Good morning, Commissioners and members of the Board. Thank you to Commissioner Edwards for reading my testimony, since I'm unable to attend.

I am writing to oppose the special exception requested in this case.

While I appreciate new businesses coming into the Shepherd Park neighborhood, as a resident of the District for more than 25 years and a member of the Shepherd Park community for the last five, I don't believe this highly residential neighborhood needs another fast food, late night restaurant. It's my understanding the establishment, Emerald Wings, is seeking a special exception. However, I don't believe Emerald Wings meets that requirment. I live two blocks from where this business is planned and I am keenly aware of the traffic congestion and litter that is already in the surrounding area. There are several fast food restaurants, weed dispensaries and a couple of late-night bars within blocks of each other in addition to a library, several small businesses, a church, school and funeral home. I am not convinced another food establishment relying on food delivery drivers, with late night hours meets the criteria for special exception. Moreover, there is a concern that there will be an increase of rodents or loitering in the area. It is also my understanding there are plans to establish affordable housing units in a space that would be across from the proposed take out restaurant. I am not sure this is the sort of dining establishment, coupled with the fast food franchises, liquor stores and night clubs in the area will make the affordable housing for older residents feel like a welcoming or safe space. The meditation efforts outlined by the business seem like basic measures that without any accountablity will quickly slip away, leaving the responsiblity of care and cleanliness to community members who are already picking up the excessive litter that covers the streets in that area.

I welcome more small businesses coming into the area, but a community thrives when it fulfills the range of needs of its members. That means an array of businesses and services, not just quick fast food take out area where more people may congregate while young people are walking to and from school, and where elders are waiting for buses and attending church. The city and its collection of neighborhoods with its diversity of residents and unqiue businesses are some of the things that make the District feel special - another fast food restaurant seeking a special exception is not what this area needs.

Thank you for your consideration for the families and residents who live here and love being in Shepherd Park.

Submitted on 10/20/2026 by:
Rhea Combs
7819 13th ST NW

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 21503
EXHIBIT NO. 30