

**GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY BOATHOUSE
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

SCOPING REPORT

Responsible Agency:
National Park Service
National Capital Region
Washington, D.C.

March 2005

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I. INTRODUCTION

a. Project Background

b. Scoping Process

INTRODUCTION

This scoping report summarizes the public scoping process for the Environmental Assessment (EA) being prepared for the proposed construction of the Georgetown University boathouse. Georgetown University is proposing to construct a boathouse along the Potomac River in the Georgetown area of Washington D.C. The purpose of the Environmental Assessment is to characterize the potential direct, indirect and cumulative environmental impacts of the proposed boathouse and alternatives and identify mitigation measures to avoid, offset, or minimize the impacts that would be generated.

The Environmental Assessment is being prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA [40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500 – 1508], and the environmental policies and procedures of the NPS.

Project Background

Georgetown University proposes to construct a boathouse facility for its collegiate rowing team along the bank of the Potomac River. The proposed boathouse would provide new and modernized training facilities for University men and women participating in the University's crew program in a single facility. The location of the proposed boathouse is in the area of the Georgetown Waterfront Park designated for non-motorized boating facilities.

Topics raised to be addressed in the EA include:

- Land Use Patterns & Socioeconomic Conditions
- Planning Control and Policies
- Visual Resources
- Transportation Systems
- Water Resources
- Geology, Soils and Topography
- Vegetation and Wildlife
- Solid Waste & Hazardous Materials
- Noise Levels
- Lightscape
- Utilities

Scoping Process

It is a policy requirement of the National Park Service to engage in a public scoping process as part of the preparation of an EA. The purpose of the scoping process is to allow citizens and public agencies to identify issues that should be addressed in the EA, including but not limited to, alternatives, potential impacts, and recommended

mitigation measures. It provides the public an opportunity to communicate issues and concerns to help develop alternatives before considerable resources have been expended.

A letter was sent in December 2004 to government and local non-governmental organizations, as well as individual residents, to notify them about the preparation of an EA for the Georgetown Boathouse project, and seek comments regarding any environmental issues that should be addressed in the EA. In addition, a scoping meeting was held on January 11, 2005 at the Latham Hotel in Georgetown. Approximately 130 persons attended this meeting and provided feedback in a facilitated workshop format. Also, 153 comment letters/emails were received during the comment period.

This scoping report includes both written summaries of the tables set up for receiving comments at the January 11th, 2005 scoping meeting and comments separately submitted in writing to NPS.

2. PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

a. Meeting Agenda

b. Public Information Package

c. Copies of Sign-in Sheets

**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING:
PROPOSED GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY BOATHOUSE EA**

AGENDA
January 11, 2005

Meeting Introduction

- Purpose of Meeting
- Format of Workshop

Environmental Assessment Process

- Scope
- Schedule
- Preliminary Issues

Group Discussions

Summary/Next Steps

National Park Service
National Capital Region
Washington, D.C.

PUBLIC INFORMATION PACKET

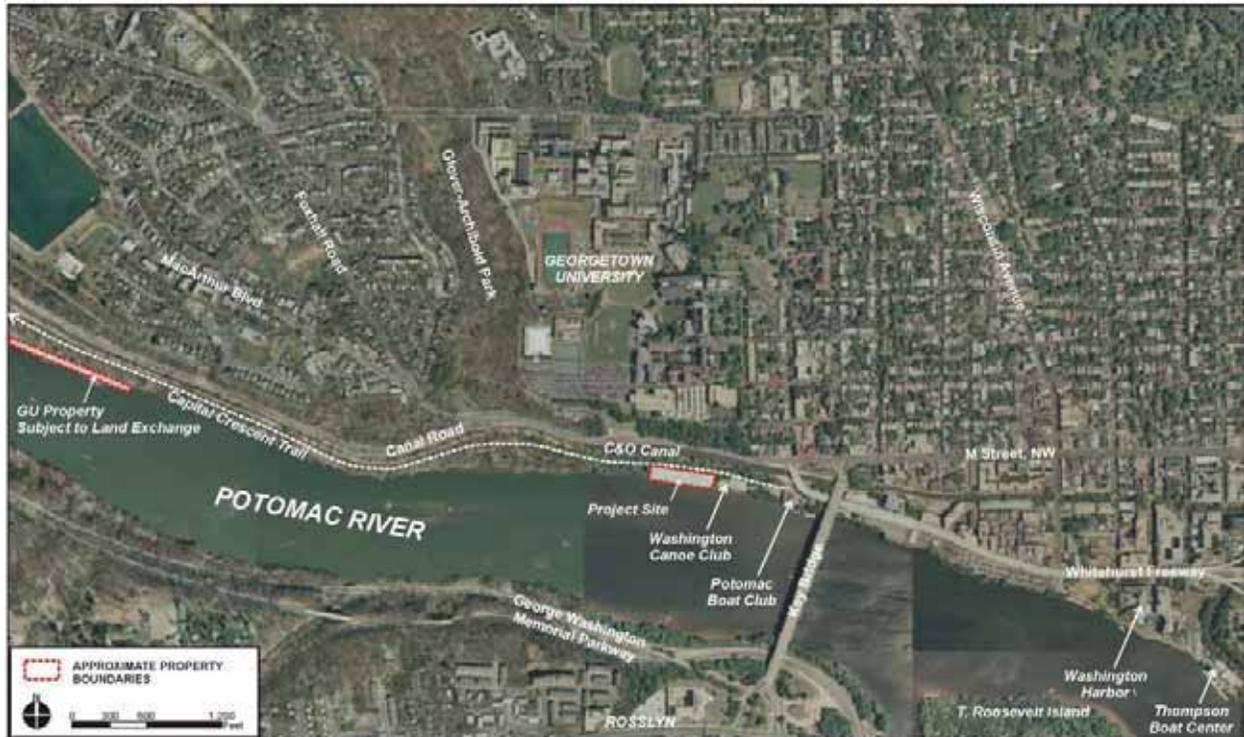
For the
PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Regarding the
**PROPOSED GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY BOATHOUSE
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**



National Park Service
National Capital Region
Washington, D.C.

January 11th, 2005



Location Map

Dear Friend,

For decades, many of you have been engaged in the planning for the Georgetown Waterfront and the C & O Canal. In 1984, the Georgetown Waterfront Park was established as part of the Park System of the Nation's Capital by the National Capital Planning Commission. After an extensive public involvement process, the plan for the Georgetown Waterfront Park and Georgetown section of the C&O Canal National Historical Park was approved in 1986. This plan includes a non-motorized boathouse zone in the proximity of Key Bridge, where boathouses had been located on the Potomac River historically. The proposed Georgetown University Boathouse is one of five boathouses, including the Potomac Boat Club and Washington Canoe Club, which would be clustered around Key Bridge within this boathouse zone.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Park Service will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the impacts associated with the construction of a proposed boathouse by Georgetown University on a one-acre site upstream from the Washington Canoe Club. The EA will also meet the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act to take into account the effect of the proposed boathouse on historic properties and to seek to accommodate historic preservation concerns through consultation with parties who have an interest in those effects.

A public scoping meeting will be held Tuesday, January 11, 2005 from 6:00-9:00 p.m. at the Latham Hotel, 3000 M Street, NW. in Georgetown. The scoping meeting will be conducted in a facilitated workshop format, where participants will express their views in small discussion groups rather than a public hearing format with participants providing testimony. This format

has been demonstrated to be an effective way to ensure a thorough discussion of issues. The purpose of scoping is to offer the public an opportunity to identify the issues and alternatives that should be considered in the EA for the proposed Georgetown University Boathouse. This includes, but is not limited to, such issues as natural resource impacts, floodplain and wetlands, views and vistas, size and design of a collegiate rowing facility, completion of the boathouse zone and its relationship to rowing on the Potomac River, potential effects on historic properties, and potential impacts to the Capital Crescent Trail.

The environmental analysis process involves several steps. During the scoping process, a full range of issues and alternatives will be identified. The next step includes compiling and analyzing scoping comments on those issues and potential alternatives and preparing an EA that evaluates the environmental impacts and historic preservation concerns and identifies potential mitigation measures. The EA will then be made available to the public for comment. Subsequent to the public comment period, the National Park Service will render a decision.

While we welcome your participation in the public scoping meeting, it is not your only opportunity to share your thoughts. We will accept written comments through January 21, 2005. Comments should be forwarded to the Office of Lands, Resources and Planning, National Capital Region, National Park Service, 1100 Ohio Drive, SW, Washington, D.C. 20242. Due to delays in receiving mail as a result of security screening by the U.S. Postal Service, it is recommended that comments be hand-carried to 1100 Ohio Drive no later than 4:00 pm on January 21, 2005; transmitted via fax at (202) 401-0017 or via email to NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/ Joe Lawler

Acting Regional Director, National Capital Region

PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENT FORM

**PROPOSED GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY BOATHOUSE
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Comments:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING:
PROPOSED GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY BOATHOUSE EA**

SIGN IN SHEET
January 11, 2005

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**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING:
PROPOSED GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY BOATHOUSE EA**

SIGN IN SHEET
January 11, 2005

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**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING:
PROPOSED GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY BOATHOUSE EA**

SIGN IN SHEET

January 11, 2005

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National Park Service
National Capital Region
Washington, D.C.

**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING:
PROPOSED GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY BOATHOUSE EA**

SIGN IN SHEET

January 11, 2005

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National Park Service
National Capital Region
Washington, D.C.

**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING:
PROPOSED GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY BOATHOUSE EA**

SIGN IN SHEET

January 11, 2005

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National Park Service
National Capital Region
Washington, D.C.

3. COMMENTS RECEIVED

- a. Summary of All Public
Comments**
- b. Comments Received at each
Table during Scoping
Meeting**
- c. Comment Forms from Public
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Regular Mail, Email or Hand
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**PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING:
PROPOSED GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY BOATHOUSE EA**

**Public Comments
1/11/05**

Comments from Table 1

- Land exchange should be included in EA
- EA should include other locations for facility
- Set aside part of Georgetown Waterfront Park should be used for boathouses
 - EIS should be done for Georgetown Waterfront Park
- Look at AWI for boathouse locations
- Look at Dempsey property
- Want to see land remain in public ownership
- Concern over size for this location
 - Gateway for Capital Crescent Trail
 - Access and parking
 - Traffic pattern
- Area will become choke point for many activities
 - Bikers
 - Joggers
 - Pedestrians
 - Rollerbladers
- Traffic analysis should be included in EA
- Aesthetic degradation will occur because of size of facility
 - Affects users mentioned above and Tow Path users, Canal users, park users in general- look at Canal Road
- Private use of public lands
 - Concern over singular use
 - Sets the precedent for other users
 - Facility should be for public, and private use should be outside of the park
- Facility size is out of proportion for need
- Will this affect the engineering integrity of Canal?
 - Hydrology during floods and ice breakup
 - No way to put all uses between facility and Canal without affecting the Canal berm
- Concern over size of dock and will they be moved during winter?
 - Will these affect racing lanes?
- What effect will this have on the Capital Crescent Trail?
- Concern over wildlife and the effect on veg. comm.
- Location is the most ill conceived location for this purpose (unanimous in group)
- EA should include a history of land swap and the choice of the site
- What is the possible degradation of the historic structures and landscape?
- EA should include land appraisal for both NPS & GU properties
- Consider potential water quality issues

- New boathouses should be constructed in Georgetown Waterfront Park below Key Bridge
- Project of this magnitude should require an EIS and be included with the Georgetown Waterfront Park
 - The EIS should include all colleges, high schools and individual rowers
- Will the Dulles Interceptor Sewer be affected?
- There is a feeling of being in a tunnel/canyon for 300' along the Capital Crescent Trail
- Concern that Georgetown Waterfront Park was planned with a small group, not the public

Comments from Table 2

- Why this spot?
 - Location
 - Context of plans
 - Georgetown University
 - Singles out of Thompson's
 - Why is the facility not in the boathouse zone?
 - Does Dempsey site really fit size?
- Facility Size
 - What is really needed?
 - Potomac Boat Club is not a good measure for GU program. University program needs appropriate size for collegiate level rowing
 - Can it extend over the river?
 - Views from Capital Crescent Trail
 - Smaller site could allow separate uses
- An EIS should be done
- Rowing is an appropriate use in Georgetown and on the Potomac
- Public Park Use
 - Facilities
 - Will the rowing grow? Stay same?
 - Has NPS moved too fast without public input on all mix & match of uses
- What are implications of land swap? Of NPS giving up land?
 - Is it really buildable?
 - Is it really an equal swap?
 - If not, could \$ be added?
 - Why are the EA's for the land swap and for the boathouse separate?
 - Does swap move forward without boathouse?
- Want to make sure full range of boating options can continue but one advantage of current facility division which means those "facing forward" are separated from those "facing backward" – race courses set in that way- to facilitate
- Can the Dulles Interceptor sewer line be moved?
 - Relocated?
 - Technically?
 - Financially?
- Explore options for a joint boathouse between Georgetown University & George Washington University
- Are VA side sites feasible?
 - Still NPS land but maybe other more feasibility issues
- Separation of uses/location
- Can WCC be moved (whole building) upstream?
- Public vs. Private use
 - Do we have the correct balance?
 - Mix of trailers & traffic on public spaces
 - Should they be shared or separated?
- Historic Impacts

- Preservation of views (height, location)
- What does the use, traffic, development on the land do to historic facility?
- Flooding
 - What impact does “flow-through” design have on flooding impacts to historic structures (WCC & C&O Canal)?
 - Does design create a speed up effect on water?
 - Where is the hydrology study?
 - Where does stormwater from development go?
- Access issues for existing property site?
 - Traffic impact on CCT
 - Are there any written restrictions on Georgetown’s future use of the land?
 - Spec. traffic
- Pandora’s box being opened
 - Use of that site, parties
 - Development on waterfront

Group Identified Priorities:

- Location
- Size of facility
- Implications of land swap
- Look at full range of use
- Sewer relocation
- Public vs. private use
- Historic impacts (C&O Canal & Washington Canoe Club)
- Hydrology study
- Access issues for property site

Notes from Group 2 Facilitator:

- High school crews expressed objection to the NPS proposal to move rowers from Thompson’s to a new small boat facility. Instead, it was recommended that the new facility at Key Bridge be dedicated to the extra space needed for high school crews, thus avoiding the need to rebuild Thompson’s.
- Are boathouses being squeezed out? Want to make sure environmental objections do not continue to squeeze out a very environmentally friendly use.

Comments from Table 3

- There is a need for more boathouses
- Explore alternative sites
- Exchange of public lands for GU boathouse
 - Value inequity between sites
- Circumstances allowing public land to be used for private use
- GU Boathouse schedule- effect on Georgetown Waterfront Park
- Could boathouse zone be expanded/changed?
- Size of boathouse/dock
- Does GU boathouse exceed boathouse zone?
- River pollution- What are the environmental effects of construction?
- River use issues
 - Traffic pattern
 - Usage
- Historic/cultural considerations
- High water/flood considerations
- Approval process, questions of precedence zoning- park commission?
- Was zoning based on faulty EA?
- Preserving natural interest in NPS property
- Size, footprint, height, blocking views
- Do rowing tanks have to be on site?
 - Concern over the use of chlorine in floodplain
 - Eliminating tanks would reduce footprint of building
- Impact on historic C&O Canal, CCT
- Impact on Washington Canoe Club (national register)
- Access to facility – no public access now
- Costs and benefits of “no action” alternative
- Could an EIS be required?
 - Why was an EIS required in Arlington?
- Could a single boathouse be used by GU and other users?
- Consider impact of widening Canal Road
- Will deconstruction of Whitehurst Freeway affect this project?
- Consider light pollution- effect on wildlife
- Dulles Interceptor interface
- Floor elevation of boathouse – relationship with dock extending into river
- Consider historic scale of Georgetown and waterfront
- Need for services for visitors on CCT
- Mix and balances of uses in the park
- Use of public money for private boathouses
- Is relocation of CCT needed?
- Will wetlands be impacted?
- Uses of boathouse- public use for events (evening)
- Maintenance of grounds
- Intensity of use and impacts
- Access and parking for boat trailers

- Hours of operation- consider impacts to neighborhood
- Will public have access to the waterfront?
- Public comment period after report is released?
- EA/EIS document should be posted on NPS web site

Group Identified Priorities:

- Size and location in the waterfront context
- Land exchange
- Can rowing shell use move further downstream?
- Alternatives for additional sites
- Impact to Canal from construction

Comments from Table 4

- What is the motivation for the site?
- '95 EA 'land swap' valid?
- EIS vs. EA
 - If controversy over project, then EIS
- GWU consideration
- EIS non –motorized boathouses zone
 - EDAW contract for this or start over with different scope?
- Outside of study area
- Sunshine process
- Full timeline from 1985
- Explain land appraisal process and values
- Define goals of NPS and benefits to CHOH and in turn public
- Best of waterfront?
- Cumulative impacts of 3 separate non-motorized boating structures
- Thoroughly discuss access
- Concern of social function of boathouse
- Relationship to Arlington boathouse
- Viewshed from trail and other vantage point
- Canyoning of trail
- Whitehurst Freeway reconstruction
- Interceptor Sewer
- Parking
- Construction impacts on/off site of building
- Maintain CC Trail integrity
- Engineering/geotechnical feasibility
- Hydrology (canal, flood, local flow)
- Lone private entity to use public land
- Concern over size and height of boathouse
- Consider impact on WCC race course
- Consider Historic value of WCC
- Issue of plan change by NPS
 - From 4,000 sf to 19,000 sf footprint
- Consider alternative building locations and design
- Evaluate decision of significance of impact in accordance with CEQ 1508.27
- NHPA 106 issues

Group Identified Priorities:

- Significance of proposal to entire waterfront (level of analysis: EA vs. EIS)
- Alternative design, location, potential CBA
- Motivation for site
- Viewshed
- Access concerns

Comments from Table 5

- Concern over conversion of parkland to private property
 - No public access to boathouse
 - Setting precedent
- Universal boathouse alternative
 - Different location
 - Funding is an issue
 - Co-finance with universities
- EIS of entire boathouse zone should be done
- Impacts to CCT?
 - Safety
 - Scale of building
- Boathouse locations
 - Current location ok
 - Consider other locations from larger area
- Consider demands of rowing community
- Project not for the public good
- Access for recreational use
 - Rowing restrictions/requirements
 - Public benefit/aesthetics
- Concern over convergence of multiple uses in one location
 - Congestion
 - Safety
- What are the physical impacts?
 - Supporting structure/unstable land
 - What are the impacts on C&O Canal?
 - What are the impacts from the docks extending into water?
 - Silt build up
 - Waterflow
 - What are the impacts on Canal embankment & CCT?
 - Waterflow
 - Construction process
- Is it appropriate for NPS to co-sponsor the project with GU?
 - John Parsons/ Sally Blumenthal should recuse themselves from NEPA process
- Current real estate assessment of both land tracts
- What are the minimum requirements for Georgetown's program?
 - Need vs. want
 - Anticipated usage
- Parking
- Construction impacts/access
 - Traffic impact in Georgetown
 - Consider river barges vs. vehicles on CCT
 - Impacts to wildlife
- Good location?

- Once parkland is developed, it is gone
- Size of boathouse
- Why is it necessary to have such a large exercise room?
- Cumulative impact of 3 boathouses in the boathouse zone
 - Trailers
 - Boats on river
- Loss of opportunity to include public
- Visual impact
 - Towpath/CCT
 - VA side
 - Full scenic viewshed analysis
- Traffic concerns if/when Whitehurst Freeway removed
- Impact on rowing community if delayed

Comments from Table 6

- NPS standards for maintenance of historic structures
 - C&O Canal
 - Standards for the treatment of historic impacts
- Concern over the exchange of land, proprietary nature of this exchange
- Is upriver site buildable?
- Facility size
 - Is smaller size being considered?
 - Is facility with and without rowing tank being considered?
- Program:
 - Need to explain program elements and rationale for need, size
- Height
 - Why?
 - Need?
 - What are the reasons for designed height?
- Footprint
 - Effect on Capital Crescent Trail
 - Can this be reduced to minimize effects on Trail?
- Consider how fire and emergency access will be handled to minimize effect on Trail
- Analysis of impacts on paddlers
 - Dock
 - Increased use of river
 - Potential conflict during afternoon particularly from April through November
 - During canoe and kayak races
- How will construction over a sewer line occur?
 - Potential impact to sewer line?
 - Potential impact to structure?
- Hydrologic impacts during flooding
- No boathouse east of 34th Street. This will create impact to Georgetown residents
- Consider history of entire waterfront & “system” of river use
- Is there a better location? Can all crew uses be combined into a new facility?
- Is boathouse consistent with NPS mission of conservation, environmental resource protection and historic resource protection?
- Location
 - Can boathouses go to Anacostia?
 - Can boathouses go to Virginia side?
- Boat use
 - Impact on races
 - # of boats on river at any one time and potential conflicts
 - Do “traffic study” type of analysis for river use
- Impact on bikers during construction
- Are mediation techniques included in EA process to resolve user conflicts?
- Include Thompson Boathouse and use of land for boats in EA

Group Identified Priorities:

- Alternative locations (Anacostia, VA, etc.)
- Footprint and size
- Historic impacts (C&O Canal, WCC)
- Trail issues (effects on bikers during construction and after boathouse is built)
- Effect on canoe and kayak use of river (daily, race)
- Sewer line
- NPS mission
- Relationship with entire park “system”

Comments from Table 7

- Verification of information from Georgetown University
- Exclusive private use of public parkland
- EA to include background on alternative sites (including Anacostia River sites and the No Action Alternative)
- Provide rationale on why the proposed site is better
- Ensure appropriate distribution/notification
- Identify legal requirements for the action
- Continuity of recreational resources
- Relationship of the site to the Key Bridge
- Construction impact and flooding impacts on the C&O Canal
- Evaluate flooding issues on the structures
 - Effect of structure extending out into the river
 - Silting/flooding effects
- Evaluate the effect of the Dulles Interceptor on the size of the boathouse (i.e. square footage)
- Consider preparing a comprehensive EA on all proposed boathouses in the project area.
- Ensure that documentation is tiered, not segmented.
- Evaluate the effect on C&O Canal visitor experience.
- Consider the visual effects from the land side and from the river side.
- Explain the basis for the building height/size.
- Address limitations on boathouse parties (only those that are ‘regularly scheduled’?)
- Address construction access relative to C&O Canal berm and maintenance/operational access
- Why are rowing tanks proposed/required?
 - Address the effect on building size
- Compare GU program requirements vs. boathouse size
 - Height of ceilings (cathedral) is driving height
 - Height of boat stacking area is too high
- Consider other recreational uses on site relative to
 - C&O Canal
 - Georgetown Waterfront Park
 - Potomac River
- Is a boathouse appropriate in a **historic** park (of this size)?
- Identify the historic uses of this site
- Address the condition of soil and foundations
- Conduct a geotech analysis of the boathouse to determine its effect on the site and the C&O Canal berm
- Address potential uses and relative value of upstream site
- Evaluate winter issues (ice flows) relative to Canal and boathouse
- Boathouse design- Did it consider effects on C&O Canal National Historical Park?
- Prepare view shed analysis of both urban & vegetated areas, Canal, river, etc.

- Explain why an EIS is not required considering historic issues related to C&O NHP
- Identify effects on the Crescent Trail
- Will the Whitehurst Freeway go away in the future?
- Will the Canal bank be affected?
 - Drainage of the Canal

Comments from Table 8

- Makes sure **names** are on the mailing list
- What justification is there for building a private building in a public park?
- Existing area is wooded with trail, vs. other sites
- Impact of site to trail system
- Consider site south of Key Bridge
- Access to the boathouse
- Boathouse size in line for college boathouse
- Consider public boathouse that meets many needs or several boathouses
- Impact during flood to Crescent Trail, river bank, canal banks from such a large facility
- Number of people that justify this amount of space
 - Users
 - University
 - Public/private school
 - Citizens
 - Identify total need in the area for boathouse space
- Timeline for addressing needs
- Need to address land swap
 - Unfair
 - Not equal swap
 - Georgetown giving up site that they could not build a boathouse on
 - Site giving up is of lesser value
- Alternative site, south of Key Bridge, would take away greenspace of residents south of K Street (2000 people)
- Impact of construction on GU's current site/land
- Preservation of Georgetown 10 acre park
- Impact of parking for social events- excessive size of boathouse as illustrated
- Boathouse as shown has cathedral ceiling in exercise room
- Impact of views from canal
- Coordinate study of impacts of this boathouse with other 2 boathouse and expansion of Thompson's boathouse
- Land swap violates role of NPS (public interest)
- Impact to existing sewer pipe below site
- Visibility from river
- Building cuts into part of Canal park that was not intended for development
- Interests of canal park different from waterfront park
- C&O Advisory Commission policy not to have development between Canal and River
- Document history
- Learn about history of site
 - Was there a boathouse there?
 - Land was part of river until 1960
- Impact on use of river
- Impact on current users of that land

- Fishermen
- Include, or update, the old Coast Guard study of the river usage and safety
- Include consideration of Arlington boathouse & Anacostia potential boathouses
- Update of 1985 boathouse plan
- Will EA address currently proposed and originally proposed boathouse as alternatives?
- Impacts on viewshed (from river and trails) C&O Canal
- Why is this site preferable to Dempsey site (who owns this site?)
- How would removing Whitehurst Freeway impact this? (this is being discussed)
- Make sure GU considers all potential sites and pick the best one
- How will it affect river traffic, usage, safety
- Interface between 12' access road and CCT
 - safety of bikers, concern that drivers with boats will block CCT
 - turning issues
 - Can this fit in between Canal wall and Canoe Club?
- Impact of 75' dock
 - River traffic
 - hydrology
- Impact when we have flooding
- Original agreement was for 4,000 square foot boathouse, now it has become a 19,000 square foot boathouse- how did this happen without C&O Advisory Commission knowing about it?
- Is site within zone of 1987 plan?
- Boathouse should be only for boating not social activities and size should be determined by boating requirements only (sf, height)
- Why do we need rowing tank in this location? Are there other locations that would work better?
- How many days per year is it necessary to use rowing tank?
- # users for CCT and river and how it has increased since original agreement
- Wildlife impact
- Impact on sewer below site
- Impact of chlorinated rowing tanks on river when it floods
- Advantage of GU having site further downstream where bridge across the canal is located
- Should this be an EIS vs. EA?
- Concern about moving heavy construction equipment to the site on trails, canal, riverbank and canoe club

Group Identified Priorities:

- Impacts on users of nearby facilities
- Looking at alternative sites, why was this chosen? (Dempsey site)
- Impact on greenspace
- Size of boating facility compared to requirements
- Availability of existing documents on web site?

Comments from Table 9

- Facility is private use that adversely affects other users of the area
 - Bikers
 - Hikers
 - Canoers/kayakers/other boaters
 - Bird watchers
 - Anglers
- Is it fair to let a private entity construct at this location?
 - Where is the boathouse zone?
 - Why is there a boathouse zone?
 - Where will future boathouses be located?
 - How will current high school teams gain river access?
- Will the EA evaluate the cumulative impact of future boathouses?
 - Citizens concerns/use
 - Scholastic concerns/use
 - Need to ensure that as many interest groups as possible are involved in this project
- Size
 - Will future structures “keep up with the Jones”?
 - Due to limited waterfront space, there will be less space available for other facilities. This will be a detriment to other users.
 - Need to see engineering studies to ensure no damage to canal
 - Size can’t be bigger than original proposal
 - Will be visible from: Rosslyn, Key Bridge, Tow Path, Canal Road, CCT
 - Public will be surprised at physical size- “enormity”
 - Height
 - Does it need a 14’ high exercise room?
- Can the EA address mitigations to building’s size that would still accommodate the GU athletic program?
- Access
 - CCT will be the size of a roadway – no longer a “trail”
 - Will expansion of the CCT for a “road” impact the Towpath slope?
- Physical impacts from construction, to historic properties
 - C&O Canal
 - Canoe Club
- Need to evaluate development of entire boathouse zone, not one boathouse at a time
- Scope of EA should include
 - River safety
 - Traffic patterns (boaters, vehicles, pedestrians)
- Can GU transfer this property (tract 114) in the future? If so, what could be impacts?
- Feel this project should be an EIS. This project seems to counter NPS mission of preservation

- Loss of natural eddy that currently protects Washington Canoe Club during floods
- Need to list benefits of land exchange to ecosystem in EA
- EA needs to list the history & evolution of both parcels
- The 2 properties
 - Are they equal (value)?
 - Upriver parcel is not buildable due to topography and access
 - Land swap is “fraudulent”
 - The Land Exchange is not to benefit the public
- Vegetation management
 - Land
 - Water
- There is a benefit of the land exchange

Group Identified Priorities:

- Height/Size/Location (engineering study)
- Consider reducing size in EA
- River Safety/ River Traffic
- Vegetation/Weed management
- Public support/ opposition
- Understanding of “boathouse zone”
- Cumulative impact
 - Few large facilities vs. many small
 - Philadelphia’s boathouse row
- Access for high school rowers to river (benefit to HS)

Final comment- meeting format was very good

Comments from Table 10

- Issue with conversion of open space to build **any** structure west of Key Bridge
 - Whitehurst Freeway- violation to open/natural character of river – potential removal in the future should be acknowledged.
 - Open space for pedestrians along river
 - Impact on Crescent Trail (rail to trail)
 - Access to boathouse on Trail?
 - Size- impact on C&O Canal?
- Height
- Hydrologic impact during flooding, on canal trail, other boathouses and nearby wetlands, Pawpaw plants.
- Impact on Metro if alternate site is chosen
- Hydrologic impact of fixed dock (silting, flooding and non-flooding)
- Impact of ice due to docks
- Impact of dock on river navigation
- Access and parking
- Parking of Canoe Club- **on public land**
- Impact on Canoe Club, Jack's Canoe and other current programs
- Impact on high school rowers, availability of space in the area
- Impact of new users on the river (boathouse would bring new users to the river- positive impact?)
- Impact on public access to the river west of Key Bridge?
- Impact on Dulles Interceptor sewer
 - How would it be maintained?
- Structural impact of building on landfill?
- Impact of barbed wire fence (existing and potential) on wildlife
- Precedence of land exchange
- Maintenance of proposed facility and visual impact
- Visual impact in comparison to Canoe Club from Trail and Canal
- Access to racing and training lanes of Canoe Club (document this later)
- Are there any sites east of Key Bridge for this boathouse?
- Difference in EA vs. EIS re: public input and depth of analysis
- Previous studies
- Green roofs on all of the boathouses along the river
 - Stormwater management
 - Mitigation of visual impact
- Precedence/setting a standard for rowing boathouses for a collegiate program
- Traffic impacts of bringing boats down during regattas and generally (corner of K and Wisconsin)
- Prior use of land and environmental impacts of those uses (past century, docks, historical ports)
- Impact on current users/usage of trail
- Economic impact on Georgetown's economy
- Comparison to existing plans related to NPS land
- Relationship to historic port usage in Georgetown (docks)

- Construction traffic on trail
- Displacement of water (flooding) from additional GU boats
- Wakes from coaching boats on canoes
 - Would GU use wakeless boats?
- Impact on Eagles on TR Island
- Impact of docks on fish
- Alternative uses of this site
 - Public bathrooms and amenities
 - Cabanas
- Duration of construction?
- Legality of original donation of CSX parcel to GU
- Land swap not of equal value (economic, aesthetic, etc)

**Comment Forms from Georgetown University Boathouse Scoping Meeting
January 11, 2004**
Collected and Compiled By EDAW, Inc.

Jim Ross
5425 Mohican Road
Bethesda, MD 20816
301-229-5789
frailey.ross@excite.com

Comment:

- I think you need to perform a hydrology study to consider the impact of a flood to the Historic C&O Canal and the Washington Canoe Club if the GU building is there.
-

Phyllis LaBorwit
12809 Babcock Lane
Bowie, MD 20715
(301) 262-2578
bowievoice@aol.com

Comments:

- Concern about C&O Canal impact- historic
 - Private use of public land. Equitable land swap?
 - Precedent being set?
 - Flooding problems
 - Traffic impact-
 - How many students does GU feel that is has to accommodate?
 - Discussions at table [were] informative, insightful.
-

Bobbie Thorburg
2475 Virginia Ave NW-527
Washington, DC 20037-2639
(202) 338-4558

Comments:

- NPS is giving up valuable land for land of lesser value.
- Issue of private use of public land
- NPS mandate is to protect the public interest
- Alternative sites should be considered (ex. Dempsey)
- Boat house usage should be limited to boats- no exercise or party space.

Susan Johnston
4621 N. 37th Street
Arlington, VA 22207
(703) 532-0393
shjohnston@earthlink.net

Comments:

- This meeting plan seemed well thought through. Dividing attendees into tables cut down on the endless haranguing of one group against the other which made previous meetings so unpleasant. The facilitator at our table (Amit Prothi) took care to be sure that quiet members of the group had the chance to be heard. He took facetious comments seriously, so that nothing was dismissed as frivolous or unimportant. This has been the most civilized of all our meetings I've attended in the past two years.
- In my mind, the question of the land swap- worthless land swapped for parkland in a well- used public park- is still paramount.

Blaise Rhodes
2419 Lillian Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20902
(301) 951-3636
blaiserhodes@hotmail.com

Comments:

- The Washington Canoe Club currently benefits from a natural eddy during floods. If the trees upstream from the Canoe Club are removed and replaced with a slow through building, that eddy may be lost, resulting in damage and possible destruction of the Canoe Club. It is over 100 years old.
- River traffic will be an issue. Rowing shells travel backwards at high speed. Canoes and kayaks go forwards at a slower rate of speed. Placing a rowing facility north of the Canoe Club will create a continuous hazard.

John Kimbrough
10602 Crossing Creek Road
Potomac, MD 20854
(301)983-5643
cakimbr@attglobal.net

Comments (underlined by author):

- Problems with Georgetown University Boathouse (GUB)- all of which requires an Environmental Impact Statement and disqualifies the Georgetown Boathouse as proposed:

- Plan specifies a 4,000 square foot public boathouse- Georgetown University specifies a 33,000 square foot private boathouse
- GU claims that their boathouse will only be for purposes of a college rowing team, however their communications with their alumni state that it will be for parties, weddings, etc.
- What is the status of the site that GU traded to the C&O National Historical Park (C&O Park) in terms of current economic appraisals, environmental quality (e.g. is this site a “Love Canal”?)
- The GU Boathouse will obstruct the view from the towpath which is not in accordance with National Park Service rules and regulations. This should not be permitted.
- The impact of the GU Boathouse on the Potomac Interceptor Sewer, the soon to be torn down Whitehurst Freeway, the Capital Crescent Trail, the C&O Park’s Towpath
- There should be a comprehensive timeline produced which will specify in great detail exactly how the GU boathouse proposal evolved from nothing into a 33,000 square foot building for the exclusive use of GU (including their alumni and other non-rowing team uses) and for which the public is excluded
- Alternative sites for the GU boathouse should be considered (why not return to GU the site that they traded to the C&O Park and let them build their exclusive, private boathouse there?)
- “sunshine process” - As a U.S. citizen (and as a taxpayer) I have been excluded from the “back room” process wherein the National Park Service discussed and decided 100% with GU only to trade the questionable site for a site in an existing national park. This is an illegal process.

Terry Lee Hume
215 Morgan Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 393-3717

Comments:

1. No land swap of our public land!
2. No boathouse or any buildings in our national historic park north of Key Bridge.
3. Safety of novice, recreational, U.S. Olympic Canoe & Kayak (flatwater) and small boats that were protected by safety guidelines on the D.C. side for these craft vs. the guidelines for rowing along the VA side
4. If a boathouse is built, I propose a “green roof” with a variety of plants be mandatory.

Louis J. LaBorwit, PhD
12809 Babcock Lane
Bowie, MD 20715
(301) 262-2578
bowievoice@aol.com

Comments:

1. Concern about height of proposed boat house and how it affects the historic view from C&O Canal.
2. Should current proposed site be considered totally viable – thus should another location be considered?
3. Concern about impact of current proposal as it affects irretrievably the C&O National Park which is used by thousands annually.

John P. Helm
5406 Cromwell Drive
Bethesda, MD 20836
(301) 229-9516

Comments:

1. Need a hydrologic study to demonstrate whether this large structure on the river bank will divert water in flood stage such that river bank, Crescent Trail, C&O Canal bank and Trail, and Washington Canoe Club will be eroded/threatened.
2. Does the proposed structure meet the public needs of removing the GU boats currently at Thompson's and storing them elsewhere?
3. Demonstrate that access road to proposed site will not interfere with CCT, Canal bank and historic Washington Canoe Club.
4. Is site consistent with C&O Park mandate and mission?
5. Object to damage to viewshed created by boathouse both from land and river.
6. Object to forfeiting greenspace for building.
7. Object to land swap not a good deal for the taxpayer
8. Object to interference with river use.

John Lederer
1923 N. Quincy Street
Arlington, VA 22207
(703) 501-4612
jledererarch@aol.com

Comments:

- Location
- Vehicle access
- Relocation of WCC building upriver and Georgetown site moved downriver

- Race lanes/river safety
 - Hydraulics
 - Vehicle access
-

Bryan Seipp/ Potomac Conservancy
8601 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 608-1188
info@potomac.org

Comments:

1. Need to permit a EIA of the entire waterfront area to identify alternate sites and the cumulative impact to the Potomac River (one is being developed for Arlington County and vicinity rowing facility)
 2. Setting a precedent for future private development of parkland, particularly in the C&O NHP, could result in additional loss of sensitive, historic and unique lands along the Potomac in the future
 3. Completion of full scenic viewshed analysis. Where are scenic views going to be hindered by proposed building?
-

Ryan Goodrow
906 Turkey Run Road
McLean, VA 22101
(703) 499-2481
goodrowryan@hotmail.com

Comment:

- I am currently a member of the Washington Canoe Club. I think there is a definite need for an EIS before picking a site for a new boathouse.
-

Timothy Downs
3321 P Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007
otoobad@earthlink.net

Comment:

- Any solution must not include an additional boathouse or expansion of the boathouse zone downstream of Key Bridge.

Maggie Thompson
733 15th Street, NW #1030
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 628-2500
Maggie@waba.org

Comments

- In the event the Georgetown Boathouse is built in the proposed location near the Washington Canoe Club, modification to the current plan must be made in order to create a situation that does not harm the character of either the C&O Canal Towpath or the Capital Crescent Trail. A suggested modification is to reduce the footprint of the boathouse in order to create space for an unaltered towpath, an un-shared hiker-biker path on the Capital Crescent Trail and the necessary fire/access lane to be used by EMS/fire/police/access to the proposed boathouse.
- Access to both trails must also be maintained during the construction of any building.

Eric Gilliland
WABA
733 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 628-2500
gill@waba.org

Comments:

- Regardless of the size and location of the GUBH, the integrity of the Capital Crescent Trail must be maintained and plans made to provide trail users an alternate route during construction. We hope that the footprint of the boathouse be reduced to allow for the continuation of an AASHTO-standard trail to K/Water Street along with a separated access road for boathouse access without digging into the C&O Canal.

Comments Received Via Regular Mail, Email or Hand Delivered

A BETTER BOATHOUSE PLAN FOR GEORGETOWN

Sally C. Strain

From: "Sally C. Strain" <seawalk@starpower.net>
To: "Sally C. Strain" <seawalk@starpower.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 11, 2005 3:14 PM
Subject: Fw: Georgetown University Boathouse proposal - "Issues and Alternatives" for consideration in the Environmental Assessment for the proposed boathouse

January 11, 2005

Mr. Joe Lawler
 Regional Director, National Capital Region
 National Park Service
 1100 Ohio Drive, SW
 Washington, DC 20242
 FAX-(202) 401-0017
 Email - NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov

Dear Mr. Lawler:

Please include the following "issues and alternatives" as part of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed private Georgetown University Boathouse in the C&O Canal National Historical Park:

I. ISSUES:

- The use of a section of the C&O Canal National Park for private development and the setting of a precedent for future private development in the Park;
- Significant impacts to the scenic Potomac River views from the Towpath, Virginia, Key Bridge and the River, from the construction of the enormous boathouse (the length of a football field and 50 feet high);
- Potential impacts to nearby historic properties (Washington Canoe Club, Canal embankment);
- Safety at the busy, narrow, fragile recreational and commuter corridor at the gateway entrance to the Park and the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT);
- Direct and indirect impacts to the natural resources, floodplain and wetlands at the site of the proposed boathouse;
- Potential impacts to public health during and after construction of the boathouse (if the corroding 84-inch diameter sewer line which runs through the proposed boathouse site is ever ruptured);
- Significant impacts to Park and nearby historic structures from building a private road to access the (inaccessible) site for construction, maintenance and servicing of the boathouse, as well as for access of the rowing hulls and boat trailers;
- River flows including depth, flows, and riverbed contours; potential for riverbed changes due to deposition and scour of sediment and the need for dredging.
- Size, design, location and use of the proposed collegiate boathouse;
- Cumulative impacts from the construction of three proposed boathouses in the vicinity of Key Bridge (two private university boathouses and one public boathouse);
- Impact on the pedestrian and vehicular traffic in an already constricted space with no parking at the site;
- Value of national parkland at gateway site relative to land owned by GU proposed for land exchange, and legality of such an exchange;
- Impact from utilities (underground, above ground) and effects from lights and noise before, during and after hours of operation of the boathouse;
- Effect on shoreline boaters from 75-foot private dock extending out into river;
- Hydrological issues related to the floodplain/runoff related to the development and effect of the boathouse on downstream structures;
- Waterfront issues related to the goals and objectives of the DC Comprehensive Plan.
- Direct and indirect impacts to the non-motorized boathouse zone for the Georgetown Waterfront Park if the Whitehurst Freeway is demolished.

1/11/2005

Among the many "alternatives" that should be considered in the EA are two environmentally friendly plans:

II. ALTERNATIVES:

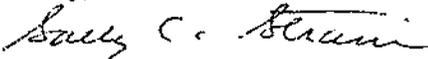
- Alternative A: Consider building a collegiate facility smaller than the one proposed, outside the Park and immediately downstream of the Washington Canoe Club, at the old Dempsey boathouse site;
- Alternative B: Instead of three separate boathouses, consider building only one public-private facility, outside the Park, between 34th St. and Key Bridge and open to university, high school and public boating programs, like Thompson's Boathouse at the south end of Georgetown. (A sketch of Alternative A and B are available at www.savethecanal.org, under "Alternatives.")
- (Consider other alternatives outside the Georgetown non-motorized boathouse zone, including redevelopment of existing Thompson's, and other sites along the Potomac, Anacostia and Virginia shorelines.)

III. ADVANTAGES OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED "ALTERNATIVES" OVER THE NPS-ALTERNATIVE IN THE PARK:

- Protection of undeveloped national parkland from private development;
- Preservation of green open space along a tidal floodplain for future generations (while redeveloping already paved land);
- Elimination of the need for a private access road to the proposed site;
- Easy access for construction, maintenance and servicing of the boathouse, as well as for access of rowing hulls and boat trailers (especially true for Alternative B);
- Safer location, less congested traffic since sites are farther from busy entrance to the Park and CCT (especially true for Alternative B);
- Near public parking;
- Available to both public and private boating interests (only true for Alternative B);
- Away from historic properties (only true for Alternative B);
- Opportunity to develop one world class facility for the use of all boating interests (only true for Alternative B).

Instead of the limited-scope EA that has been proposed by NPS, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) of the entire Georgetown non-motorized boathouse zone, between 34th St. and Key Bridge, should be done. An EIS would demonstrate the environmental, practical, technical and logistical advantages of moving the proposed location downstream from the currently proposed NPS alternative in the Park. An environmental analysis, as well as cost-benefit, engineering, viewshed and traffic studies of the zone should be included in the EIS, and a draft version of the report made available to the public for comments. (Note - NPS is already in the process of doing an EIS to identify a site for just one boathouse for the Arlington County, Virginia, shoreline, but has not yet considered doing an EIS for the Georgetown boathouse zone, where three proposed boathouses are contemplated!)

Sincerely,



Sally C. Strain
5712 Sherier Pl., NW
Washington, DC 20016
(202) 363-4546
seawaik@starpower.net

1/11/2005



"Sally C. Strain"
 <seawalk@starpower.net>

01/05/2005 03:51 PM
 EST

To: <nCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov>
 cc: "alma gates" <ahg71139@aol.com>, "Sheila Weidenfeld"
 <sheila.weidenfeld@verizon.net>, "Stu Ross" <ross@rdblaw.com>,
 "kevin brandt" <kevin_brandt@nps.gov>
 Subject: Fw: Jan. 11, 2005 EA Scoping Meeting for GUBoathouse EA

Dear Mr. Lawler -

Further to my note of December 21, which has not yet been answered, please clarify how the scoping meeting of Jan 11, 6-9 PM will be organized. For instance, is it true that instead of one large discussion group, there will be several smaller groups meeting in a workshop format? Who will the moderators be, and how will the groups be determined? And how can the public benefit from the sharing of ideas, if the participants are divided into separate groups? Will a summary of the presentations be made available to the public? And will a draft version of the EA be made available for public review?

Friends and neighbors have asked if it is important to attend the meeting for the entire three hours, or will the meeting be more like an "open house" type of meeting, like the Arlington County EIS meeting on June 21? Also, will a fee be charged to NPS for the use of a private hotel in Georgetown? If so, have you considered using public space, instead, such as the large auditorium at Sibley Hospital?

One neighbor suggested that NPS sponsor a site visit to show the public the boundary of the entire Georgetown non-motorized boathouse zone as well as the proposed location for the GUB in the C&O Canal NHPas well as the section of parkland now owned by GU.

Thank you in advance for your response.

----- Original Message -----

From: "Sally C. Strain" <seawalk@starpower.net>
 To: <NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov>
 Cc: "alma gates" <ahg71139@aol.com>; "Stu Ross" <ross@rdblaw.com>
 Sent: Tuesday, December 28, 2004 3:26 PM
 Subject: Re: Jan. 11, 2005 EA Scoping Meeting Info

> Dear Mr. Lawler - Thank you for the announcement. Who will the
 > moderator(s)/facilitator(s) be, and how will a public record of the
 > scoping session be established? Will a summary of the presentations by the
 > different discussion groups be made available to the public? Will a draft
 > version of the EA be made available to the public for review? Thanks in
 > advance for your response. Sally (Palisades resident)

> ----- Original Message -----
 > From: <NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov>
 > Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2004 2:39 PM
 > Subject: Jan. 11, 2005 EA Scoping Meeting Info

>
 >

>> Dear Friend,

>>

>> For decades, many of you have been engaged in the planning for the
 >> Georgetown Waterfront and the C & O Canal. In 1984, the Georgetown
 >> Waterfront Park was established as part of the Park System of the
 >> Nation's
 >> Capital by the National Capital Planning Commission. After an extensive

>> public involvement process, the plan for the Georgetown Waterfront Park
>> and
>> Georgetown section of the C&O Canal National Historical Park was approved
>> in 1986. This plan includes a non-motorized boathouse zone in the
>> proximity of Key Bridge, where boathouses had been located on the Potomac
>> River historically. The proposed Georgetown University Boathouse is one
>> of
>> five boathouses, including the Potomac Boat Club and Washington Canoe
>> Club,
>> which would be clustered around Key Bridge within this boathouse zone.
>>
>> Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Park
>> Service will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the
>> impacts associated with the construction of a proposed boathouse by
>> Georgetown University on a one-acre site upstream from the Washington
>> Canoe
>> Club. The EA will also meet the requirements of the National Historic
>> Preservation Act to take into account the effect of the proposed
>> boathouse
>> on historic properties and to seek to accommodate historic preservation
>> concerns through consultation with parties who have an interest in those
>> effects.
>>
>> A public scoping meeting will be held Tuesday, January 11, 2005 from
>> 6:00-9:00 p.m. at the Latham Hotel, 3000 M Street, NW. in Georgetown.
>> The
>> scoping meeting will be conducted in a facilitated workshop format, where
>> participants will express their views in small discussion groups rather
>> than a public hearing format with participants providing testimony. This
>> format has been demonstrated to be an effective way to ensure a thorough
>> discussion of issues. The purpose of scoping is to offer the public an
>> opportunity to identify the issues and alternatives that should be
>> considered in the EA for the proposed Georgetown University Boathouse.
>> This includes, but is not limited to, such issues as natural resource
>> impacts, floodplain and wetlands, views and vistas, size and design of a
>> collegiate rowing facility, completion of the boathouse zone and its
>> relationship to rowing on the Potomac River, potential effects on
>> historic
>> properties, and potential impacts to the Capital Crescent Trail.
>>
>> The environmental analysis process involves several steps. During the
>> scoping process, a full range of issues and alternatives will be
>> identified. The next step includes compiling and analyzing scoping
>> comments on those issues and potential alternatives and preparing an EA
>> that evaluates the environmental impacts and historic preservation
>> concerns
>> and identifies potential mitigation measures. The EA will then be made
>> available to the public for comment. Subsequent to the public comment
>> period, the National Park Service will render a decision.
>>
>> While we welcome your participation in the public scoping meeting, it is
>> not your only opportunity to share your thoughts. We will accept written
>> comments through January 21, 2005. Comments should be forwarded to the
>> Office of Lands, Resources and Planning, National Capital Region,
>> National
>> Park Service, 1100 Ohio Drive, SW, Washington, D.C. 20242. Due to delays
>> in receiving mail as a result of security screening by the U.S. Postal
>> Service, it is recommended that comments be hand-carried to 1100 Ohio
>> Drive
>> no later than 4:00 pm on January 21, 2005; transmitted via fax at (202)
>> 401-0017 or via email to NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov.

 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
733 15th Street, NW, Suite 432, Washington, DC 20009-6020
202 347-3020 202 347-2522 (fax) email: lwvdc@aol.com

January 10, 2005

Mr. Joe Lawler
Acting Regional Director, National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, SW
Washington, DC 20242

Dear Mr. Lawler:

The League of Women Voters, a national non-partisan organization, which was formed in 1920 after the 19th constitutional amendment provided women the right to vote, works to promote the public interest at national, regional, state and local levels of government. The League takes action by addressing governmental bodies when League members reach consensus on an issue. The League has strong positions at the local and national level supporting the preservation of open space and unique natural features of the city.

We appreciate the decision of the National Park Service to proceed with an Environmental Assessment (EA) to review the Georgetown boathouse proposal. However, the League believes in full review of the environmental, social, and economic impacts of major developments, and we therefore urge you to analyze more thoroughly the project's impacts, **through a full programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**. Such an EIS would review not only the impacts of the current Georgetown boathouse proposal, but also the impacts of all proposed boathouses on the waterfront. A full programmatic review would provide an opportunity for full public participation in the planning process, address comprehensive impacts in a coordinated way, and allow project planning to proceed in a timely manner. In addition, a programmatic review would assess the needs of high school and college rowers as well as other public groups using the waterfront zone.

Important issues an EIS should include are:

- Impact on users of the C&O Canal, Capital Crescent Trail, and neighbors
- Impact on historic sites
- Direct and indirect effects on the water quality of the Potomac River
- Alternative sites which may be more desirable at this time
- Mitigation measures
- Assessment of parking at the waterfront for existing and proposed boathouse and tourist uses
- Cumulative impacts from several boathouse projects.

An EIS would address the many concerns of neighbors and boaters, as well as bikers and hikers on the C&O Canal and Capital Crescent Trail, and other citizens who treasure this

urban open space. As the NPS offered public comment and review through an EIS for one boathouse in Arlington, VA, certainly an EIS is appropriate for the construction of three boathouses on the District side of the Potomac.

Without a doubt, the undeveloped area along the Potomac River west of Key Bridge provides a valuable resource to Washington DC as open space in an urban setting. As the Georgetown Waterfront Park and C&O Canal National Historic Park Plan states, "Above Key Bridge is one of the main scenic treasures of the Nation's Capital."

Since the proposed development would set a precedent for permanently removing public urban parkland from our national park system for private use, result in loss of wetlands, and impact views of this historic area, **we urge that you proceed with an environmental review in the form of a complete EIS of the Georgetown waterfront area proposed for boathouse development.**

Sincerely yours,


Frances Gemmill
President

Potomac River Sports Foundation
Washington, DC

January 16, 2005

John Parsons
Associate Regional Director for Lands, Resources and Planning
National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, DC

Via <NCR_Georgetownboathouse@NPS.gov>

Dear Mr. Parsons:

On behalf of the Potomac River Sports Foundation, a DC non-profit corporation whose mission is to foster and support non-motorized paddling sports on the Potomac, I am pleased to submit these comments on the proposed scope of the Environmental Assessment study currently underway for the proposed Georgetown University Boathouse.

For almost a decade, this project has been taking shape. Along the way, it has incorporated directives and comments from such federal, regional and local agencies and review panels as the National Park Service, Fine Arts Commission, National Capital Planning Commission, DC Zoning Commission, DC Historic Preservation Review Board, Georgetown Advisory Neighborhood Commission, C&O Canal National Historical Park Advisory Commission, and Georgetown Waterfront Park Commission. All these bodies have endorsed the location of the Boathouse at the present location. This location is at the upstream end of the boathouse zone defined by the National Park Service in 1987.

The Potomac River Sports Foundation supports the location of a boathouse in this area. It believes that the plans for the Georgetown facility are consistent with historical and current uses in the area and supports a finding that, in light of an assessment of likely impacts and benefits, it should proceed. We support the land exchange between the University and the National Park Service, the subject of an earlier, favorable Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact. We support the construction of a University Boathouse at this location in accordance with the NPS plan.

Further, the Foundation urges the National Park Service to proceed not only with the Georgetown Boathouse but also with additional proposed new or expanded facilities to

accommodate the growing demand for non-motorized boating access on the River. Given the growth of the population in the Washington Metropolitan area and the popularity of outdoor recreation, additional facilities in this location are both necessary and desirable. Such facilities can be woven into the fabric of mixed uses of the shoreline without unduly affecting scenic, historical open space and environmental values.

Background.

For more than 135 years, this stretch of the Potomac River has been used for recreational purposes for recreation and competition by rowers, scullers and paddlers. Georgetown University was in fact, was one of the earliest institutions to have a boathouse along this stretch of River shoreline. In the late 1800's the University was one of four to found the Intercollegiate Regatta Association, today's top intercollegiate rowing championship organization. The boathouse zone defined by the National Park Service in its 1987 plan acknowledges this historical linkage. Combined with the more recent Georgetown Waterfront Park Plan approved by the National Capital Planning Commission, the NPS boathouse zone will redevelop the post-industrial Georgetown waterfront into a functional park area for residents and visitors that acknowledges its connection to river commerce dating to pre-Colonial times. The NPS boathouse zone extends along the Georgetown shoreline from a point 1,100 feet west (upstream) of Key Bridge to a point parallel with 34th Street below the Bridge. The zone encompasses the existing boathouse structures and access points of Potomac Boat Club, Washington Canoe Club and Jack's Boats, a canoe and kayak livery located on land leased from the NPS.

It is an area reborn as a haven for boating recreation since the 1960's. Following damaging floods and ice jams, port uses died off at the turn of the 20th century. In the later 20th century, the Corps of Engineers constructed several flood control structures such as the Jennings Randolph Dam to mitigate flood impacts. In place of the port's wharves and warehouses came heavy industrial facilities, such as the concrete plant that used barges for sand and gravel deliveries and the fat rendering plant that discharged its waste directly to the river. By the 1960's, as these industrial facilities were, in turn, becoming obsolete, the waterfront was acquired and cleared parcel by parcel for new freeway construction. During the same period, a major new sewer line was placed along the Potomac waterfront to carry sanitary sewage to the Blue Plains Sewage Treatment plant downstream. Portions of the sewer were located immediately along the shoreline and covered with earth and rock fill. The new utility line created a major portion of the site proposed for the Boathouse. It also was placed in front of the Washington Canoe Club; as a consequence, the WCC that was built on piers over the water was now sitting on fast land and set back from the new shoreline. The freeway was never built. Due to growing public opposition and legal challenges, the freeway plans, including a new Potomac River bridge at the Three Sisters Islands for which construction actually began in 1970, were halted. The legacy of the highway plans was a cleared Georgetown waterfront and additional grading and fills in the access corridor and staging area for the Three Sisters Bridge, again including the location for the proposed Boathouse.

The Georgetown section of the Potomac is a zone of transition. It lies at the end of the Potomac Palisades and above the broad, lower reaches of the River that flow through Washington's monumental core to join the Anacostia and down to the Chesapeake Bay. This very limited zone - former port, industrial zone, current transportation and utility corridor -- is realizing a new role as a gateway between the heavily urbanized Washington metropolis and the forested and rocky walls of the Potomac Gorge. The proposed Georgetown Boathouse will serve as a fitting gatehouse, signaling the transition between open, undeveloped land and the city at its edge. And, importantly, it will be a functional gateway providing much needed access to the River for non-motorized recreation in concert with the history of this zone.

No new rowing or paddling facilities have been built for 45 years. The last boathouse, Harry T. Thompson's Boat Center, was constructed in 1960 by the National Park Service and is operated by a private contractor. In the past couple of decades, the Center's capacity has been temporarily extended via an outdoor, fenced storage area that accommodates approximately a dozen high school rowing programs. Other existing facilities, including the Washington Canoe Club, Potomac Boat Club and Jack's, have also attempted to deal with similar overflow demand by storing boats in outdoor racks and even, in some cases, on floating docks during prime season. An indication of the extent of this unmet demand for boathouse space is that the number of rowing shells stored outside the Thompson's Center is equal to the number stored within. In essence, a facility as large as Thompson's is needed simply to handle the present level of use at this one location. Construction for a new embassy closed down one fenced area, and it was replaced by smaller, equally temporary enclosures in the Thompson Center's parking lot and behind the building. Building the Georgetown Boathouse will help the NPS National Capital Region realize its plans to address this user backlog.

Major issues within the Environmental Assessment scope.

The following comments are aimed at suggesting the appropriate scope for the Environmental Assessment for the proposed Boathouse. Additional facts and opinion are presented to help frame the recommendations.

1) The comparative value of lands exchanged

The July 1995 Environmental Assessment for the land exchange between the University and the National Park Service found the exchange to provide fair and equivalent value in the land and easement exchanged by the University for the land and easement designated by the NPS. The C&O Canal National Historical Park was established with a number of private inholdings along its 185 mile length. Notably, the land involved in this EA was owned by the railroad and transferred in part to Georgetown and in part to the NPS. It would not be accurate to depict the parcels as part of the original C&O Canal National Historical Park as they were held in private ownership, the Georgetown parcel continuously until the present along with a one mile easement for access to it along the former railroad line.

The parcel of land being offered by NPS to Georgetown University for the boathouse project did not, in major part, exist prior to the construction of the Dulles Interceptor sewer line in the 1960's. The sewer line ran along portions of the River shoreline including the demised Boathouse parcel and in front of the Washington Canoe Club. Because this major sewer line was placed here and covered with dirt and rock fill to stabilize and protect it, the shoreline was extended into the river at this location. Washington Canoe Club itself was built at its present site on pilings over the water, not on fast land. Only the addition of the sewer line covered with dirt, rock and concrete made the area into dry land. The proposed use of the landfill site for the Boathouse would be a value added use to an area with little value as parkland and providing few ecosystem functions. ***The EA should establish the site's history.***

Conversely, the upstream parcel has significantly higher value as a restored natural area to include within the Park. Its natural values seem obvious as does the value of the one mile private access easement that conveyed to the University with the upstream parcel it owns. Should a boathouse or other structure be built on this private parcel, there would be substantial potential to interfere with trail users making use of the Capitol Crescent Rail Trail that was built on the old railroad line and that is co-extensive with the easement the University owns. While the Foundation does not have real estate appraisal expertise on its volunteer Board, the land exchange would appear to be fair to the NPS. This was, in fact, the finding of the July 1995 Environmental Assessment. ***The new EA should incorporate the findings of the earlier EA on this point.***

2) Impact on historic properties and sites

There are, in the immediate vicinity of the proposed boathouse site, two historic properties: one, the Washington Canoe Club structure and the other, the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Our comments for the EA will begin with the C&O Canal Park.

- The C & O Canal National Historical Park. As indicated, neither the proposed boathouse site nor the site owned by the University to be exchanged with the NPS were originally part of the Park boundaries. Both sites were owned by the railroad which also preceded the creation of the Park. The Park is approximately 185 miles in length and passes through or by large and small towns between its southern terminus in Georgetown and its northern, in Cumberland. Query the impact of this boathouse structure located on the river shoreline in the context of the full 185 mile length of the Canal and Park. Near the site, existing buildings lining M Street tower above the Canal, the Whitehurst Freeway four lanes wide crosses the Canal as does the Key Bridge itself further down, and the Potomac Boat Club, built in 1908, rises several feet above the level of the towpath a few hundred yards downstream from the proposed Boathouse site. New buildings located on immediately on the Canal Towpath rise six stories or more above it, some of the newest of which are located less than a quarter mile from proposed new boathouse. [For example, 3303 Water Street and 3333 Water Street, both built within the past 10 years] Given the old, pre-existing structures that cross or tower above the Canal and the multiple new structures permitted immediately adjacent to it, the potential adverse impact posed to the Canal's historic setting and character by the Georgetown

boathouse would seem minimal at best. *The EA needs to address the relative potential for the Boathouse to affect adversely the Canal in light of the current setting in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project and in the context of the entire 185 mile of the Park.*

▪ Washington Canoe Club. This structure is located along a section of waterfront that has had multiple boathouses for canoes and rowing craft during the past 100 years. Historic photos show boathouses lining the District shoreline both up- and downstream of the current structure. Some of these now lost boathouses were immediately adjacent to and some higher than the existing WCC boathouse. This history is a major reason for the WCC listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register notation for WCC lists the period of significance for it as 1900 – 1924 and 1925 to 1949. This notation strongly suggests the presence of these other boathouses was significant to the historic significance and setting of the WCC. The return of one additional boathouse in a historically sympathetic style adjacent to WCC would likely reinforce, not adversely impact WCC's historic setting and would help to define the historic character of this shoreline zone.

Despite the WCC National Register listing, repeated modifications have occurred to the structure and its setting during its history. For example, historic photos of the WCC show a structure and setting much different from the present, including the appearance of second floor on top of the downstream wing that is not present in earlier photos. *The EA should establish for the public record at what form the WCC was in when it was registered as a historic property and what modifications have been made to the structure and setting based on the historical record. The EA should also establish whether the established historical review process has been followed in modifications of WCC or the C& O Canal Park and what the nature of those modifications have been. And finally, the EA should indicate the weight to be given to a potential adverse impact from a new structure to a historic property when that property itself or its setting has been previously altered by action of the property's owner(s).*

3) Private versus public use.

The proposed Boathouse would allow full public access to the grounds. The Washington Canoe Club, a private club located on National Park Service land adjacent to the proposed Boathouse site, site is enclosed by chain link fence, presumably for security, and parking of private automobiles is permitted within the fence line. The WCC structure was originally built on pilings over public navigable waters and has been continuously used exclusively by its members and their guests. The proposed Georgetown boathouse site would be open for casual visitation and open views of the river. The NPS frequently engages in land exchanges with other owners to round out important park areas and facilitate adjacent community needs and public uses. *The EA should establish for the public record the terms of the WCC lease with the NPS.*

The EA should also present accurate information on size of the WCC membership served by the current facility. A distinction should be made between those who are not

active users of the Club for water recreational access and those who actively use the facility for those purposes to develop more accurate comparison between the public and private benefits of the current arrangement. ***The University should be prepared to provide a figure for the EA on the minimum number of users it expects the Boathouse to serve on an annual basis and establish for the record the expected level of use by non-University students, such as high school and US National Rowing Team athletes using the indoor rowing tanks for testing and training..***

4) Hydrology

It has been suggested that the EA needs to address the site's impact on hydrological currents, river flow, siltation, and erosion rates. Any impact is likely to be *de minimus* given that no permanent structures will be built in or placed in the river except for possible anchor pilings for floating docks that would be removed seasonally to a secure downstream location. All present boathouses on the Potomac move their floating docks for the winter months and, occasionally, if flood waters are predicted at other times of the year. There is no reason to assume and no proposal from Georgetown to do differently. Any shoreline armoring will be executed in accordance with the requirements of the US Army Corps of Engineer regulations for inland, navigable waters which would permit only clean rock to be placed to secure the shoreline against erosion. This section of shoreline is currently characterized by waste concrete pours and rock fill placed during construction of the access road to the 3 Sisters Bridge project in the early 1970s. ***The EA process should establish the relevant facts for the record.***

5) Impact on wetlands, current land cover and animals

This area was graded to bare dirt and rock in 1970 for the 3 Sisters Bridge access and has only minor natural value. The compacted soils placed atop the sewer line and impervious asphalt paving of the Capitol Crescent Trail allow little drainage through the site's soils. The Corps of Engineers have previously established that the site lacks any jurisdictional wetlands. There is little or no recharge to the river or groundwater possible, and there is little or no flood water absorption capacity currently present due to the nature of the soil and the sewer utility running under it. Adverse impacts resulting from the boathouse construction will be slight if any. Plants appear to be a mix of native and non-native species of woody and vegetative plants. Migratory and resident native and non-native bird and animals may visit the site but will not be adversely affected since any present will be easily able to shift to adjacent areas. Some species of birds, e.g. herons, ducks and geese, can be expected to utilize the float and open areas of the site as they do in other nearby boathouses, such as the Potomac Boat Club.

EA should discuss the site's vegetation, animal and bird species using it, and fish populations in the river and forecast the impact of the project on them.

6) Impact on Towpath and the Capitol Crescent Trail

As a private property owner, Georgetown is currently entitled to access to its upriver site over the bed of the former railroad which is being used as the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT). The land exchange is proposed, in part, to minimize any adverse impact on the CCT and its users. The current proposal for the boathouse is for a separate access way parallel to the CCT and no diminution of width of the CCT.

The EA should examine the benefits of an unseparated trail and boathouse access road. The infrequency of use for shell trailer loading for away regattas and for service vehicles and emergency access may suggest a wider trail available nearly always would be better than the separation currently contemplated.

The EA might also consider using the existing access to the WCC from Water Street to serve both WCC and the proposed Georgetown boathouse. Use of this access point across land owned by NPS would eliminate any conflict between the CCT and access to the proposed site.

7) Impacts on current river recreation

The EA should establish the how potential conflict on the use of the River by different types of craft can be addressed by the adoption of a use pattern and marking buoys to which the parties can agree to adhere. Much of the potential conflict will be found not to exist given the different times of usage prevailing at WCC and a university boathouse. There is no reason for an additional facility to have any significant impact on the shared use of the river at this location for rowing and canoeing. It has sufficient width and depth.

8) Impacts on views

The EA should consider any potential for the impact on views from several vantage points (on the water and off) and across different seasons and types of viewers. The EA should consider both the potential to improve the viewshed for certain types of views as well as for adverse impacts. The EA should also contrast the impact on the views across and of the proposed boathouse with those across and of existing sites including those with exterior storage of boats, trash containers, vehicles and equipment, fences, and blank or windowless walls at ground level.

9) Facility size/ appropriateness

The EA should consider that the proposed project in the context of both the present level of use and reasonably projected future levels of use. The fact that all existing boathouse facilities are currently substantially undersized to serve the existing demand, including the most recent, Thompson's Boat Center, informs this process and strongly suggests the need to do more than simply house present level of use or mimic facilities built 100 years ago. ***The EA must also take into account the need for the project to satisfy the Fine Arts Commission, DC Zoning Commission requirements and other federal and local bodies.***

10) Construction impacts

The issues discussed previously apply to the construction stages as well as continuing operations stages. See comments on site access alternatives that the EA might consider. This is largely a management issue for the University and NPS to oversee site construction activities and insure through normal means minimal off site impacts. ***The EA should consider including any guidelines for minimizing construction impacts.***

11) Need for more rowing access

The EA should consider the role of the proposed new boathouse might play in providing more access to current rowing organizations, particularly the many high school programs that occupy temporary outside racks at the Thompson's Center. By enabling Georgetown to move into a new facility, indoor storage space would be opened at the Thompson's facility. Georgetown is the largest current tenant in this NPS owned facility and it would like to accommodate more of the high school programs indoors.

Since the need for new boathouses must be balanced against competing public interests in completing the new Georgetown Waterfront Park and providing more open, green space for passive as well as active recreation along the Georgetown waterfront, a lengthy process involving all affected interests concluded with a plan for the new park and addressed the location of new rowing facilities. Many compromises have already been made with respect to this plan and the location of the Georgetown boathouse. ***The EA should appropriately take these completed public processes and decisions into account in examining the proposed project and available alternatives.***

12) Cumulative impacts

The discussion of cumulative impacts in the EA would be premature. There have been no new boathouses built along the Potomac for 45 years. Other boathouses have been proposed but have not even entered the planning or preliminary approval stages. There is no need for a cumulative impacts discussion of other rowing boathouses in the EA.

I look forward to the completion of the draft Environmental Assessment. Please keep me on your list of interested parties as the process goes forward.

Sincerely,

Erik J. Meyers
President,
Potomac River Sports Foundation

c/o 2002 North Lincoln Street
Arlington, VA 22207
<emeyers2@comcast.net>

Robert B. Norris

1/27
Dear Mr. Dobbin:

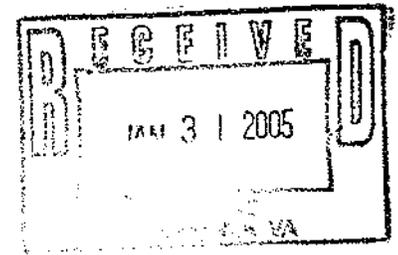
During our talk today, you indicated that G.U. could build its boathouse on its upriver property. I don't think so. See my letter of 1/14 enclosed.

I also enclose copies of my letters of 1/10 and 1/21.

If you have any questions, please call.

Best regards,

R.B.N.



Robert B. Norris
1801 45th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007
(202) 333-3925

January 10, 2005

Mr. Joe Lawler
Acting Regional Director, National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, SW
Washington, DC 20242

Re: Georgetown University Boathouse Proposal

Dear Mr. Lawler:

With respect to the scoping session on the Georgetown University (GU) boathouse proposal, as well as the expenditure of time, money and energy which will be devoted to this issue, it seems to me that the National Park Service (NPS) has failed to address the fundamental question in this matter: How is the public interest served by NPS entering into an agreement with GU for an exchange of land in order to allow the University to construct a private boathouse on NPS land within the C&O Canal National Historical Park? Permit me to explain.

As I understand it, NPS proposes to exchange about an acre of land in the vicinity of Key Bridge owned by NPS (Tract 102-114) with about a one acre parcel of land approximately one mile upriver, which is owned by GU (Tract 102-109). The stated purpose of the land exchange is to allow NPS to acquire and protect GU's upriver parcel (Tract 102-109), and to allow GU to gain a location (Tract 102-114) to build a boathouse.

Tract 102-114, owned by NPS, is located within the C&O Canal National Historical Park just west of Key Bridge and near the entrance to the Capital Crescent Trail, a popular recreational and bicycle commuter trail heavily used throughout all seasons of the year. Tract 102-114 is also in the Georgetown Historic District.

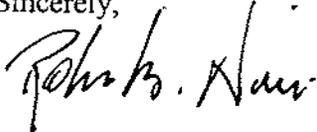
Tract 102-109, owned by GU, is a parcel of land located within the C&O Canal National Historical Park approximately a mile upriver from Tract 102-114. There is no public road access to Tract 102-109.

This proposed exchange is not a swap, but a governmental give-away to a private entity at the expense of the public. It is beyond peradventure that the values of Tract 102-109 and 102-114 are not even remotely, let alone "approximately" equal. While Tract 102-114 would allow for construction, Tract 102-109, because of its topography and marginal access, is unbuildable. Moreover, the values of the two Tracts cannot be equalized by the payment of

cash for the following reasons. Although GU owns Tract 102-109, because of its location approximately a mile upriver, Tract 102-109 is effectively now part of the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Hence, there is no public need for NPS to acquire Tract 102-109 and the protection of this parcel is assured by its location within the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Also, since Tract 102-109 is unbuildable, it is, as a site for a boathouse, worthless to GU. In these circumstances, the public gets nothing from this so-called land exchange. Thus, a cash payment would in effect be a "sale" rather than an equalization of values. For these reasons, I am convinced that this proposed land "exchange" is legally untenable.

In conclusion, I am, frankly, at a loss to understand how NPS, the guardian of our parklands, could even entertain this proposed "exchange" in which the public interest in this matter is so totally ignored. In these circumstances, NPS should admit error and terminate any further proceedings in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert B. Norris".

Robert B. Norris

Robert B. Norris
1801 45th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007
(202) 333-3925

January 14, 2005

Mr. Joe Lawler
Regional Director, National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, SW
Washington, DC 20242

Re: Georgetown University Boathouse Proposal

Dear Mr. Lawler

Reference is made to my email of January 7 in which I expressed my concern about the small discussion group format which was to be used at the scoping session on January 11.

I stand corrected. The small discussion group format did seem to involve more people. And, because of the summations given by members of the ten small groups, all the participants at the scoping session seemed to have heard each other's views. This was particularly important to me. Of course, as both you and I know, the validity of the ultimate resolution of the boathouse proposal must be grounded on the good faith and integrity of NPS and EDAW, the organizations in control of the process.

I am sure that John Parsons and Sally Blumenthal, both of whom attended the scoping session, have reported to you that the one point developed at the January 11 scoping session on which everyone agreed is the belief that the proposed land exchange between NPS and Georgetown University (GU) is not in the public interest. This fact should cause concern to NPS. Therefore, some other alternative must be found.

On January 12, along with 15 interested persons, I participated in a site visit to the waterfront area including the upriver property owned by GU and identified as Tract 102-109. GU's parcel, as you know, is located within the C&O Canal National Historical Park about a mile upriver from Key Bridge. Tract 102-109, which lies about 15 feet below the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT), is essentially a narrow rectangular strip of land. The side of the property that borders the CCT is offset from the edge of the paved surface of the CCT by approximately 20 feet and has a length of 1,066 feet along the southern side of the CCT property. The opposite side, toward the river, has a length of 1,076 feet, of which only one third actually has river frontage. The width of the property is a few inches less than 45 feet. Because of the 15-foot steep cliff along the CCT side of the tract, there is a protective fence for the safety of users of the CCT. GU's parcel also appears to be marshy, soft underfoot and susceptible to flooding. GU also owns a 15-foot wide easement from the entrance of the CCT near

Key Bridge to Tract 102-109, over which there has been superimposed a 10-foot wide paved surface for bicycle and pedestrian use.

Our inspection of Tract 102-109 confirmed that this parcel, because of its topography and marginal access, is unbuildable. The site inspection also made it abundantly clear that there was insufficient room for a turnabout for emergency vehicles as well as boat trailers, for, as you know, these trailers are designed to transport 8-oar shells that are 70 feet in length. As previously stated, because of the 15-foot width of the easement, access to Tract 102-109 is at best marginal. Obviously, there are many places along this easement where vehicles could not pass each other in opposite directions.

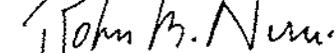
Even GU concedes that its upriver parcel, Tract 102-109, is unsuitable for the construction of a boathouse. When GU acquired this property, the University actually considered locating its boathouse at this site. In this connection, the University's architect made some sketches of a possible boathouse at this location and explored running power and utility lines under the easement. However, GU concluded that this site for a boathouse wouldn't work and gave up the project.

In 1999, as you know, NPS selected an appraiser to assess the two sites considered for the proposed land exchange. This NPS-retained appraiser concluded that Tract 102-109 was unbuildable because of its topography and marginal access. He determined that the property's highest and best use is for incorporation into the C&O Canal National Historical Park, within which it is already located. This appraisal of Tract 102-109 was not approved by NPS staff, because, inter alia, the "appraiser's determination of the property's highest and best use was based solely on his opinion, and was not substantiated by supplemental information," whatever the latter phrase means. NPS staff report to IG, 12/23/04. Of course, an appraisal is but an educated opinion based on the appraiser's education, training and expertise. The NPS staff also allegedly questioned the "methodologies" employed by the appraiser. Id. This appraisal was rejected by NPS and the contract with the appraiser terminated. Based on my own personal inspection of Tract 102-109, as well as the inspection by those attending the site visit on January 12, and the description of the property set forth in this letter, I believe NPS staff rejected this appraisal because it simply didn't like the conclusions reached by the appraiser. In other words, if you don't like the message, kill the messenger.

As I pointed out to you in my letter of January 10, as a site for a boathouse, Tract 102-109 is of no value to GU. For that reason, as well as the other reasons I have previously advanced, the public will get nothing from this so-called land exchange. Based on the facts set forth above, I submit that it is disingenuous for officials of NPS to continue to push the proposition that if this proposed land exchange is not consummated, GU will build its boathouse on Tract 102-109. Thus, rather than continuing to argue for a discredited position, NPS should seek another alternative.

Please place this letter as well as my letter of January 10, in the official file in connection with the GU boathouse proposal.

Respectfully/submitted,



Robert B. Norris

Robert B. Norris
1801 45th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007
(202) 333-3925

January 21, 2005

Mr. Joe Lawler
Regional Director, National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, SW
Washington, DC 20242

Re. Georgetown University Boathouse proposal – Scoping Comments

Dear Mr. Lawler:

Besides the contentions I have previously made in my letters to you of January 10 and 14 regarding Georgetown University's (GU) boathouse proposal, I believe it is abundantly clear that on the record in this case the National Park Service (NPS) has not really considered the environmental impact of the construction on Tract 102-114 of such an enormous structure, abutting the gateway to the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) and just below the towpath of the C&O Canal National Historical Park.

If I understand correctly, when the previous environmental assessment was formulated, either the enormous size of GU's boathouse was not known or was substantially smaller than the one currently proposed. We now know GU's real intentions with respect to the length, height, and width of its proposed boathouse. What should be clearly understood is that the Canal towpath is 28 feet above the CCT and that the height of the two horizontal wings of GU's boathouse is 38 feet. In other words, these horizontal sections would be 10 feet higher than the surface of the towpath, obviously blocking the view of the river from the towpath. I further understand that the current proposed height of the middle section of the proposed boathouse is a little over 50 feet. Because of the enormity of this boathouse, if the proposed land exchange were consummated it would "significantly affect the quality of the human environment." 42 USCA 4332(2)(C).

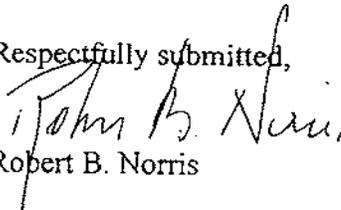
Because of its location, this proposed land exchange would also violate regulations implemented in furtherance of the aims of 16 USCA 4601-22(b), the land exchange statute. Also, because of the enormous size of GU's proposed boathouse, it is apparent that NPS, in its effort to appease GU, has ignored its responsibility to "protect the natural, historical, cultural and other values on the lands." 36 CFR 17.8. See also 36 CFR 17.3.

Because Tract 102-114 is inappropriate for GU's boathouse, NPS and GU should seek an alternative site. I would recommend, and respectfully request, that NPS, for land use planning purposes, treat the Georgetown Waterfront Park (from Washington Harbor to Key Bridge) and the C&O Canal National Historical Park (from Key Bridge to the upriver line of Tract 102-114) as one area for planning purposes. Presently, as I understand it, the non-motorized boathouse zone extends from 34th and Water Sts. to the upriver line of tract 102-114. I further understand that George Washington University (GW) has a claim for its boathouse on the first parcel upstream from 34th and Water Sts. to the ramp off of Key Bridge to the Whitehurst Freeway. Parenthetically, NPS should also anticipate the possibility of the removal of the Whitehurst Freeway, an effort being seriously pursued by Councilmember Jack Evans.

In my opinion, the best possible place for GU's boathouse would be immediately downstream from GW's parcel. While some may object to this intrusion into the Georgetown Waterfront Park, if a boathouse at this location were well designed and appropriately reduced in size, it would be an attractive addition to what is in reality an urban park. I believe this result could be accomplished not by a land exchange but by a long-term lease agreement between NPS and GU. For example, the lease could be 50 years, or even more. This arrangement would also enable NPS to impose appropriate restrictions on the size of this boathouse. Moreover, GU could convey its upriver parcel (Tract 102-109) and its easement to that parcel to NPS as part of the leasehold agreement. I submit that this arrangement is a win-win situation for everyone: GU secures its boathouse on the Georgetown waterfront; the public's interest in the preservation of the C&O Canal National Historical Park and the CCT is assured; and NPS obtains GU's upstream parcel and its easement for incorporation into the C&O Canal National Historical Park.

Please enter this letter into the official file on the GU boathouse proposal.

Respectfully submitted,


Robert B. Norris

Source: Alan Brangman via email
dated 1/19/2005

Major talking points for GU boathouse

Land transaction equal or greater benefit for public

C&O Canal Park as established did not include either the GU owned parcel or the exchange parcel. The latter was not included because it was largely river – the Dulles Interceptor sewer and fill placed over it in 1960s created most of proposed GU boathouse site. Upstream parcel was not public land but owned by RR. Upstream parcel has higher natural / open space and park values and came with private easement access rights for 1 mile over former RR bed now being used as CCT.

Impact on historic properties/ sites”

- C&O – Query impact of boathouse structure on Canal more than 185 miles in length located at beginning of G'town section of Canal where multiple new buildings sited immediately adjacent to the towpath 6 stories or more above the Canal.
- WCC – Query impact of boathouse structure on WCC since (1) architecture reviewed/ approved by Fine Arts/ G'town ANC/ DC Zoning and (2) WCC has itself altered the setting and appearance of its registered property by addition of second story on downstream wing, fencing, outside boat racks, creation of new fast land by placement of rock fill into the river, and parking of private autos and trucks.

Private use vs. public

Private user, WCC, has operated site immediately downstream of proposed site, since 1950s acquisition by NPS. Although 100% on parkland, WCC has fenced area to exclude public, extended fast land by adding additional fill and utilized areas within the fence for additional boat storage racks and for auto and trailer parking. None of these uses will be made of the parcel on which GU boathouse will sit and site will not be fenced off to the public thereby allowing greater public access to the site than is possible at present. EA should present accurate information on size of WCC membership that actively paddles (more than 10X per season) not just membership list. Need to be able to discuss accurately water activity level alleged to be affected.

Hydrology

EA should look at hydrology, impact on river currents, etc. in the vicinity of the site and the impact of the proposed project on it. The analysis of EDAW experts should negate

unsubstantiated allegations that the GU boathouse will have a discernible impact. Floating dock that will be removed for winter. Area is fill material placed in old riverbed and with armored shoreline and thus will not change from present condition. Same holds true for allegations that would increase siltation/ soil erosion of shoreline.

Loss of wetland, trees, animals

EA should note that scrub woody and vegetative native and non-native species have covered site since fill was placed and area graded in 1970 for 3 Sisters Bridge access. Only minor natural value. Compacted soils placed atop sewer line and paving of CCT creating additional impervious surface cause periodic water pooling on site. Little or now recharge to river/ groundwater and little or no flood water absorption currently present on site therefore little or no impact resulting.

Impact on CCT (land recreation)

-Will not narrow present trail width. Could propose unseparated trail and boathouse access road (for infrequent use by shell trailer, service vehicles and emergency access.) which would increase width of available CCT at this location 99% of the time.

- Alternative access could be provided via use of existing vehicular access that has been created by WCC on NPS land to serve both facilities and avoid any use of the corridor currently used by the CCT. This would require removal of fence around WCC and creation of turnaround point between 2 facilities.

Impacts on current river recreational uses

Management issue only. Not likely to be major problem. Infrequent flat-water paddling. Current pattern is for rowing to keep to DC side up, VA down therefore same pattern. Rowers not go behind 3 Sisters so little impact.

Impacts on views

Seasonal distinctions/ who is the viewer? And from where does viewing take place?

- from river - improve
- from site - improve
- from canal toward river – largely unaltered
- from CCT – again, change – if this is such crowded area, who can safely look at river and what can be seen through weedy second growth anyway? And if its not crowded, then plan to have downstream GU wing all glass and have lighting (not too much) will improve openness. Query transparency of WCC fence line with exterior boat racks, cars and trailers on lot and WCC building with no windows at ground level.

Facility size/ appropriateness

Necessity for project purpose current and future anticipated uses. Need to satisfy Fine Arts, DC Zoning, Old Georgetown Board been met. Contrast with extensive exterior storage at Thompson's and WCC.

Construction impacts

Management issue only.

Need for more rowing access

Role of GU boathouse in opening more space to accommodate current and future use. HS rowing figures prominently. Need for balance with other competing interests in downstream section of GWP (reference years of discussion over plan for GWP and compromises already made by all affected interests)

Alternative sites

Discussion of compromises in siting with GWP and competing interests in nature of park. Involvement of all affected interests in compromise final plan. Additional boathouses still needed and slated for remaining alternative sites.



Kathryn Ray & Dennis
Beaufort
<kcrdlb@verizon.net>

02/21/2005 09:52 PM
CST

To: NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov
cc: john_parsons@nps.gov, sally_blumenthal@nps.gov
Subject: Support for the Georgetown Boathouse

Dear NPS Officials,

Today, 8 petitions with over 120 signatures were faxed to Mr. Parsons. The petitions are from the public high school rowing community.

The supporters of the boathouse wish to emphasize the following points:

Boathouses for rowing groups are important and appropriate additions to the recreational use of the C&O NHP and the Capital Crescent Trail. This environmentally sensitive recreational use is consistent with the goals and mission of the National Park Service.

A boathouse for Georgetown University will complement the other non-profit organizations that have facilities on the Potomac riverfront in the C&O Canal National Historic Park near the Capital Crescent Trail.

Georgetown student rowers will add to the vibrant and lively riverfront that is appropriate for National Park Service property.

Boathouse rows of Boston and Philadelphia are important destinations for residents and tourists that add significantly to the character and attractiveness of these cities.

Negotiations for this boathouse have been going on for years. It is time to move forward.

Thank you for considering our support of Georgetown's boathouse.

Kathryn Ray

1541 33rd Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
January 21, 2005

Office of Lands, Resources and Planning
National Capital Region, National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, SW, Washington, DC 20242.
Via Fax 202-401-0017 and e-mail NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov

Dear Sirs:

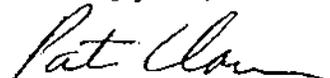
Congratulations on the January 11 scoping meeting about the environmental assessment of the a proposed Georgetown University boathouse. It was a very useful meeting, and you ran it very well. May I offer three comments about the scope of the environmental assessment.

First, the scoping meeting was designed for people to raise questions, and that is what they did. That meant the meeting focused on problems people saw with the proposed boathouse; there was no opportunity to express comments about the advantages of the project. For instance, there was no room to discuss what the boathouse would mean for Georgetown University rowers, for high school rowers, or for other river boaters who are not now able to get space at Thompson's Boat House. If one were to look at the comments expressed at the January 11 meeting, they were overwhelmingly negative about the project -- but that is because the participants were asked to raise their questions about the project, not to discuss what they saw as the project's advantages.

Second, many of the comments made reflected rather basic ignorance about the Georgetown waterfront -- about its history, about the competing demands for space, about other projects planned, and most especially about the Georgetown Waterfront Park. It would be unfortunate if the environmental assessment of the proposed Georgetown University boathouse were to turn into a review of all the issues about the use of the Georgetown waterfront. There are many different constituencies concerned with the waterfront, and only a small portion of them were present at the scoping meeting because it was announced as a meeting about only one particular element of the waterfront, namely, the GU boathouse. If there is any intention to reconsider the plans for the Georgetown Waterfront Park, then it would be necessary to hold another scoping meeting for what would be a very different environmental assessment from an assessment of the GU boathouse alone.

Third, many of the issues raised at the scoping meeting were not about environmental issues but about other public policy concerns. For instance, several of the groups expressed concern about the valuation of the land involved in the swap, that is, did the NPS get land of equal value to the land it will cede to Georgetown University? Now, that is an important question, and one well worth raising. However, it is not an environmental issue. It would be inappropriate and inconsistent with law if the environmental assessment were to look at such issues: that would take away the focus on the environment which is supposed to be the centerpiece of such an assessment. The NPS has only certain limited resources to devote to this assessment, and those resources should go entirely to environmental issues.

Sincerely yours,



Patrick Clawson



8601 Georgia Avenue, Suite 612
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: 301.608.1188
Fax: 301.608.1144

TO: Office of Lands, Resources & Planning Nat'l Capital Region

FROM: Matthew Logon

DATE: 1/21/05

RE: Environmental Assessment for the GU Boathouse

PAGE(S): 4 (including cover)



8601 Georgia Avenue • Suite 612 • Silver Spring, MD 20910 • 301.608.1188 • Fax: 301.608.1144

www.potomac.org

January 20, 2005

Office of Lands, Resources and Planning National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, SW
Washington, D.C. 20242

VIA FACSIMILE: (202) 401-0017

RE: Environmental Assessment for the Georgetown University Boathouse

To the Office of Lands, Resources and Planning:

The Potomac Conservancy submits the following written comments on the proposed Georgetown University Boathouse Environmental Assessment (EA) and respectfully requests that these comments be included in the public record of the review of this proposal. The Potomac Conservancy is a regional non-profit that protects the health, beauty and enjoyment of the Potomac River and its tributaries. We advocate for the active use and enjoyment of the river to the extent that those activities are consistent with our efforts to protect ecological and human health and the scenic integrity of the riverscape.

After reviewing the extensive information concerning the proposed Georgetown University Boathouse EA, the Potomac Conservancy recommends that a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the entire Georgetown waterfront non-motorized boathouse zone be conducted due to environmental, cultural, public interest, and safety concerns. The National Environmental Policy Act requires an EIS when a federal action has "significant impact on the human environment" according to the National Park Service (NPS) Director's Order #12. There is no question that the proposed development would have "significant" impacts and, therefore, an EA is too limited in its scope to adequately consider the project's impacts. Furthermore, NPS has recognized this mandate in its consideration of the boathouse locations along the Arlington County, Virginia, shoreline where NPS is appropriately performing an EIS, not an EA.

1. **The EIS should include the entire Georgetown waterfront zone (the following factors meet the NPS DO#12 criteria for an EIS):**

Protecting the health, beauty, and enjoyment of the Potomac

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- ***Unique characteristics of the area (proximity to historic and cultural resources, wild and scenic rivers, ecologically critical areas, wetland or floodplains).*** The C&O Canal and the Potomac River are national treasures and their integrity must be carefully maintained for the public's use and enjoyment. The possibility of extensive construction and subsequent long-term operation and maintenance of a facility in a highly visited and sensitive area of the park and waterfront requires in-depth analysis. Destruction of the natural landscape, particularly the loss of vegetation and the addition of impervious surfaces along the riparian buffer and floodplain, will change the ecology and hydrology of the site. Increased erosion, flooding, silting, and damage to the canal embankment and downstream structures must be studied and alternatives identified.
- ***The degree to which public health and safety are affected.*** The construction and operation of a facility at this particular location will create safety hazards for Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) and C&O Canal towpath users. The hundreds of hikers, bikers, runners, and others, who use these trails weekly, often do so at times that would conflict with use of the boathouse (morning and evening commutes and weekends). During rowing events, in particular, the number of people using the boathouse (rowers, coaches, support teams, families, etc.) would effectively shut down the CCT and create dangerous conditions. These problems need to be studied by appropriate and qualified experts.
- ***The degree to which impacts are likely to be highly controversial.*** Opposition to the plans for this boathouse is growing as the full impacts of the project are communicated to the public. The excessive size of the building and its location do not match the vision that countless individuals and organizations, including the Potomac Conservancy, have of the Potomac Riverfront and the C&O Canal National Historical Park.
- ***Whether the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects, or represents a decision in principle about future consideration.*** No private structure has been constructed in the Park since its founding. In addition, the swap for the land upstream is unequal (as that site is essentially unbuildable) and, therefore, the public benefit is highly questionable. At the very least, the transaction raises questions on the precedent of swapping private for public land and what is in the public's best interest.
- ***Whether the action is related to other actions that may have individual insignificant impacts but cumulatively significant effects.*** The combination of factors, such as environmental impacts and safety concerns (mentioned above), will have cumulatively significant effects. Moreover, the project would have other significant impacts such as degradation of the scenic landscape. The proposed building would completely obstruct views

of the river and the surrounding area from the CCT and towpath, and also of the wild river landscape from Key Bridge and Virginia. It would also limit public access to the riverfront. It is the cumulative impacts of the project, even more so than any individual concern, that has raised the public's ire. An EIS is the only way to fully evaluate the numerous cumulative effects of a project of this magnitude.

- *Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or breaking it down into small component parts.* Separating the proposed Georgetown University boathouse proposal from a full environmental impact assessment of the non-motorized boathouse zone would be contrary to the intent of the EA/EIS process. Doing so would inappropriately limit the scope of the impact assessment and discussion of alternatives.

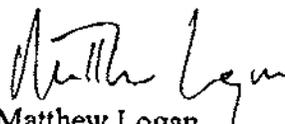
2. Identify Alternatives under the EIS criteria:

- Chose no action. This alternative must be fully evaluated in order to meet the requirements of NEPA.
- Evaluate sites for feasibility for a boathouse along the Anacostia River.
- Chose one open access site on the waterfront downstream of the Key Bridge in which public and private institutions share access to the building and facilities. This alternative would possibly solve many of the environmental, public safety, and scenic concerns of the project.

The Potomac Conservancy strongly urges the NPS to take a hard, comprehensive look at proposed waterfront development in the boathouse area. We believe that a number of reasonable alternatives exist to the current proposal and must be examined. The Potomac River waterfront in Georgetown is a precious public resource requiring thoughtful and open deliberation, and the development of an EIS is integral to good decision-making.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Our staff is available to provide you and your colleagues any technical assistance needed for the protection and enjoyment of the Potomac River. Please do not hesitate to call with any questions, comments, or to arrange assistance.

Sincerely,


Matthew Logan
President



"David Winer"
<davidwiner@erols.com
>
01/18/2005 08:35 AM
EST

To: <NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Environmental Assessment for Proposed Georgetown University
Boathouse

January 18, 2005

Office of Lands, Resources and Planning; National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive
Washington, DC 20242

I am submitting the attachments for the record in the subject proceedings. I have also submitted these materials separately to your office in the form of a printed document.

David E. Winer

5927 Onondaga Road
Bethesda, Maryland 20816



Figure 1-GtrWaterfront.jpg Figure 2-Dempsey Site.jpg Figure 3-GtrWaterfront.jpg GUB-EnvAssessment-Comment.doc

January 18, 2005

Via US Mail and Email

Mr. Joe Lawler
Regional Director, National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive SW
Washington, DC 20242

Re: Proposed GU Boathouse

Dear Mr. Lawler:

I was unable to attend the Environmental Assessment Scoping Hearing on January 11, 2005 for the proposed GU Boathouse but my conscience compels me to add my name to those opposed for the following reasons:

- 1) The LOCATION upriver of the Washington Canoe Club and Capital Crescent Trail should preserve the ideals of Justice Douglas when he saved the C & O Canal from the urban renewalists & transportation folks looking for a crossing at 3 Sisters. The scam arrangement by which Kingdon Gould acquired the "exchange parcel" farther upriver and subsequently donated to GU which is the basis of this taking should be exposed as the sham transaction that it was. Nothing could have been built upriver and nothing should be built here. Don't destroy the hard won victories of Justice Douglas and the countless unknown others. There are other alternatives downriver, across the river or on the Anacostia.
- 2) The SCALE is all out of proportion to the historical and environmental landscape in which the building is supposed to co-exist. Only some of us have seen the balloons and have been frightened by the hideous height. This monstrosity doesn't co-exist, it devours its neighbors. Why doesn't GU make an actual mock-up of screens onsite showing the real scope of the building so the entire community could look at what is proposed? No, they bamboozle everyone with quaint across-the-river projections that distort the real field of view. To those GU adherents that say there were boathouses here before, I say: "we'll then lets make it a size that fits in with its neighbors like the Washington Canoe Club and Potomac Boathouse. This is like replacing a country store with a WAL-MART in a historic district and saying they are both just stores."
- 3) The PROCESS is another example of GU trying to bend the rules. GU's moral relativists (backers, zoning attorneys, etc.) feel comfortable bending any rules if it suits their PRIVATE purpose. Imagine the hue and cry if ANY other user tried to expropriate Federal Parkland for private use. Only GU is audacious enough to attempt to make the General Public kowtow to their demands. This modus operandi calls to mind GU's aborted co-generation fiasco. But this is worse because it will irrevocably impact National Parkland.

Mr. Joe Lawler
1/18/05
Page 2

I cannot imagine the heat you must be taking from all sides. But in your capacity of steward of the public lands you must first do no harm. GU's argument is based on deception and lies: GU's original "landswap" was a sham; GU agreed to smaller and lower; any other organization would need an Environmental Impact Statement before going further (although I doubt anyone else would have gotten near this far).

Please, on behalf of the entire nation, do the right thing. GU's "new & improved" boathouse should have to undergo "current & impartial" zoning & regulatory processes. GU has been successful without a boathouse for quite some time. Other Universities and river users are watching. Be impartial on behalf of the people and let us see - in 3-D and on site if necessary- what is actually proposed before it is built. And not for just one day. Let us live with the screening of the river from the Capital Crescent Trail and the Towpath for several weeks before you make it irreversible. And expose to the light of day the entire historical process that got GU here, from the beginning.

It seems as if GU has many more influential backers willing to look the other way: just this time and just for GU. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration. I wish you the strength to make the right decision and preserve this historical setting and view for future generations, as Justice Douglas once did. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

John Uhar
3039 Q Street, NW # 36
Washington, DC 20007
202-437-0700

email: jguhar@yahoo.com

word\guboathouse-no



P.O. Box 30703
Bethesda, MD 20824

January 20, 2005

RD LOG NO. 1/24-①

Mr. Joe Lawler
Regional Director
National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, SW
Washington, DC 20242

ATTN: Please make this document part of the public record of scoping for the Environmental Assessment for the proposed Georgetown University boathouse.

Dear Mr. Lawler:

I am writing you on behalf of the Board of the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail (CCCT), our 2200 members, and many thousands of Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) users regarding our concerns over a number of issues involved with the proposed Georgetown University Boathouse, and appreciate these concerns being taken into consideration in the scoping phase of the Environmental Assessment being conducted for that project. Let me start by saying that we feel the proposed site, immediately upstream of the WCC (also referred to as Tract 102-114), is not the most suitable site along the Georgetown waterfront for a boathouse to be used for a university rowing program due to limited space, difficult access, proximity to two very busy recreational trails, and potential conflicts and negative impacts on those user communities. Beyond that, the structure proposed for Tract 102-114 is most certainly inappropriate for that location. It is our belief that the EA will likely confirm both of those opinions, and the process can move forward with a boathouse for GU that is properly sited, and fits its location.

We understand the Park Service desire to open up more recreational and competitive boating opportunities along the Potomac River, and we are aware that removal of GU's racing shells from Thompson's Boathouse will make more space available for the high school rowing community, as well as other citizen rowers. We also understand that GU currently owns a parcel of land within the C&O Canal NHP, about a mile upstream from Key Bridge, and an access easement over the CCT to that parcel, and we agree that obtaining that parcel and removing the access easement to it would be a positive development for the Trail. However, we feel strongly that your office has been willing to give up far too much to GU in exchange for the parcel and easement. We feel that a much better resolution for all involved would be a swap for recently

acquired National parkland in what is called the Georgetown Waterfront Park (GWP), specifically a parcel immediately downstream from 34th Street. Development of a boathouse on that parcel would have few, if any, of the negative impacts that will exist with such a development on Tract 102-114, and we feel that *an examination of a site downstream from 34th Street should be included as an alternative location in this EA*. In fact, an EIS for the entire GWP, including the Non-motorized Boating Zone, should be done to determine the best sites for boathouses to be located. If for some reason, unforeseen to us at this time, a site downstream of 34th Street is determined to have too many negatives associated with it, we could reluctantly accept a university boathouse on Tract 102-114, but only if it is *much, much smaller than what is currently being proposed*. In a nutshell, we are saying that the Park Service should not be entering into an exchange to remove a negative from the CCT, while creating an even greater negative in so doing.

We look forward to your analysis of the issues enumerated below.

Sincerely,

Ernie Brooks
Chairman, Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail
brooksew@hotmail.com
contact@cctrail.org
(202) 726-6040

Issues we would like to see addressed in the EA

- 1) Actual, or effective narrowing of the useable trail surface -
Development of Tract 102-114 could negatively impact the first 0.2 miles of the CCT due to competition for space with the University's proposed separate access road to their boathouse. Any such narrowing could lead to less safe conditions than users have come to expect along the entire length of the Trail. A detailed report on how much, and what type of vehicular traffic is anticipated on the access road should be prepared as part of this EA, along with an assessment of the impacts of those vehicles on Trail users. This report should also include effects on Trail users during a lengthy construction period.
- 2) Tunnel effect along length of boathouse -
Due to the pre-existing canal embankment on the north side of the CCT, a boathouse structure immediately to the south of the CCT, with a length in excess of 280', and heights varying from 38'-50'4", would replace an open feel for trail users with a tunnel effect along that length. This effect could be somewhat mitigated by scaling back the width of a boathouse on that site, and lowering the side that faces the trail.
- 3) General size considerations -

The following document contains meeting notes showing Superintendent Doug Faris' requested changes of 4/9/1996 to the Exchange Agreement between GU and NPS.

The Defenders of Potomac River Parkland obtained the document from NPS through a Freedom Of Information Act request.

Regarding the Superintendent's concerns about the height of the proposed boathouse, please note on the second page an item referencing page 8 of the Exchange Agreement, in which he indicates that the height should be at, or below, the height of the neighboring Washington Canoe Club boathouse.

COMMENTS ON GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY LAND EXCHANGE

Glenn, I talked with Superintendent Faris this morning (April 9) regarding wording for the Quitclaim Deed and the Preliminary Agreement To Exchange Real Property. The following changes are needed based on the Superintendent's concerns.

Quitclaim Deed:

New inclusion re. open space language

line 4 - insert "collegiate" before "recreational boating".
This is requested as a result of concerns of our advisory commission that the boat house will be used by alumni and university friends and not strictly as a "boathouse for students" as was stated in the FONSI.

Language needs to define what can be stored: "only university boats" and kind and quantity of fuel to be stored. Are we talking of propane or fuel oil for the building or are we talking about boat motor fuel and if so how much fuel do they need for chase boats? 50 gallons? Also storage area is limited to 1500 sq. ft.

New inclusion re. ingress and egress.

The Superintendent is adamant that due to the sensitivity of the Capital Crescent Trail and its supports that the trail from the end of K Street to where ever the University accesses their boathouse be widened at their expense to the full 15 feet wide right of way so that bicycles can have an unobstructed trail. There is no way that a vehicle with or without a boat trailer can be on the trail in its present width without obstructing it.

Also the trail that will be used by vehicles such as DC firetrucks and construction vehicles needs to be reinforced to support that kind of weight. We need to get an engineer to assess the trail and develop specs to accommodate these heavier loads so that GU will know how much they will need to do before construct can begin.

Add sentence to restrict delivery of construction materials and equipment to after dark to minimize impact to trail users.

Modify second paragraph to state that the repairs made by the university to the CCT are to conform to NPS specifications.

Last paragraph: need to reemphasize that only temporary parking is permitted at the boathouse site itself.

Other Quitclaim Comments

pg 3. Add "collegiate" in line 3 before "recreational"
pg 6. Add "collegiate" in item 1. before "boating"

- What does "ancillary recreational" include in item 1.?
- pg 7. Same two comments as for pg 6. above for two places in first paragraph
- pg 8. First paragraph, section (b), the height of the GU boathouse should not be and higher than the existing historic boathouse of Washington Canoe Club. This height should be specified in this paragraph. 
- pg 9. First paragraph: Add "university" before "shell storage", and also before "sailing equipment".
 First paragraph: section (m) replace with "temporary parking for loading and unloading vehicles"
 First paragraph: Add "collegiate" before "boathouse" in the eleventh line.

Preliminary Agreement to Exchange Real Property

- pg 2. Section (i) Add "collegiate" before "recreational"
- pg 6. Line 6. "two days" is too short unless they already can provide us with a testing plan specifying how they will be testing, how heavy the equipment will be, impact on CCT use, etc. We should state "within 10 working days after receiving an acceptable work plan from the University's environmental consultants".
 Line 8. Add "and/or to the Capital Crescent Trail" after "Tract 102-114"
- pg 8. Line 1. Add "collegiate" after "non-motorized"
 Line 2. Define "ancillary" and add "collegiate" before "recreational"
- pg 9. First paragraph, section B. and section (iv) should read the same as comments for pages 8 and 9 of the Quitclaim Deed above.
 Section (iv) Add "collegiate" before "program"
- pg 10 Add "collegiate" before "boathouse"
- pg 13 Section (16), Line 10 Add "collegiate" before "boating"
- pg 15 Why are we reimbursing the University under item (20) since this is mutually beneficial to both of us.

ANN SATTERTHWAITE, AICP
PLANNING CONSULTANT
1615-34th STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 2007-2711
tel.:202-342-0203 fax: 202-337-8607
e-mail: ASatt@aol.com

18 January 2005

Office of Lands, Resources and Planning
National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive SW
Washington, DC 20242

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing as a concerned citizen who has been involved with the planning of the park on the Georgetown waterfront for almost thirty years and as a professional planner who has worked in recreation planning (Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission), conservation (Conservation Foundation), historic preservation (National Trust for Historic Preservation), and hiking/trails (Appalachian Trail Conference).

The Georgetown Waterfront Park has been a carefully planned park with an extremely open citizen participation process. The park will transform a derelict industrial city waterfront into a well-designed public waterfront park for varied passive and active recreational uses such as walking, jogging, rowing, canoeing, bicycling, or just looking at the spectacular views of the river. Throughout the planning process, considerable attention has been paid to the varied environmental aspects of the site as well as the historic features of the area.

The planning of the park began in the late 1970s. By the mid 1980s, the transfer of the land from the District of Columbia to the National Park Service was negotiated, boundaries for the park established, and a plan for the park was completed in 1987 by the Park Service. After extensive public involvement and careful attention to environmental compliance, this plan was approved by the Commission of Fine Arts, the National Capital Planning Commission, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. In late 1996, the Georgetown Waterfront Commission was established to assure the development of this park. The Commission has had over 50 public meetings, all announced in local newspapers and to local interested groups. Two sub-committees were organized, one on design and another boathouses. Both subcommittees held meetings that were open to the public and also reported their findings to the full Commission at its public meetings.

One of the most exciting aspects of the planning for this waterfront park has been the dramatic increase in non-motorized boating in this region. The early planning for this park in the late 1970s never anticipated the enormous demand for recreational boating, especially rowing, on the Potomac River. By the late 1980s, the National Park Service, realizing the growing interest in rowing, prepared a Non-Motorized Boating Study (1989). Yet in the decade after this Park Service study, the interest in boating had so swelled that the Georgetown Waterfront Commission

established a Boathouse Committee in March 1997 to further investigate sites for boathouses as Thompson's boathouse was filled beyond capacity with tens of shells being stored outside. How to cope with the overcrowding at Thompson's and to find ways of accommodating the high school rowers as well as Georgetown University and George Washington rowers and the individual rowers within the park as designed was the challenge facing this committee. The Boathouse Committee met many times, hired consultants, reported on four possible sites, and conducted a public "walk-through" of the proposed boathouse sites. The site proposed for the Georgetown University boathouse just west of the Washington Canoe Club was included in the "walk-through" and considered the most feasible site for the university's boathouse. The work of this Boathouse Committee was carefully coordinated with the Design Committee and the progress of both committees was reported back to the full Commission at many Commission meetings. At these meetings, many different points of view and concerns were raised. Two plans for the Georgetown University boathouse at the western site were discussed at several of the Waterfront Commission meetings as well as different boundaries for the Boathouse Zone. The current plan for the Boathouse Zone with the eastern boundary at 34th Street and the western boundary approximately 1100 feet west of Key Bridge was presented and approved by the Commission in 2001 as meeting all the Commission's concerns about environmental protection, access, boathouse operations, and design. The integrity of the park design, the protection of Capital Crescent Trail, the C& O Canal, and the Potomac River, and concerns for parking, security, access, and maximizing public usage were paramount in all discussions and decision-making.

Aside from the Georgetown Waterfront Commission's findings and decisions, the Georgetown University boathouse was been extensively reviewed and approved by the local ANC 2E, the Old Georgetown Board, The Commission of Fine Arts, and the DC Zoning Commission. All those review agencies had open meetings. The DC Zoning Commission's April 2004 decision spells out many of the critical access and use requirements to assure maximum public use and protection. Rarely has a project undergone such public scrutiny.

The Georgetown University boathouse is a collegiate training facility meeting Title IX standards and the Federal Emergency Management Agency requirements. The current boathouses along the Potomac River and the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia are not collegiate training facilities with Title IX and FEMA requirements, and, hence, are smaller than Georgetown's boathouse. However, careful attention was paid to assuring that the design of the Georgetown Boathouse would blend in architecturally with both the Potomac Boat Club and the Washington Canoe Club, add to the amenities of the Georgetown historic district, and protect the environment.

Until the mid 20th century, the overriding historic use of the Georgetown waterfront was industrial and commercial. Cement plants, Pepco facilities, rendering plants, and sundry commercial buildings lined the waterfront. The Dulles Interceptor Sewer coursed through the waterfront properties and most of the land, including the proposed site of the Georgetown University boathouse, was degraded fill. The nearby canal was not converted to a park until the late 1930s and even then its future was often threatened, most notably by a highway proposal in the 1950s. Converting this Georgetown waterfront into a park and utilizing a small portion of its banks for water-dependent boathouses is a remarkable transformation and public benefit.

For some of the specific comments about the boathouse:

I. The C&O Canal structure will not be damaged or threatened by the boathouse construction or operation.

2. The Capital Crescent Trail will not be used for access to the boathouse as a separate access path will be used only for fire and rescue vehicles, trash pick-ups, and delivering and retrieving boats.
3. The views from the C&O Canal may be marred for several seconds as one walks along the Canal, but those views are already marred for the entire distance in Georgetown except for the street openings and there are 180 miles of views ahead on the Canal.
4. Unlike the other boathouses along the Potomac River, which rent out their spaces for private parties, no private parties can rent the Georgetown boathouse for social functions
5. There will be no parking at the boathouse as students will walk or ride bicycles there and buses for visiting teams will unload at the main university campus.
6. The upriver site, owned by Georgetown University, is a natural area, which presents more environmental and access problems than the site west of the Washington Canoe Club.

All the review material available from the various review agencies as well as from the Georgetown Waterfront Commission will indicate what careful attention has been paid to the siting, design, and the uses of the Georgetown University boathouse as well as to the public concerns for the protection of the environment, the C&O Canal and the Capital Crescent Trail. The Georgetown Waterfront Commission, which has labored for over seven years to assure that the river's edge will provide the maximum public benefits for current and future generations, strongly supports the design and siting of the Georgetown University boathouse at the location approximately 1100 feet upstream from Key Bridge.

Sincerely



Ann Satterthwaite, AICP

FAX COMMUNICATION

FROM: ANN SATTERTHWAITE, AICP
1615-34TH STREET NW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20007-2711

FAX: 202-337-8607

TELEPHONE: 202-342-0203

TO: *Office of Lands, Resources + Planning*
NCR - NPS
Fax: 401-0017

DATE: *19 January 2005*

NUMBER OF PAGES (INCLUDING COVER SHEET): *4*

ADDITIONAL MESSAGE:

Grace Bateman
1508 33rd St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007

January 19, 2005

Mr. Joseph Lawler
Acting Regional Director
Land Resources and Planning
National Park Service
Washington, D.C.

RE: Environmental Assessment of The Georgetown University Boat House.

Dear Mr. Lawler:

I am writing to in response to the National Park Services' request for comments in connection with its Environmental Assessment of Georgetown University's proposal to construct a Boat House on the Potomac River west of Key Bridge.

I support the University's planned Boat House because it is a much-needed facility that will further the University's rowing program, and because it will be an asset to the community with no significant adverse impact on the environment. The University has taken extreme care to insure that the Boat House will not adversely effect nearby resources such as the C&O Canal, the Crescent Trail, and the Potomac shoreline. And because the University intends to construct the Boat House in full compliance with all FEMA regulations, and in a manner that will not adversely affect the interceptor sewer system which runs under the Boat House site, the project will not negatively affect the immediate site or surrounding areas.

In addition, the presence of the Boat House structure will not have a significant impact on the C & O Canal and Potomac River views, particularly when compared with the impact existing structures, such as the Washington Canoe Club, currently have on these resources. Moreover, the design for the Boat House is consistent with the design of existing waterfront structures in the area. Finally, given the University's long-standing practice of maintaining its facilities, the Georgetown University Boat House should enhance the Potomac River environment for many years to come.

Accordingly, I strongly support Georgetown University's Boat House, and urge the National Park Service to promptly complete all reviews so that the project can move forward.

Sincerely yours,

Grace Bateman



Arthur Fawcett
<chipfawcett@yahoo.co
m>

To: NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Comments on Georgetown Boathouse

01/13/2005 09:38 AM
PST

NPS:

This is to provide my comments on the Georgetown Boathouse after the January 12 scoping meeting. As background, I am a professional city planner, currently President of Washington Parks and People, and have rowed in this section of the river since 1958 as a member of the Potomac Boat Club.

There are a number of legitimate concerns about the project but, assuming that environmental questions are resolved, I support the boathouse on the proposed site.

I believe that the location of a boathouse in a park is an appropriate use. There are plenty of private boathouses located in parks throughout the nation--the most obvious example is the clubs and university boathouses in Faimount Park in Philadelphia. Rowing is clearly a recreational use, which is one of the primary uses for public parks. In this case, since Georgetown University would own the site it would not be literally on park land.

The size of the boathouse is of some concern. I would think that a useful compromise would be to bring the height down some. I believe, however, that the size proposed is necessary for a first-class university rowing facility.

As for possible damage to the boathouse from flooding and ice, the Washington Canoe Club and the Potomac Boat Club have survived these hazards for many years. The effect of the boathouse on the structure of the canal due to flow of water during floods needs to be investigated.

I do not believe that there are viable alternative sites. Sites on the Anacostia River are feasible, but make no sense--the Georgetown rowers must have non-automobile access to the boathouse and the travel time to the Anacostia would have a serious negative effect on the rowing program. The only other site that would be reasonable for programs would be down-river from Key Btridge; this has been eliminated in the Georgetown Waterfront Park planning process. The Dempsey's site is too small and would cause unacceptable congestion on the water for both Washington Canoe Club and Potomac Boat Club.

The public benefits of the proposal are obvious. Not only would it provide competitive experience and physical conditioning for the students, it would also

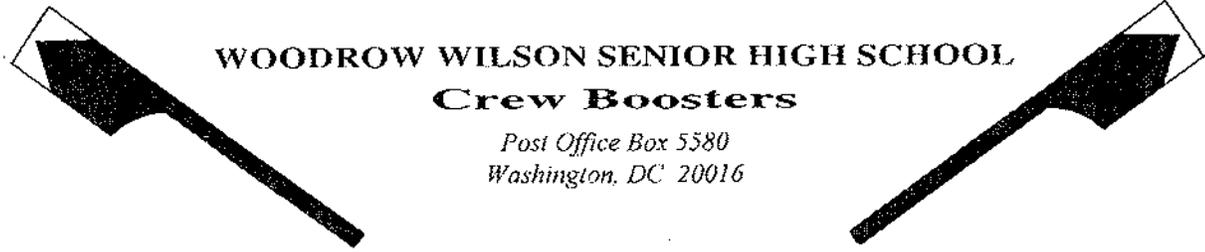
give them important exposure to the river environment.

Sight-line studies should be done, but any boathouse would block views of the river within a limited area.

The history of the site is mixed. Obviously before human settlement it was a completely natural area. But when I arrived in the area in the late 1950s there were ramshackle dwellings in this area. The human history of the Georgetown Waterfront was commercial and industrial. Rowing clubs were established there in the middle of the nineteenth century.

I would be very interested in talking to your consultants if they are carrying out interviews. My telephone number is (202) 797-7990.

Arthur Fawcett



WOODROW WILSON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Crew Boosters

Post Office Box 5580
Washington, DC 20016

NPS, National Capital Region

Woodrow Wilson Crew Boosters – the parents group that fully funds the only rowing program at a Washington DC public high school – fully supports the construction of a new Georgetown University boathouse. Unless this boathouse is approved in the near future, there will be insufficient boathouse storage space to accommodate the rapidly growing interest in rowing by students at Wilson and other area high schools. Our program, alone, has expanded from 60 to 95 students in the past three years; other high schools and colleges are experiencing similar increased interest.

Background

Wilson Crew Boosters is a non-profit organization founded 20 years ago to support a fledgling high school rowing program at Wilson Senior High School, the only public high school in the District of Columbia with a rowing program. Currently, 95 students at Wilson Senior High and Deal Junior High participate in a winter training program and spring racing season. It is probably the largest athletic program in the DCPS system. Historically, Wilson has produced many fine college rowers, many of whom have rowed in college and on the National and Olympic teams.

There are currently 12 high school programs and 3 collegiate programs that store shells and row out of Thompsons' Boat house. Recent construction by the Swedish Embassy has reduced storage space for Thompsons' and created an urgency for all scholastic and collegiate teams on the Potomac. If this space shortage is not addressed quickly – through the construction of the Georgetown boathouse – its quite possible that area high schools may have an insufficient number of storage spaces for boats, and be forced to turn away interested rowers.

Wilson Crew Boosters have worked for many years with Georgetown Waterfront Park and NPS to increase the number of boathouses on the Potomac in order to satisfy the growing interest in the sport of rowing. Georgetown and George Washington Universities agreed to build their own boathouses on lands exchanged with the park service in the boathouse zones for lands of similar value inside or adjacent to NPS lands in the vicinity. We have worked with, and supported, Georgetown's building of its own facility. (As it lacks its own boathouse, Georgetown shares the Thompson Boathouse with Wilson using the limited berths there to store its shells.) The DC school system provides no funding for the Wilson crew program and has no available funds to build its own boathouse.

Past public agreements have identified very narrow zones where boathouses are considered appropriate for the waterfront. Georgetown and George Washington agreed to build their own boathouses on lands exchanged with the park service in the zone identified through planning as suitable for boathouses for lands of similar utility and value in the vicinity. One of these sites is

PULL FOR WILSON CREW!



WOODROW WILSON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Crew Boosters

*Post Office Box 5580
Washington, DC 20016*

the site on which Georgetown University proposes to build a boathouse. The site has been used historically as a boat house site (see the photos on the Washington Canoe club website: <http://www.wcanoe.org/Gallery/Images/Archives/1930/images>.. These photos also portray a sense of historic activities on the waterfront.

As the NPS reviews the use of this site, we ask you to consider the positive impact the Georgetown Boathouse will have on the growth of high school crew on the Potomac – and the negative impact it will have should the boathouse construction be delayed or stopped. While some suggest that high schools should row on the Anacostia, frankly this is not a viable option due to transportation and scholastic issues (by the time our students would arrive by public transportation, it would be dark or close to dark).

Additionally, construction of the Georgetown Boathouse can provide benefits to the Potomac ecosystem – including turning a tract of land which is predominantly weedy species into a useable site which can be landscaped with native plants. While we believe that an engineering analysis needs to be completed to insure the building does not impact the C&O canal resources, this and other issues can be mitigated through discussions with Georgetown University.

We urge the NPS to consider the most strategic way to complete the NEPA compliance for this project. We agree an EA should be sufficient analysis however there appears to be significant opposition to the project which will not be reduced by any level of analysis. Therefore, it may be more expedient for the rowing community if an EIS is prepared. We need not remind you that these discussions have been on going for nearly 20 years and we hope it won't take another 20 before more boat storage space is available.

If you review the land exchange again, we hope your analysis will examine the benefits to the environment and the integrity of the park land along the Potomac.

As mentioned above, the construction of the Georgetown Boathouse has an urgent and significant impact on the health and growth of high school rowing, we urge you to complete your analysis as thoughtfully and efficiently as possible. Wilson High School Crew Boosters is available to provide NPS and the contractors with any data regarding high school rowing programs on the Potomac.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ann Aldrich, 202-363-3130
Bonnie Levin, 202-362-5787

Wilson Crew Boosters, Co-President's

PULL FOR WILSON CREW!



"Michael B. Kraft"
<mbkraft@mindspring.com>

To: <NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Sculling

01/21/2005 02:52 PM

EST

Please respond to
"Michael B. Kraft"

21 January, 2005

Greetings:

Thank you for inviting comments following up the Public Scoping Meeting January 11 in Georgetown. I am a sculler at Thompson's Boat Center, and attended the meeting with four other scullers from Thompson's.

While the meeting was focused principally on the proposed Georgetown University boathouse, comments were solicited for all issues relating to rowing and boathouses on this section of the Potomac and, indeed, our concerns are interlinked.

We object to the National Park Service proposal to move scullers from Thompsons to a new location at Key Bridge. We regret, also, that notwithstanding the fact that several hundred scullers use Thompsons throughout the rowing year, that many have been there for 25 years or more, and that Thompsons has been the principal Washington home for sculling instruction, sculling programs and sculling rentals from the beginning, scullers for the most part have not been brought in to the planning process nor have they been informed of meetings relating to National Park Service proposals. We learned of the January 11 through a last-minute heads-up from friends. The canoe and kayak lessees have been left out, as well.

We are very much aware of the growing need for space as high school and college program expand. Some schools already have worked out their own solutions; Gonzaga, for instance, has found new space on the Anacostia. A considerable amount of space at Thompsons will be freed up when Georgetown and George Washington universities have moved to their proposed new locations. If, after that happens, the National Park Service continues to feel the need to build a new boathouse at Key Bridge, we suggest such a facility be made available to sweep boats not already accommodated at Thompsons. By so doing, the National Park Service would eliminate at least one construction project, as there would be no need rebuild the scullers wing at Thompson's.

We are disappointed that the National Park Service has not made an effort to stay in touch with scullers or the other small boat owners at Thompsons, Although we are individuals, and are not organized in groups, our numbers have played a significant role at Thompsons from the beginning and we want to continue there.

The name and contact information for each leaseholder of small boats is available to the National Park Service in the Thompson's office.

Sincerely,

Mike Kraft
1929 Upshur St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20011
(202) 882-3178
mbkraft@mindspring.com



Gail Edie
<gail@johndie.com>
01/12/2005 08:27 AM
EST

To: NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov
cc: mbkraft@mindspring.com
Subject: Boathouse plans

To whom it may concern:

I am an avid sculler with a single scull stored at Thompson Boat Center. I have also been a high school girls' rowing coach for six years for a team based at Thompson's. I am therefore very familiar with all of the storage and capacity issues around this growing sport.

It is essential that scullers be kept informed of public meetings such as the one held January 11, and that this group of rowers be taken into account when examining various options for boathouse usage. We have several spokespeople whose e-mail addresses are easy to obtain and add to a communication list. Mine is one.

I consider myself to be as much or more a part of the Thompson's rowing community as the high school and college rowers, since my interest endures year after year and is part of my daily adult life. I am not in favor of moving to any other proposed facility because I depend upon the location of the Boat Center both for accessibility and for the environment on the river. I deserve to have the same opportunities to express my views as any other user of the facility.

Our community of scullers is less formally organized than other teams operating out of Thompson's yet we contribute significantly

- to the operating income;
- to upholding safety standards at the boathouse and on the river;
- to the atmosphere of collegiality and cooperation at the boathouse among diverse populations of rowers.

It is further essential that scullers be assumed to be part of the Thompson Boat Center community until such time as plans for another boathouse with the capacity to accommodate scullers be finally approved. Since such plans are not close to approval, any current plan for future use of Thompson's must include adequate storage space for the single and double sculls which it presently houses, and also for the use of all the facilities at Thompson's by our group of thirty or so adults.

Please let me know how I can receive a report or minutes from last night's meeting at the Lathan Hotel.

Gail Edie
Potomac, MD



gdalbers
 <gdalbers@verizon.net
 >
 01/19/2005 11:51 AM
 EST

To: NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov
 cc:
 Subject: Comments-EA scoping for Georgetown University boathouse. Please
 acknowledge receipt.

Please acknowledge receipt of these comments. Thank you.

4000 Massachusetts Avenue NW, #1510
 Washington, DC 20016
 January 17, 2005

Office of Lands, Resources, and Planning
 National Park Service
 1100 Ohio Drive, SW
 Washington, DC 20242

Re: Georgetown University boathouse EA Scoping

To Whom It May Concern:

Please include the following comments as part of the public record for
 scoping process
 for the Georgetown University boathouse proposal.

I urge you to evaluate the Georgetown University boathouse proposal
 through a
 programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which would encompass
 all
 boathouse needs for the universities, high schools, and the general
 public from the
 District of Columbia for crew, kayaking, and canoeing. The proposed
 Georgetown
 University boathouse is clearly a major federal project with
 significant effects on the
 environment. Please include a study of the following impacts and
 effects in the EIS.

I. Impacts and effects to study:

- A. Effects of placement and size of dock and of bank riprap
 and riverbank,
 - Impacts to Washington Canoe Club (WCC) boathouse
 Key Bridge, Potomac Boat Club or other river
 boaters from erosion
 or
 sediment buildup along banks or within the river.
 Engineering study
 needed. Consult environmental review for Clydes
 floating boat
 proposal.
 - Will dredging be required to maintain current
 boating uses by large
 and small boats using the river?

B. Impacts on kayakers and canoers using WCC boathouse.
 Historically,
 for safety,

crew has used the Virginia side of the river and the canoers and kayakers have used the DC side. The flatwater kayaks and canoes are very tipy, fragile and easily broken if impacted by fast moving boats such as those used in crew training. None of these racing boats maneuver easily to avoid a collision. The new dock and its use will impact the WCC racing lanes.

C. Loss of wetlands and the functions they serve at that site: abating flooding, filtering water (several sewers in area), and providing habitat for fish and wildlife.

D. Loss of wilderness to unnecessarily large structure. Other sites are available downstream. (NPS claims this land exchange removes an upstream sensitive parcel from development. It certainly appears that NPS dropped the ball when it did not acquire that parcel and access originally. Studying the details of this exchange, it appears evident this trade was set up to accelerate an exchange with GU in the first place.)

D. Physical Impacts to C&O Canal need engineering study.

- Water flow within canal
- Need to cut into the embankment to accommodate bike path and separate vehicle lane.

E. Physical Impact to WCC

- Engineering studies should analyze the impacts during and after construction including:
 1. Large heavy trucks moving on a narrow road immediately adjacent to WCC.
 2. Effects of "flow through design" on WCC building during flooding.
 3. Damage to WCC building from large 17 foot boat trailers hitting building on downstream side where the CCT and road constrict.
 4. Effects of movement of tons of fill may end up in the WCC boathouse.
 5. Damage to WCC from drilling and earth movement during construction.
 6. What will be increase in flooding wetlands upstream and "flow through" levels at WCC due to fill of design of new boathouse? What will be the ground level at new

site in relation to WCC?
will be the effects of
increased

How will flow be directed ? What

impervious surfaces upstream?

F. Size and design impact historic character of the existing
historic structures and sites (WCC and C&O Canal). Washington Canoe Club is
listed on the National Register of historic places. The EA/EIS should be in
conjunction with the 106 process.

Tow Path and 10
feet

Path.

"Washington Canoe Club will
boathouse on this tract by

structures-no taller than
WCC.

guidelines for
historic

river in District of
character of
the site.

- The proposed boathouse will be 23 feet above the

above Canal Road, obstructing views from the Tow

- The original EA actually recognizes the

be affected by the future erection of a

Georgetown University."

- Size should be consistent with existing

The proposed structure clearly exceeds the city

structures and the size is unnecessary.

- Consider views from the Tow Path, CCT, and the

Columbia as well as Virginia to maintain historic

G. Cumulative Impacts and Indirect Effects

waterfront should be
cumulative impacts on
auto traffic. Please
Boat Club,
boathouses planned
parking lot did not
would not fill

- All boathouse development along Georgetown
discussed in a programmatic EIS to address
views, parking, as well as bike, pedestrian, and
address parking for Washington Canoe Club, Potomac
shoppers in Georgetown, as well as the three new
for the waterfront. Previous discussion of a new
address details such as why shoppers in Georgetown
up the lot.

effect to the NPS of
value? The original
wishes to trade was

- What will be the cumulative impact and indirect
the precedent of trading public lands of unequal
appraisal for the upstream parcel Georgetown
deemed worthless by a NPS appraiser. The NPS

parcel Georgetown

property. This precedent is

U wishes to develop is valuable riverfront
not in the public interest.

effect of the

Will

boathouse upstream also?

happen, yet what

(turned Senator) from

precedent will have

additional boathouses

- What will be the cumulative impact and indirect
of developing parkland upstream of Georgetown?

other universities and colleges want their

Why just Georgetown? The NPS says this will not

will prevent some American University alumnus

putting the pressure on NPS to do so? The

been set. What will be the cumulative impacts of

upstream?

H.

Impacts to users of Capital Crescent Trail

the Tow Path and

- View-The proposed boathouse will be 23 feet above

10 feet above Canal Road!

corridor daily. It is better

where they will not tangle

the WCC and the new

- Hundreds of visitors traffic this recreational
to keep the 17 foot boat trailers downstream
with bikers and hikers and baby strollers behind

boathouse.

will pose a safety

- One section of the WCC is very constricting and
hazard to bikers and pedestrians on the trail.

I.

Impacts to sewer lines from truck traffic-sewer lines

under WCC,
Dempsey site

and at proposed boathouse site. heavy construction
trucks pose a hazard.

II. Alternatives

A. Universal boathouse below Key Bridge would hold over 150

boats,
enough

and
high school

for Georgetown University, George Washington University,

groups. parking and access would be easily
accommodated. The crew teams

prefer the downstream site as more accessible.

B. Anacostia River

C. Old Dempsey site

D. No Action-no boathouse in proposed location

III. The new boathouse proposal contradicts elements of city plans.

A. The National Capital Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan

for the

National Capital: Federal Elements, P. 184, February 2, 1989 states, "The C&O Canal National Historical Park should be preserved as a legacy of inland waterway development. It should also serve as a recreational area for non-motorized uses, such as bicycling, jogging, hiking and boating, though preservation of the park's historic resources should take precedence over the provision of recreational activities."

B. The 1987 plan for Georgetown Waterfront Park and 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."

IV. Mitigation

A. Parking for WCC and other boaters has not been carefully thought out. For some reason the NPS seems intent on obliterating the WCC from the waterfront by eliminating parking at their boathouse and by removing the fence protecting the boathouse. The Washington Canoe Club is an historic club and the prime location for training for flat water canoe and kayak competitors in the US. It has been the home of numerous Olympic contenders over the last 100 years. Yet, the NPS intends to remove parking from the site as well as the fence which protects the historic structure and provides safety for those using the club. Vandalism and theft occur even with the fence in place. I was almost accosted there once when the gate was left open. Parking along the waterfront is already a problem. The lot that NPS proposes will not accommodate all groups they envision using the waterfront. Will groups have designated spots? WCC boaters need to load and unload boats. Having them park elsewhere will cause further hazard to bikers and pedestrians. I imagine the NPS prefers shiny new buildings along the waterfront, however, WCC is an 100 year old historic working boathouse which is flooded every few years. You should see this majestic structure from below Key Bridge on the Virginia side of the river! It is truly beautiful, fits into the landscape and adds to the charm of the waterfront! I hope that those

working on the EA can have
the opportunity to see this historic structure and
shoreline from the river.

B. Mitigation during construction
a. Protective barriers for WCC and canal from trucks
during and after
construction
b. Escrow fund for repairs to WCC and canal before
and after construction
c. Barge the tons of soil fill required for the
project
upstream to avoid
damage to structures and to avoid interference
with users of CCT and to
protect sewer lines.

C. Place rowing tank on campus. It makes the boathouse too
large and
does
not need to be used on the river. In cold weather
during tank us students
would rather be closer to campus anyway.

D. If GU boathouse is placed upstream of WCC, sound practices
for management
of the boating lanes should be discussed and resolved
now, not left to GU to decide.

E. Enforceable use restrictions for the new boathouse should
be in place. if not,
congestion from cars will impact other users of the
waterfront as well as bikers
and hikers on the CCT. How will restrictions be enforced?

F. Would it not be in the public interest for NPS to else
the boathouse land for
100 years instead of turning it over to a private entity
or at least requiring this
valuable property be returned to the public should GU
become fiscally insolvent
and need to sell the property? Rowing may not be popular
in 50 years, or NPS
may wish to add restrictions to the use. Why should GU
be allowed to make a
profit off public parkland!

G. A new boathouse built on public land should provide
facilities for
high schools or
the public. It should be a public boathouse open to
various groups!

Issue: It is inappropriate for the NPS to be co-sponsoring a project
for private
development! Sally Blumenthal and John Parsons should recuse
themselves from
the NEPA process. I do not understand why the NPS has spent countless
hours at taxpayer
expense promoting this private development.

Thank you for this opportunity to participate in the public process. I am not opposed to boathouses, but hope the outcome of this project can be concluded with the best interests of ALL public users of parkland in mind, not just those of a few private university students and alumni. The location and size of the proposed boathouse need careful and objective review. An appropriately sized and designed universal boathouse located downstream would serve everyone's needs.

Sincerely,

Gerardine Albers
202-362-2605
gdalbers@verizon.net



"Walter Wells"
<waluwells@verizon.net
>

To: <NCR_georgetownboathouse@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Proposed Private Boathouse, C&O Canal National Historical Park

01/14/2005 10:44 AM
EST

Thank you for the opportunity of submitting these comments and for arranging for the scoping session at the Latham Hotel on 11 January. It was an informative meeting.

1. Construction and use of the proposed boathouse , being a new privately owned facility within a National Park, is unacceptable. Granted that the C&O Canal NHP has a range of private ownerships within its borders, it should not allow such a major departure from the range of current inholdings.
2. Presumably, NPS would be losing all control over how this facility could be used, if built. One can imagine that it would be very attractive for Georgetown University to use it for activities having little or anything to do with its alleged principal purpose or the purposes now supported and included within the mission of the National Park Service.
3. The proposal would establish a precedent for allowing other privately owned and operated facilities. Applications for allowing additional facilities would be extremely difficult if not impossible to reject or control.
4. The proposed land transfer is inequitable. The upstream parcel which may be acquired by NPS has "value" only if it allowed to remain as it now is. Relative proximity to wheeled access is no reason to allow the proposed structure to be erected regardless of its environmental impact.
5. Access to this proposed structure and nearby parking areas are both very limited. What the magnitude of the demand for these amenities and how any anticipated problems would be resolved needs to be fully examined.
6. Little mentioned, while I was at the scoping session, was the matter of who owns what and the terms of the ownership or leasing of lands included within the C & O Canal NHS, at least within the District of Columbia. This information should be included in either the EA or EIS.
7. While one can assume that the immediate environmental effects of the proposed structure or modifications thereto can be addressed and remedied, such as constrictions to river flow, ice flow, scouring of the Canal embankment, effect on other structures including the sewer line, the visual impact cannot be minimized. Now, once west of the Whitehurst Freeway, one has the feeling of getting out in the open to enjoy what the Canal is and has been. The proposal for the boathouse ignores this aspect and, further, cannot respect it.
8. Finally, I have been an occasional walker along the Towpath for 31 years. Included in this use is my having led a 10-mile walk on New Year's Day for most of those years. As said above, I always welcomed coming out into the open with the view of the Potomac River, once west of the Whitehurst Freeway. Don't ruin this gateway.

Walter Wells



"Paul Pollinger"
<pollinger@worldnet.att
.net>

01/20/2005 10:56 AM
EST

To: <NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: EA questions on G'town Boat House

I sent an earlier email concerning the proposed Georgetown boat house with questions about what happens when the Potomac River goes above flood stage. That was the day before the actual hearing. Could you please include that statement as being in the hearing if it is not already the case. Thank you.

Additional questions for the EA.

Is it too late to place the Georgetown boathouse at the proposed Swedish Embassy site close to where Thompsons is right now?

Is the Fletcher Boat House site an acceptable site? If not, what are the reasons. It seems to me that this is an ideal solution and you will note that many boathouses are quite far from their University campus.

If the present site happened be part of a pre planned trade for an upstream site. How is it that the access rights were separated from the land acquisition since at one point they seemed to be together at the time the Park Service executed the deal? This is pertinent to the statement that was published that Park Service never thought that the up river site was useable or equal to the trade. Would it be possible to publish all the details of the initial acquisition of the upstream site?

The Architect and the University made the statement that the rowing tanks and exercise rooms had to be at the river site to attract new rowers from the Georgetown campus. I and others question their qualification and expertise in making such a marketing statement? Would not a rowing tank on campus do this in an equal or superior manner? Could some marketing professionals be included in evaluating such statements?

Please make the above part of the EA hearing for the Georgetown Boat House site.

Paul G. Pollinger
3713 Fulton St. NW
Washington, DC 20007-1343
202 333-6976

Feb. 8, 05

Dear Sara Blumenthal,

As a resident of many years
in the Watergate, I had a
beautiful view up the river
where the canoe club is.

I can't believe there could
be a tug boat house right nearby.
Please don't let them do it!

Sincerely,

Heben Young

(Sorry about my
uphill writing, I'm
nearly 85 + can't
help it.)

NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC
SOCIETY

SUSAN WELCHMAN
Illustrations Editor
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE

Jan. 20, 2005

00283/2
PO 1/27

RD LOG NO. 2/4-①

Dear Director Minella,

As a 25 year member of the Washington Canoe Club, bike commuter on the towpath, and environmentalist I urge you to investigate thoroughly Georgetown University's and the National Park Service's collaboration in the new Boat House adjacent to our club. In work and in life I abhor apparent disregard for wild places by abusive citizens. The construction of this monster to benefit the few is flagrant disregard for the land.

1145 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-4688

Telephone: (202) 857-7141

Fax: (202) 775-6155

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S. Welchman

152



"frank morgan"
<frankmorgan51@hotmail.com>

09/02/2004 10:19 PM
AST

To: schuette@enews.nrl.navy.mil, davidwiner@erols.com,
seawalk@starpower.net, brooksew@hotmail.com
cc: brangmaa@georgetown.edu, John_Parsons@nps.gov,
sally_blumenthal@nps.gov, terry_carlstrom@nps.gov
Subject: GUB at Dempsey

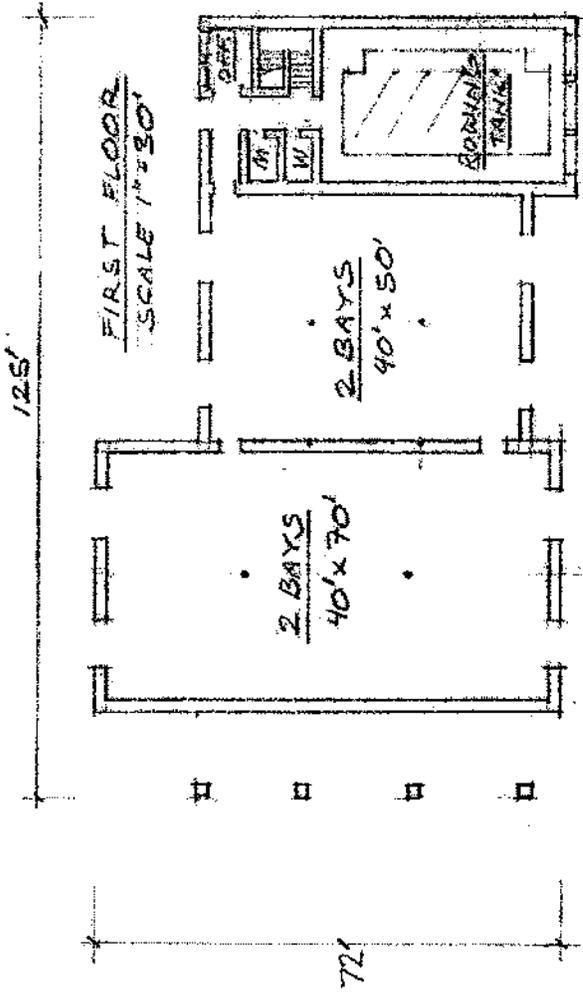
Larry, Dave, Sally, and Ernie,
Attached is a design which shows how a boathouse for Georgetown might fit onto the old Dempsey site; as you can see the space is tight but it seems to handle about 7500 s.f. which is almost exactly half the total area of the site (Dave, I used the more conservative of the site boundary lines you gave me); given an FAR of 50% for boathouses this just makes it; "GUB at Dempsey" is a few feet taller than "Collegiate Reduced" to underscore the connection to the main campus, and because I felt the site could handle it; all in all Dempsey just seems like a better place to put a boathouse than the site west of WCC; best, Frank Morgan

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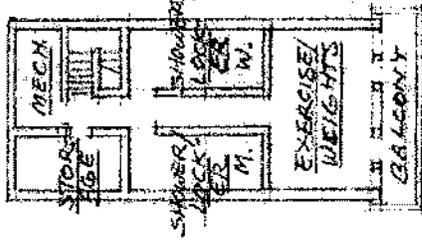


GUB at Dempsey 9-1-04.jpg

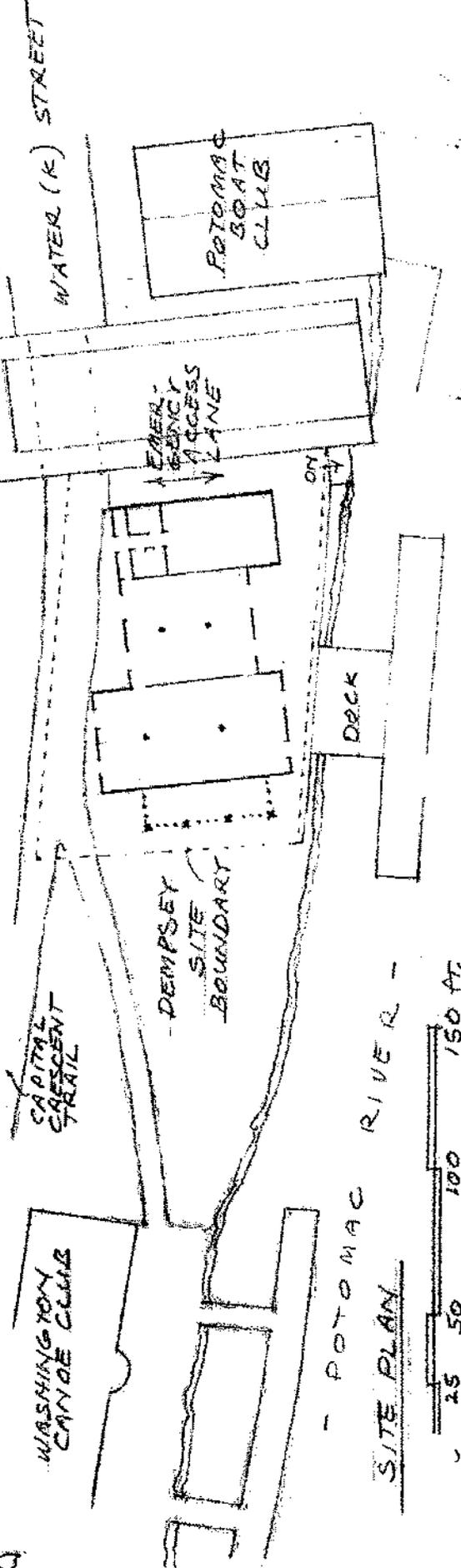
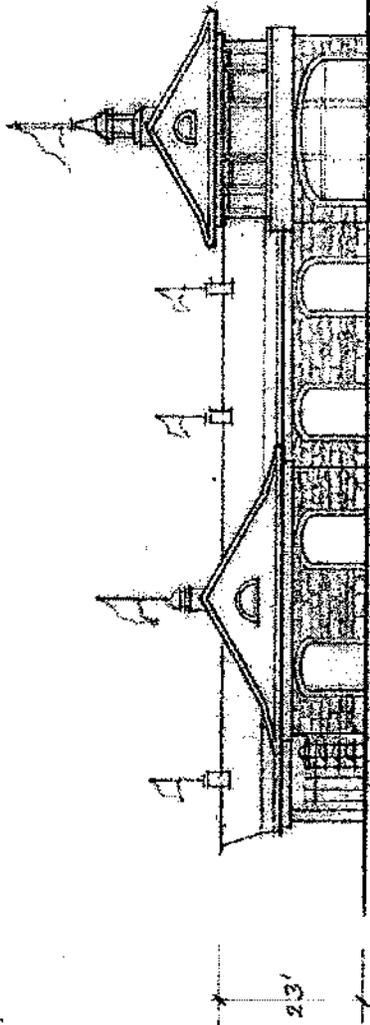
DESIGNER: FRANK MORGAN DATE: 9.1.04



30'
SECOND FLOOR
SCALE 1/4" = 30'



TOTAL SITE S.F. = 15,000
 FIRST FLOOR S.F. = 7500
 (INCLUDES OPEN STORAGE)
 SECOND FLOOR S.F. = 900
 TOTAL S.F. = 8400



TOP: LARRY SCHUTTE, DAVE PINER, SALLY STRAIN, ERNIE BROOKS
 RE: GUB AT DEMPSEY (COLLEGIATE REDUCED)



Scuby
<scuby@aasdcad.com>

01/17/2005 07:21 AM
EST

Please respond to scuby

To: NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Possibly Spam: Boathouse

I strongly Oppose the construction of the Boathouse by Georgetown University. The C&O Canal exists not only because of the efforts of the National Park Service, but many volunteers contribute to its existence. Once you start to take away what makes it so special to so many it will lead to its decline. I Urge the Park Service to Oppose the Construction of the Boathouse so that the enjoyment of the C&O Canal will not be compromised for so many for the enjoyment of so few.

Thank You

John Betting



Lcyj8@aol.com
01/16/2005 06:00 PM
EST

To: NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Proposed construction

As a Member of the C&O Canal Association, and along with my wife a "Level Walker" at Level 47, I would like to add my concern and objection that National Park land, and a very vulnerable national treasure is being given away, or traded away, to a private institution.

From the descriptions of the boathouse I have read, and its location along the Canal, it seems both inappropriate and illegal to offer this land to the university.

We in Maryland, have just been reading about how our governor Bob Ehrlich has attempted to give/sell state park land to private investors. Is this a trend?

Hoping you will not capitulate to political pressures or financial gain.

L. Carroll Yingling, Jr.
3900 N. Charles Street, #303
Baltimore, MD 21218
USA



Bert & Pat
<buybook@earthlink.net>

To: NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Oppose Georgetown Boathouse

01/16/2005 03:10 PM
EST

Dear Sirs:

I strongly oppose the proposed Georgetown University boathouse to be built within the C&O Canal National Historic Park. I believe that all Park property should be maintained in as natural a state as possible and not altered for the benefit of a small minority.

Furthermore, this plan sets a terrible precedent, encouraging the continued private development of Park lands.

Bert Lustig
3476 Mauzy Rd.
Berkeley Springs, WV 25411

Bert and Pat at Buy the Book, Berkeley Springs, WV



"Bill & Pat Brown"
<wnbrown@msn.com>
01/15/2005 08:53 PM
EST

To: <NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov>
cc: <fred.mopsik@verizon.net>, <presto77@verizon.net>
Subject: PROPOSED GU BOATHOUSE

Comments before the National Park Service's Office of Lands, Resources & Planning, Jan. 11, 2004, on the proposed development of NPS Land along the Potomac River North of the Washington Canoe Club and South of Foundry Branch by The Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia

I am William Brown, the president of the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia. Founded on December 7, 1865, the AOI is the District's oldest, continuously active civic association. It was founded immediately following the Civil War by 31 prominent citizens and businessmen in an effort to restore the capital's dignity and to keep alive the reminiscences of the past history of our city and, more importantly, to emphasize respect for local government authority and national patriotism above the sectional differences which existed after the Civil War. And it is our quest for local government authority and pride in our natural environment that has compelled us to comment this evening on this issue.

In his photo-essay, "Along the Potomac," AOI's immediate past president Dr. Philip W. Ogilvie, who passed away September 2002, remarks, "In the...60-years [since the formation of the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin] the river has recovered much of its biological potential as pollution has been reduced and land practices have been improved." I can attest to this personally, as the C&O Canal and Potomac River banks - my playgrounds as a child - have improved to the extent that one is no longer disgusted by the stench that once befouled it's recreational potential. Now much improved, the river and its environs are today threatened by visual pollution and access limited only to those able to pay for it.

The proposal to develop the eastern shoreline of the Potomac above the Washington Canoe Club should not be allowed to proceed. This property should be maintained, as is, with no construction upstream of existing structures. The Potomac Palisades must be protected and maintained as close to its natural state as possible. We must not follow the lead of Arlington and Fairfax Counties and permit the monstrosities which now clutter the Virginia shoreline of our river. The proposed boathouse would not only contribute to the visual clutter of the shoreline from the Virginia side of the river, but - worse - block views of the Potomac, the Key Bridge, Roosevelt Island and the Alexandria Aqueduct remains from both the C&O Canal Towpath and the Capital Crescent Trail. Hikers, bikers and joggers have grown accustomed to these views as they approach Georgetown and it would be a crime to deprive park and trail visitors of these scenes in perpetuity.

The AOI fully supports the use of the Potomac River for recreational boating and aquatic sports - with the exception of personal water craft, e.g., jet-skis - for all visitors to enjoy. We object to the private, exclusive nature of the proposed boathouse and its party rooms which will be available only to those who can afford to pay for it. Georgetown University should consider a boat house down stream from the existing boathouses or, better yet, partner with the National Park Service to design and build a private-municipal boathouse to better suit the needs of their students and the boating public at large between the Georgetown Waterfront Park and the Aqueduct.

The Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia

strongly recommends that the Park Service maintain this parcel as undeveloped and not permit any construction up-stream from the existing historic structures (Alexandria Aqueduct and Washington Canoe Club).

Thank you for your consideration of our position on this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

William N. Brown, President



"Ruth Lederle"
<lederlerj@comcast.net
>

To: <NCR_Georgetownboathouse@NPS.gov>
cc: <seawalk@starpower.net>
Subject: Proposed Georgetown University Boathouse

01/18/2005 11:52 PM
EST

Mr. Joe Lawler
Regional Director, National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, SW
Washington, DC 20242

Dear Mr. Lawler: I would like to tell you about my concern and dismay regarding the proposed Georgetown University boathouse:

1) What prompted the National Park Service to even consider a land swap totally unequal in value?

2) Why did GU acquire that parcel of land upstream that is in the flood plain and both undesirable and unsuitable for a boathouse?

3) Why is the National Park Service so interested in seeing that GU gets the boathouse of THEIR DREAM on national park land? I have attended several public meetings at which the GU boathouse came up for discussion. In each of these meetings, the first one dating back to January 2003, the representative of the NPS were in absolute favor of the land swap and building plans as presented by GU. I am really flabbergasted at this. I understand that there is a need for more rowing and general non-power boating facilities, but the plan to provide GU with a private boathouse on public land to boot does not come close to addressing this need.

4) What does the public gain if the present GU plans are implemented? The answer is: NOTHING POSITIVE. The negative aspects to the public are numerous.

- a) It would be a real threat to the structure of the C&O Canal.
- b) It would cause an unsafe bottleneck for bikers, hikers, rollerbladers and pedestrian users of the Capitol Crescent Trail.
- c) Removing 1/4 acre of trees would make the historic Washington Canoe Club just downstream of it very, very vulnerable in times of flooding and ice flows.
- d) The far protruding boat ramps would impede river usage by other boaters and cause undesirable silting.
- e) Building over the big and aging sewer pipe is an additional concern.
- f) Undesirable views from the Virginia shore, from the river, as well as from the C&O Canal, are a given.
- g) It would set a bad precedent for future private use of park land.

These are just a few obvious points that come to mind. In addition, I am sure there are others not so immediately obvious which also in no way have a positive impact. As an alternative building site for GU, the Anacostia riverfront is begging for private and public development and usage.

Please scrap this Georgetown University project as presently planned. Present and future generations will thank you.

Respectfully,

Joe Lederle
308 N. Greenbrier Street
Arlington, VA 22203
703-527-2924
lederlerj@comcast.net



"Charon Coonfield"
<cjcoonfield@comcast.net>

01/17/2005 07:25 PM
CST

To: <NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Proposed Georgetown University Boathouse

I want to formally state my concerns regarding the GU boathouse proposed to be built within the C&O Canal National Historic Park. How did this grow from a 4000 sq ft structure to a 18,900 sq ft structure with a 75 ft dock? How can you support this use of OUR public land for GU's private use? Will they let me dock my kayak there? I doubt it.

GU has other land they can use upstream. Has this really be looked at as a viable location, or are we just willing to take their word for it.. Currently I live in TX, where only 3% of the land is not privately owned. Let me tell you, public land, for public use is precious. Please look into this proposal more closely. Don't just let this happen and loose the land, the view, the ability for all of us to enjoy the canal.

Thanks for listening. Sincerely,

Charon J. Coonfield
3939 Holly Hill Dr
Grand Prairie, TX 75052
972-237-1903
cjcoonfield@comcast.net



"David Elliot"
<delliot7@hotmail.com>
01/19/2005 09:38 AM
EST

To: NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Possibly Spam: C&O NHP

Office of Lands, Resources, and Planning
National Capital Region
National Park Service
Washington, DC

Email - NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov
Fax - 202-401-0017

Dear Sir/Madam:

My family and I regularly use the C&O as an escape from the hustle of urban living. We enjoy the ease of access to the trail from Georgetown.

The idea of giving/exchanging land with Georgetown Univ seems absurd.

Why would we trade land solely for the benefit of the University, at the expense of the general public's access to the NHP?

I am asking that this issue be rejected, shot dead, stopped, abandoned, or whatever else would keep the NHP as is.

Thanks

David Elliot

[Claim your Space NOW! Have fun sharing blogs, photos and music lists online.](#)



"Roberta Gutman"
<roberta.gutman@world
net.att.net>

01/19/2005 09:55 AM
EST

To: <NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Preserve the Capital Crescent trailhead!

Please preserve the head of the Capital Crescent Trail from Georgetown University encroachments on this beautiful piece of public land. The trailhead has a simple, natural beauty and is widely used. It is a local and regional, if not national, treasure. PLEASE PRESERVE IT FROM DEVELOPMENT AND KEEP IT FOR WHAT IT WAS INTENDED: PUBLIC USE!!! Thank you.--Roberta Gutman, Capitol Hill



Benjamin Stern
<bstern3@yahoo.com>
01/19/2005 07:07 AM
PST

To: NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Impact of Boathouse on the Park Experience

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a frequent visitor to the C&O Canal National Historic Park. In addition to hiking and biking on the section from Georgetown to Great Falls countless times, I have bicycled the entire towpath once, and hope to do so again this fall.

It is an experience unlike any other to arrive at our nation's capital after for travelling for several days, or just several hours, along the wooded and rustic trail that tells the story of our nations growth and development. In considering the impact of the proposed Georgetown University boathouse, please consider the particular importance of that location, where after almost 185 miles, the towpath reaches its destination. The transition from canal to city is, I believe, a crucial part of the experience of the C&O National Historic Park. That experience would be diminished by the presence of a structure that is too high and too large for its location.

I believe that the location in question is a perfectly good place for a boathouse, provided that the structure is humble in both size and style. Any structure that is more than a few feet higher than the level of the towpath would seem out of place, and would diminish the unique experience that this park provides.

Thank you,
Benjamin Stern
1 Crystal Rock Ct
Germantown, MD 20874
301-515-8596

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"Kathryn Derdich"
<k.derdich@worldnet.at
t.net>

01/19/2005 10:27 AM
EST

To: <NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: GU Boathouse Concerns

I am a C&O Canal Towpath and Capital Crescent Trail bike rider and am very concerned about the proposed GU Boathouse building. I think it is a mistake to allow private use of this very historic public lands.

I think this huge building would deprive all US citizens that currently own the land of valuable use and appreciation of the area for the sake of a few privileged GU rowers.

Sincerely,
Kathryn A. Derdich
540 Oberdick Drive
McKeesport, PA 15135



"Jessie Harris"
<jes405@hotmail.com>
01/19/2005 09:31 PM
GMT

To: NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: boathouse

I hope that you will not approve Georgetown University's plan to establish a large boathouse. I see no reason that many people would be disturbed in their use of the C & O Canal Park for the exclusive benefit of a few. Furthermore it is likely that such a use would adversely affect the wildlife, vegetation, wildlife habitat etc. We are blessed to have such a magnificent Park. The Park should not part with any of its land without getting an environmental and aesthetic return of at least equal merit

Jessie Harris, Georgetown University graduate

Jessie M. Harris
Flower and Nature Photography
4401 W St. NW DC 20007
Tel 202-338-9083
<http://www.agpix.com/photographer/prime/A0030320.html>



Eric Powell
<eric_po@yahoo.com>
01/20/2005 07:01 AM
PST

To: NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Against GU Boathouse proposal

Let me briefly voice my objections to the GU Boathouse plans. I am in agreement with most of the arguments that I've heard against the boathouse, but there are a few points I haven't heard from anyone else.

Being an Arlington resident, I enjoy walking across Key Bridge into the District for the views -- on the downriver side is the vibrant city, and on the upriver side are trees. Just trees. You have to look carefully to notice the Washington Canoe Club building from the bridge, and lean out to see the Potomac Boat Club. It has always amazed me that as large an urban area as Washington has such a special amenity. The proposed GU Boathouse will significantly impair the view, and I feel, destroy one of Washington's unique qualities.

Second, I have checked the satellite views of the river. Going upstream from about Wilson Bridge, there is NOT ONE SINGLE WOODED AREA along the north side of the Potomac until you reach the proposed GU Boathouse site. The Virginia side is nearly as void of trees below Key Bridge. Roosevelt Island being the primary exception. Where is the justification for pushing nature even further from most citizens of the city?

In the summer when it's all green, the Crescent Trail feels quite remote. Pushing the tree-line even just a few hundred yards further upstream, and squeezing the trail behind the GU Boathouse, will undoubtedly reduce the number of people that discover the serenity that can be found there.

I have to say that I am opposed to any construction on that particular site. I am all for a public boathouse below Key Bridge, allowing recreational access upstream. But a massive private boathouse clearing a rare wooded lot and impairing views from both sides of the river, I find truly objectionable. Having no environmental impact study is adding insult to injury.

Sincerely,

Eric Powell
(Georgetown University alumnus)
Arlington, VA
703-243-2159