Date: November 8, 2026

TO:

- Alexandra Wilson, Esq. (Counsel for the Applicant)
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 7C (ANC 7C)
- ANC Commissioner for SMD 7C04

FROM: Bronya N. Crawford, Adjacent Property Owner (5075 Sheriff Road NE)

RE: Specific Rebuttal to Applicant Legal Counsel's Inaccurate Property Comparison Analysis
Case Reference: BZA Case No. 21522 (5073 Sheriff Road NE – Special Exception Request)

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1. PURPOSE & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This rebuttal is formally submitted to the Board of Zoning Adjustment, ANC 7C, ANC 7C04, and the applicant's legal counsel to correct the record regarding the neighborhood context of Square 5176. The applicant's attorney asserts that the proposed multi-story expansion at 5073 Sheriff Road NE is consistent with existing properties on the 5000 block of Sheriff Road NE and several adjacent properties on Just Street NE, claiming these properties feature 'similar expansions.'

This analysis is factually, structurally, and legally inaccurate.

A rigorous architectural and spatial review of the block—specifically including 5077, 5083, 5085, and 5087 Sheriff Road NE, alongside 5081, 5085, 5097, and 5103 Just Street NE—demonstrates that no property on these blocks has ever been granted a variance or special exception to simultaneously execute an aggressive front "pop-out" and an excessive rear "pop-back." The attorney's analysis conflates standard, matter-of-right porch enclosures and modest, legally compliant extensions with an unprecedented, multi-story structural inflation that violates the fundamental protections of the D.C. Zoning Code.

Enclosed Porches vs. Full-Scale Structural Additions

- The Porch Precedent: The expansions at the compared addresses (such as 5077, 5083, 5085 and 5087 Sheriff Road NE) are within the existing building footprint. They primarily consist of enclosing or updating an existing front porch structure.

- The 5073 Special Exception: The applicant at 5073 is not simply modifying the existing front and rear structure of the home; they are attempting to project entirely new, massive living spaces out into the front and rear yard lines, which far exceeds the modest alterations on Sheriff Road NE and on Just Street NE as noted in her analysis.

2. COMPREHENSIVE ADDRESS ANALYSIS: FACTUAL REBUTTAL OF CITED PROPERTIES

The applicant's legal counsel's comparative analysis is inaccurate because it treats completely different construction types as similar. The cited properties fall strictly within legal guidelines and do not alter the established building footprints:

- 5077, 5083 & 5085 Sheriff Road NE (Front Porch Enclosures): The modifications at these addresses consist exclusively of enclosing pre-existing front porches. One property uses standard glass windows, one property uses screens and the other property removed an

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 21522
EXHIBIT NO. 20C

existing interior partition wall to merge the pre-existing front porch area into the primary living space. These are not structural front expansions; they did not alter the primary foundation or push the main framing walls forward into the front yard setback. They strictly respected the existing building footprint. They merely enclosed a space or opened a space that was originally built. These changes have zero zoning impacts.

- 5083 and 5085 Sheriff Road NE (Rear Extension): The rear additions at these properties were constructed entirely within the legal matter-of-right lot occupancy limits. It respects the spatial flow of the block and did not require a zoning variance or special exception to breach protective boundaries. These properties sit on a distinct hillside elevation with an established concrete embankment and retain its uniform, historical building line. These changes have zero zoning impacts.
- 5081, 5085, 5097, and 5103 Just Street NE: Modifications on these neighboring properties are confined entirely within standard zoning parameters. They maintain the street wall alignment of the semi-detached layout and avoid massive structural footprints that encroach onto neighboring property lines. These changes have zero zoning impacts.
- The Front 'pop-Out' Violation: The applicant at 5073 is proposing a true structural 'pop-out.' This involves extending the core foundation and building heavy, larger framing forward into the front yard setback line. This breaks the uniform streetscape and permanently disrupts the architectural rhythm of the block.
- The Rear 'Pop-Back' Violation: The applicant is simultaneously requesting a massive 'pop-back' a deep structural extension out into the rear yard. Unlike the legally compliant rear additions on the block, this expansion attempts to bypass the strict statutory thresholds designed to protect adjoining properties. They want the back pop-out addition to be more than double the established legal limit.

3. THE EVOLUTION OF ZONING SAFETY: THE MANDATORY 10-FOOT RULE

The applicant's legal counsel relies heavily on an outdated understanding of neighborhood development. Historically, at the time these homes were originally built, front setback lines and rear extensions were largely unregulated by private property standards, leaving communities vulnerable to disjointed growth. Current zoning laws exist precisely to stop the type of construction being proposed at 5073.

The 10-foot rule was explicitly enacted as a defensive barrier to protect the health, safety, and property values of D.C. residents. It was implemented in April 2017. Additionally, the front setback rule was enacted in September 2016.

Because the semi-detached houses on Sheriff Road are physically joined together in a single straight line and sit on narrow lots, they are deeply interdependent. The Zoning Commission established the 10-foot expansion limit to prevent developers and homeowners from building unchecked "pop-backs" that completely swallow a neighbor's access to natural sunlight, choke off ambient air circulation, and strip away residential privacy.

Allowing the residence at 5073 Sheriff Road NE to bypass this rule, by adding an addition more than double the zoning limits will completely destroy the livability of the adjoining home and other neighboring homes, inflicting the exact structural and environmental harms the Zoning Commission wrote the law to prevent.

4. CONCLUSION AND PETITION FOR DENIAL

While the applicant's attorney for BZA Case No. 21522 has claimed that surrounding properties have similar expansions, there is a fundamental difference in the scope and legality of what was actually built. Because every single cited neighborhood example has stayed within legal guidelines, or was built prior to implementing the guidelines, the applicant' s legal counsel cannot claim their request matches the character of the neighborhood. The counsel's precedent argument must be entirely dismissed. Her clients must be held strictly to the current regulations in place for property expansions to meet their need for a "growing family".

The applicant's legal attorney has presented an analysis that is visually, structurally, and legally flawed. There is a profound, non-negotiable difference between neighbors safely enclosing a front porch and expanding the rear of their properties all within the legal limits, versus an applicant seeking a zoning "Special Exception" to build an over-scaled, front pop-out and rear pop-back for the sole purpose of a "growing family".

I respectfully request that ANC 7C and ANC 7C04 officially recommend disapproval of this application, and that the Board of Zoning Board deny the requested special exception for Case No. 21522 to protect the integrity, light, safety, and structural foundations of Square 5176 and the community.

Concerned Property Owner,

Bronya Crawford