

PUBLIC INFORMATION PACKET

For the

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

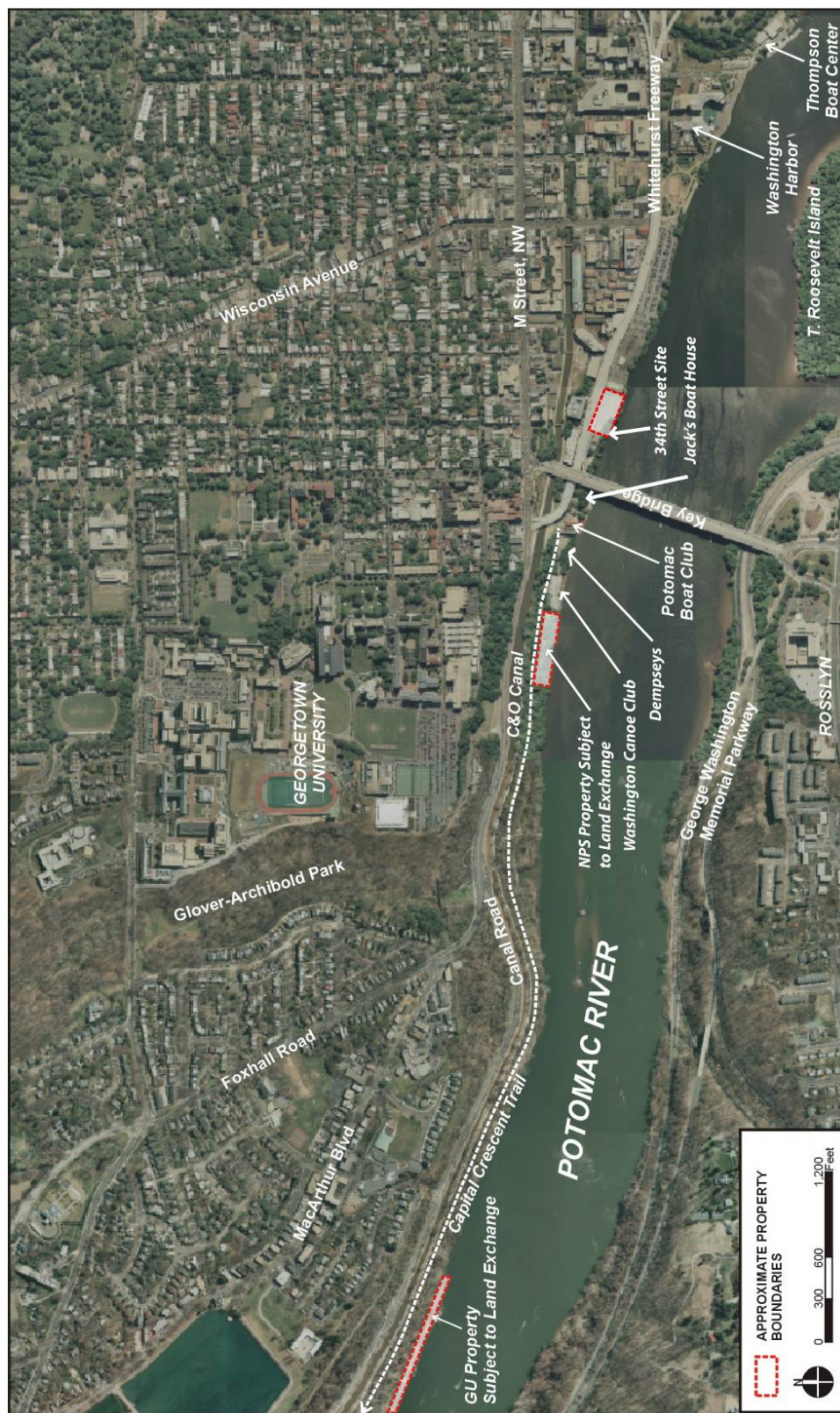
Regarding the

PROPOSED LAND EXCHANGE AND GEORGETOWN BOATHOUSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



National Park Service
National Capital Region
Washington, DC

December 11, 2007



Location Map

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Park Service will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze the impacts associated with a land exchange between Georgetown University (the University) and the National Park Service (NPS) and the impacts associated with the construction of a proposed boathouse for the University on a site within the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal NHP). The EIS 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.

Background and History

In 1995 the NPS conducted an Environmental Assessment (EA) on a proposed land exchange of the site owned by the University within the boundaries of the C&O Canal NHP and a site located within the non-motorized boathouse zone established by the Georgetown Waterfront Park Plan. This EA resulted in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

In 1997, the NPS signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office that contained a provision that the proposed University Boathouse would not have a footprint greater than 15,000 square feet. Since the University subsequently proposed an 18,600-square-foot boathouse, an amendment to the MOA was required. As part of that process, the NPS conducted public meetings in June and July 2004 to determine whether to revise the MOA. As a result of those meetings and additional written comments, the NPS determined that an EA should be undertaken for the construction of the proposed boathouse. NPS released an EA on the proposed boathouse for public comment from April 25 through June 15, 2006, and held a public open house on the EA. Approximately 2,500 comments were received.

Based on comments received on the 2006 EA, and pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), NPS has determined an EIS that will evaluate both the proposed land exchange and the construction impacts of the proposed boathouse is the proper NEPA compliance document. For this reason, NPS will prepare an EIS to analyze potential environmental impacts from the proposed action, the range of reasonable alternatives, and mitigation options. The EIS will be prepared in compliance with NEPA and applicable regulations, including NPS Director's Order 12 and Interior Departmental Manual at 516 DM.

The EIS will consider alternative actions. Those alternatives may include:

- Construction of a boathouse with a footprint of 18,682 square feet on the NPS-owned site within the C&O Canal NHP, which is described as Alternative C in the 2006 EA;
- Construction of a boathouse with a footprint of 15,000 square feet on the NPS-owned site within the C&O Canal NHP;
- Construction of a University Boathouse east of 34th Street on an NPS-owned site within the Georgetown Waterfront Park;
- Construction of a University Boathouse upon the site owned by the University; and
- A No Action alternative, which would not require this land exchange and would involve the continued use of the Thompson's Boat Center to house the University's rowing program.

Topics for analysis may include the constructability of the boathouse and/or by-right development on the University-owned site; natural, cultural and intangible resource values of the University-owned site; hydrology within the project area; possible impacts on wildlife; possible wetlands; balancing uses on the Capital Crescent Trail; and the cumulative impacts of the project in combination with the Washington Canoe Club, Potomac Boat Club, Jack's Boats, Dempsey's boathouse site, potential George Washington University boathouse and Thompson's Boat Center.

The NPS invites interested agencies, organizations, and members of the public to submit comments or suggestions to assist in identifying significant environmental issues and in determining the appropriate scope of the EIS. Written comments on the scope of the EIS are invited. The public scoping period begins with the December 11, 2007 public scoping meeting and will continue until at least January 18, 2008.

Comments and suggestions on the scope of the EIS should be addressed to: Kevin Brandt, Superintendent, C&O Canal NHP, 1850 Dual Highway, Suite 100, Hagerstown, Maryland 21742.

Please visit the project web site for updates and the opportunity to submit comments online:
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/choh>

PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENT FORM

**PROPOSED LAND EXCHANGE AND GEORGETOWN BOATHOUSE
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Comments:

Address: _____

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