

I am pleased to offer the following comments on the five designated sites and the possible development scenarios applicable to those sites. I wish to emphasize that I understand the “scenarios are not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to represent generalized approaches” to the possible future development treatment of each site. Study, p. i.

Site A. As proposed by the Low Density scenario, this site should remain undeveloped. The site is environmentally unacceptable for potential development and should be rejected for this purpose. The public’s use and enjoyment of this treasured but already congested area would be preserved. The site should remain untouched and the historic and scenic features of the C&O Canal NHP would be protected. This sentiment is reinforced by the vast majority of the public comments set forth in Appendix E. There are also numerous and well documented environmental, health and safety concerns to development of this site. The late Carl A. Linden, who died on April 2, 2012, correctly observed that development at Site A “would create a hazardous chokepoint at a major entrance” to the Park. Study, Appendix E, Correspondence 18. Our community will miss Carl’s wise counsel and visionary leadership in the defense of the Park he so loved.

Site B. As recommended in all three development scenarios, I support the restoration of the Washington Canoe Club structure. This historic landmark should be preserved.

Site C. This site is located between the eastern boundary of the Washington Canoe Club property and the Aqueduct Bridge. It was formerly known as the Dempsey site. Key Bridge Boathouse, the successor to Jack’s Canoe and Kayak operation, should be relocated from Site D to Site C. It would be easy to move the small “log cabin” office building currently located in the parking lot at Site D. The Key Bridge Boathouse rental operation consists ostensibly of floating docks strung together on which kayaks and canoes are stacked. Therefore, moving the Key Bridge Boathouse operation to Site C would result in only a minor inconvenience. By placing the Key Bridge Boathouse next to the Washington Canoe Club, there would be the additional benefit of grouping like uses (paddlers) side by side on the waterfront.

Site D. The Park Service and Georgetown University should give serious consideration to locating the GU boathouse at Site D, the current location of the Key Bridge Boathouse operation. This site is the area between Key Bridge and the Potomac Boat Club and includes

the three townhouses. With respect to the townhouses, the Park Service will acquire the first two (3524 and 3526 Water St.) from GW in exchange for GW's boathouse site at Site E between Key Bridge and 34th St. I further understand that the Park Service intends to purchase the third townhouse (3528 Water St.) which is currently owned by "3528 K St. Ass. LP" The Park Service would then have the townhouses razed as they are considered inappropriate for that location anyway. Of course, in order to acquire this property from the Park Service, Georgetown University would exchange its upriver parcel and its mile-long easement over the Capital Crescent Trail.

The estimated length of site D along the river is 200 ft., along Water St., 230 ft., and the depth from the street to the river about 100 ft. If the average length of this site is about 215 ft., the square footage of this site is approximately 21,500 sq. ft. Since the Park Service intends to limit the footprint of Georgetown University's boathouse wherever it may ultimately be located to no more than 15,000 sq. ft., there is obviously more than ample space at this site to accommodate all of the university's needs associated with its rowing program, including an interior rowing tank.

There are many advantages for locating GU's boathouse at Site D. This site is within the non-motorized boathouse zone but outside the C&O Canal NHP. This site, unlike sites within the park, would not adversely impact the historic and scenic features of the C&O Canal. Also, there would be no height restrictions on the boathouse at this site as contemplated in the Medium and High Density scenarios. Since the site fronts on Water St., it is easily accessible with no requirement for vehicular turnaround. This location would also avoid the safety problems inherent in the congestion at the somewhat narrow gateway of the Capital Crescent Trail which is used by hundreds of bikers and hikers every day of the year. Finally, Site D poses no environmental concerns.

Site E. I understand that George Washington University has been promised Site E, located between 34th and Key Bridge for its boathouse. To advance its claim GW purchased two of the three townhouses (3524 and 3526 Water St.) which GW intends to convey to the Park Service in exchange for Site E. The Park Service should clarify this situation. This site offers all of the benefits described in my supporting explanation of the construction of a boathouse at Site D.

The adoption of these recommendations would “cluster” GW’s boathouse, GU’s boathouse and the Potomac Boat Club, thereby creating a “boathouse row” around the commanding presence of Key Bridge. As an additional inducement for this proposal, the high school rowing programs would also benefit. Since GU and GW would vacate the Thompson Boat Center, it would reduce substantially the currently overcrowded conditions in that facility. And, as an additional benefit, GU and GW should consider allowing some of the high school rowing programs to use their facilities on a time and space availability basis.

Since the siting of boathouses for both GW and GU, as well as the relocation of the Key Bridge Boathouse, must be approved environmentally after the preparation of either an EIS or an EA, the projects should be considered together, thereby avoiding a duplication of effort and expense. And finally, the construction of boathouses for GW and GU would not require sorely needed public funding.

Respectively submitted,

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