional 100 beds on campus than it would be able to provide without the PUD. Some community residents have argued that GW should be required to provide those beds elsewhere on campus. However, the approval of this application will allow GW to provide those beds much sooner. GW has still committed to construct additional beds elsewhere on campus. I also disagree that the proposed flexibility will result in objectionable impacts. The alley located behind the proposed site will provide light and air to the buildings situated along it. I also do not agree that the relief from the court requirements will cause tenement-like courts. I have viewed the plans for the building, and it appears that the rooms will be provided adequate light and air.

From an aesthetic perspective, I would much rather look at the well-designed residential building and related streetscape improvements than the existing parking lot. The building will fill in the existing gap in the streetscape. It is hard to imagine a rational basis for opposing the conversion of a parking lot to on-campus housing.

I believe the additional student housing, the new retail use, and the other proposed amenities will provide a great benefit to the residents of my building and the immediate neighborhood. I urge you to approve the application of The George Washington University expeditiously.

Sincerely,

David Lehrman

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