

March 15, 2012

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Mr. Anthony Hood, Chairman
Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Re: **Z.C. Case No. 06-11F/06-12F**
GW Foggy Bottom Campus Plan / PUD – Square 102
The George Washington University Museum (“GW Museum”)
Supplemental Pre-Hearing Statement of the University

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Commission:

Pursuant to 11 DCMR Section 3013.8, The George Washington University (“University”) hereby files its supplemental pre-hearing statement for the above-referenced case.

Background

The property that is the subject of this application is located in the southwest corner of Square 102 (“Property”). The Property consists of approximately 13,811 square feet of land area, and is located in the R-5-D Zone District. The Property is part of the University’s 2007 Foggy Bottom Campus Plan, which was approved by the Zoning Commission in Order No. 06-11 / 06-12. In conjunction with the approval of the Campus Plan, the Commission also approved a first-stage PUD, which identified 16 development sites on the Campus for future improvements (together, “Campus Plan / PUD”). The Property was designated as a future development site for academic / administrative / medical use.

On November 2, 2011, the University filed an application for second-stage approval of a PUD in order to permit the construction of the GW Museum on the Property. The GW Museum will be located at the corner of 21st and G Streets, in an infill building to be constructed on the Property along 21st Street as well as in the Woodhull House, which is a landmark listed in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites and the National Register of Historic Places (“Project”). Since

the filing of the initial pre-hearing statement, the University has continued to refine the design and operation of the Project in response to comments from the Commission, Office of Planning (“OP”), the Historic Preservation Review Board (“HPRB”), the Historic Preservation Office (“HPO”), the District Department of Transportation (“DDOT”), Advisory Neighborhood Commission (“ANC”) 2A, and community representatives, including the West End Citizens Association (“WECA”). The additional changes are discussed below.

Loading Access

As detailed in a Transportation Assessment prepared by the Applicant’s transportation consultant, the Project will have a negligible adverse impact on the surrounding transportation network. See Exhibit A.

As a part of the project design, the University proposes a new curb cut on 21st Street NW between G Street NW and H Street NW. This curb cut is needed to enable interior loading that is generally a requirement for new museum construction and is critically important for the proposed facility, which will house fragile artifacts. As detailed in an affidavit prepared by the University’s expert on museum uses and attached as Exhibit B, the lack of an interior loading facility would adversely impact the ability of the Museum to secure loans of certain exhibitions and artifacts and could also pose an unacceptable risk to the Textile Museum and Washingtoniana exhibits as well as other GW collections:

- **Industry-accepted standards of care for state-of-the-art museum construction require an interior loading facility for the care and protection of artifacts.** In general, interior facilities are needed to minimize object handling, protect objects from exposure to the elements, and maximize security. Here, the fragile content of the artifacts that will be displayed in the Museum requires an interior loading facility. The primary content of the Museum is associated with the Textile Museum and will largely consist of textiles and related artifacts (often of great rarity and fragility) that are climate sensitive and require constant protection and careful handling. Similarly, the documents and artifacts associated with the Washingtoniana collection will require careful handling.
- **The storage and conservation plan for the Museum requires an interior loading facility.** The Museum lacks on-site space for storage and conservation activities because of its downtown location. This activity will take place at a new resource center at the University’s Virginia Science and Technology Campus (“VTSC”) in Loudoun County, VA. While the VTSC will provide an opportunity to coordinate

and consolidate deliveries to the Foggy Bottom location in smaller vehicles, it will also require routine trips between the VTSC and Foggy Bottom campus for object movement, exhibition maintenance, and similar activities.

In short, the active care and management of the Museum's collections both on-site and between the Museum and VTSC require an interior loading berth.

Use of the curb cut will be limited. The University anticipates that the 14-foot-wide curb cut will be utilized, on average, three days per week for object movement and deliveries. (Generally, only one delivery per day is expected, but during set-up or tear-down of exhibits, multiple deliveries could occur per day.) To respond to DDOT's concerns, the University has agreed to further reduce loading dock use by establishing a curbside loading zone for service and delivery activity that does not need to take place in the loading dock, such as trash/recycling, catering, and special events. The University has also agreed to establish a curbside drop-off and pick-up zone for visitors to the Museum. See Exhibit A, Figure 3.

As the University demonstrated in Exhibit H of its initial PUD application, a new curb cut on 21st Street is justified in part by the lack of an existing public or private alley system in Square 102, a significant factor in assessing the appropriateness of a curb cut under DDOT's policy.¹ The interior of the square contains a large pedestrian-oriented network of pathways and open space known as the University Yard. The University's traffic consultant concluded that the creation of a new alley system in Square 102 would conflict with existing uses and create significant pedestrian safety issues in the Yard, which serves as a major pedestrian walkway, a special events location, a key accessible route to adjacent buildings, and an active and passive recreational area.

The design of the curb cut and loading area will not be objectionable. The loading area is deep enough to fully accommodate the delivery vehicle and allow the door to close (indeed, by necessity the door must be closed for the reasons described above). The door at the loading dock will be faced with stone or other appropriate material and slide into a pocket in the façade. Its

¹ Under DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual, new curb cuts are permitted from property with no existing alley access, provided the applicant demonstrates that the creation of potential new alley access would be in conflict with existing land uses and is not supported by the guidelines in the Comprehensive Plan. DDOT Design and Engineering Manual, Section 31.2.3.1. District of Columbia law, regulation, or other DDOT standards and guidelines do not otherwise require that the applicant demonstrate a "need" for the curb cut based on its specific use of the property. Notwithstanding this fact, the University has addressed why the proposed use of the Property as a museum requires access to an interior loading berth and has proposed additional operational and physical design measures to ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety.

design, which will disguise the loading dock, was developed in consultation with the HPO and approved by the HPRB. The curb cut will not eliminate any existing street trees.

Furthermore, as requested by DDOT, the University analyzed the potential impact of the curb cut on the safety of the transportation network and, as discussed in Exhibit A (p. 5-6), agreed to provide a number of significant mitigation measures to ensure that the proposed curb cut will not adversely impact the vehicular and pedestrian network. They include:

- Trained traffic control personnel to direct vans and trucks into the loading berth and minimize pedestrian impacts;
- Peak hour restrictions on the Museum's use of the curb cut (7 AM to 9 AM and 4 PM to 7 PM) in order to minimize impact on other vehicular traffic;
- Limitations of the size of vehicles using the curb cut (no larger than 24 feet); and
- Restrictions on the use of the curb cut for artifact and exhibit loading only (i.e. not to be used for trash/recycling, catering for special events, or commercial delivery services such as UPS or FedEx).

The University evaluated a series of design alternatives to the proposed curb cut, but concluded that other design alternatives such as a mountable curb or portable ramp are not necessary to address concerns regarding potential pedestrian impacts and would therefore impose an unnecessary burden on building and delivery operation. Notwithstanding this fact, the University is willing to install a mountable curb, should the Public Space Committee conclude that such a design feature is necessary to discourage non-authorized vehicles from using the curb cut for passenger drop-off activity. The University is also willing to conduct a monitoring study during the first three to six months of operation that will fully assess the effectiveness of these design and operational measures in protecting pedestrian safety. During this study, GW and DDOT will be able to assess the impact of the proposed design and, if necessary, consideration could be given after the study to install additional remedial measures (e.g., bollards or other design features) that might be required to minimize unauthorized use of the curb cut.

For all of the above reasons, the proposed curb cut will further the operational and management needs of the University without posing an adverse risk to vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Updated Plans and Treatment of Woodhull House

The University's design team has continued to refine the building design to address comments from the HPO and HPRB. The drawings attached as Exhibit C were reviewed at the February 23, 2012 HPRB meeting. At that time the HPRB approved its Staff Report and Recommendation that the HPRB "determine the revised concept to be consistent with the purposes of the preservation act, and to delegate final approval to the staff." Copies of the HPRB Staff Report and Recommendation and the record of HPRB's approval thereof are attached as Exhibit D.

The drawings attached as Exhibit C no longer depict a painted Woodhull House. Since setdown, the University and the project architects have continued to discuss the appropriate exterior restoration treatment of Woodhull House with HPO. HPO has communicated to the University that repainting of Woodhull House may be required as a component of the restoration of the landmark, but only if Woodhull House was originally painted. Further research is being undertaken by the architects to confirm whether Woodhull House was originally painted. The University will continue to work with HPO to address the final treatment of Woodhull House prior to the issuance of the building permit.

Community Outreach

The University presented this project to the Advisory Committee in August 2011 and to ANC 2A in July 2011 and again in October 2011 and January 2012. The University will make a final presentation to ANC 2A on March 21, 2012.

The University has also met with representatives of the West End Citizens Association to discuss WECA's comments and concerns regarding loading activity. In response to WECA's concerns, the University has agreed to restrict the use of the loading dock so it is not used from 4 PM to 7 PM. Any deliveries during this time period will use the curbside loading zone and will not interfere with through traffic along 21st Street NW.

Witness List, Proposed Testimony, and Time Estimate for Presentation

We look forward to presenting this case to the Commission. The University will provide three witnesses to testify on its behalf: a representative of the University, the project architect, and the traffic consultant. The University will call two of its three witnesses, Lee Becker of Hartman-Cox Architects and Jami Milanovich of Wells & Associates, as experts in their respective fields. Mr. Becker will be called as an expert in the field of architecture and Ms.

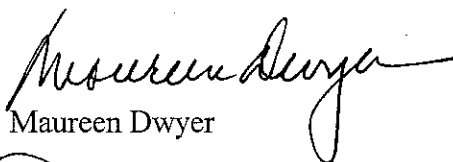
Anthony Hood
March 15, 2012
Page 6

Milanovich will be called as an expert in the field of transportation engineering. Resumes for these witnesses are included as Exhibit E. The University anticipates at this time that its presentation will require up to 60 minutes.

Conclusion

The University looks forward to presenting the material at the public hearing scheduled for April 5, 2012. If you have any questions regarding this application, please feel free to contact Maureen at 202-721-1101 or David at 202-721-1137.

Sincerely,



Maureen Dwyer



David Avitabile

DA/da
Enclosures

cc: Charles Barber
Alicia Knight

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

On March 15, 2012, I caused a copy of the foregoing letter and enclosure to be delivered by electronic, hand or by U.S. Mail to the following:

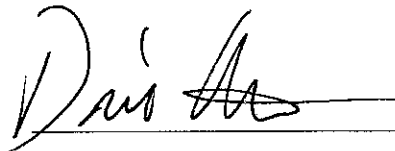
Jennifer Steingasser
Deputy Director, Development Review and
Historic Preservation
D.C. Office of Planning
1100 4th Street, SW, Suite E650
Washington, DC 20024

Jeff Jennings
Policy and Planning
District Department of Transportation
55 M Street SE, 5th Floor
Washington, DC 20009

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A
West End Branch Library
1101 24th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

L. Asher Corson
President, Foggy Bottom Association
955 26th Street, NW, Apt. 709
Washington, DC 20037

West End Citizens Association
c/o Barbara Kahlow
800 25th Street, NW #704
Washington, DC 20037



David Avitabile