

Subject: Letter to Washington Post (DC Extra)

Editor:

Your article, *At the River's Edge, Competing Visions*, in the January 27 issue of the Post by David Nakamura hardly touched on the issues surrounding this enormous controversy. The piece was couched as if two competing groups were at loggerheads--the heading proclaims rowers and environmentalists as foes. An analysis of the real issues would reveal that these two groups should be allies. The general consensus among both groups is that more boathouse space is desperately needed. Unfortunately the high school rowers have been misled into believing that the environmentally disastrous Georgetown University proposal is their only avenue for relief.

The proposed boathouse site would provide a private entity with prime, environmentally sensitive acreage from the C&O Canal Historic Park. The issues surrounding this scheme are numerous, but a particular fundamental issue seems to have escaped your reporter's attention: the National Georgetown Waterfront Park was planned with exceedingly heavy input from organized Georgetown citizens--under the radar screen of the boating community and environmental groups from the wider community. The result is that boathouses along this world class recreational riverfront are severely excluded. A cramped boathouse zone around Key Bridge seems to have been tolerated by the Georgetown citizens organization, with further relegation of boating to another park out of their back yard.

Yes, there is already a plan for a waterfront park. Changes to that plan are needed. Boathouses could be accommodated, while creating an even more interesting and enjoyable park for citizens of Georgetown and the rest of the public. It takes little imagination to envisage a lively and beautiful park across the whole of the Georgetown waterfront, with boathouses and plenty of traditional park amenities. A combined use waterfront with boating for colleges, high schools, and unaffiliated citizens would be a unique and enchanting park serving us all.

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