



Government of the District of Columbia
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 8B



October 21, 2020

To: Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia
441 4th St NW Suite 210
Washington DC. 20001

RE: Z.C. Case 20-09

Dear Chairman Hood and members of the Commission,

I, Commissioner Keeon Johnson, am writing this letter in response to the filing of Leonard Watson Sr's letter in opposition of the above mentioned case.

1).The ANC followed all requirements set forth by the OANC. ANC 8B gave proper notice by posting the required notices in each Single member district and sending notice (VIA email) to the ANC's contact list. Both were done more than a week in advance of the mtg, which is required by ANC Law. In addition to satisfying the conditions set forth by ANC Law, the information to access our public monthly meeting was also posted on the OANC website. ANC rules and regulations state that The Chair may sign on behalf of the Commission as long as there was a quorum and the vote was taken at a public meeting that was properly noticed. Advisory Neighborhood Commission 8B has satisfied all of those conditions.

2) Any official action voted upon by the Commission only needs the signature of the Chair. Each individual commissioner does not need to sign as long as there was a quorum and the motion passed. The motion to approve the project in question was moved, seconded, and passed. Thus, great weight shall be given.

3) The CBA between ANC 8B and Wagner LLC. does not have to give mention of which Commissioners were present and have a signature of all Commissioners. There are no laws for ANC and Community Benefits Agreements. Thus, ANC 8B handled this CBA as it would have conducted any other ANC business. Note: Mrs. Khadijah Watson, wife of Leonard Watson Sr and Mother of Commissioner Leonard Watson Jr. was Chair of ANC 8B prior to myself becoming Chair. As Mrs Watson was leaving office, there was a CBA that she was working on for a project on Ainger Pl. Mrs. Watson did not inform any Commissioners of the Community Benefits Agreement, nor did she let any other Commissioners know of any negotiations. In an effort to be 100% transparent, I informed all Commissioners of the CBA's and welcomed input.

4-7) There are very few organizations who actually do the work that they claim to do in our ward. The organizations were not originally named because they were not finalized. Families on the Rise LLC is owned by my mother, Louise Thorne. However, this organization was named because of the continued commitment to our community. Mrs.Thorne has not been contacted as of yet about being a recipient of the funds. The Gerald Project is affiliated with Commissioner Darrell Gaston only because it was started in honor of his Godson. However, the organization has no financial ties to Commissioner Gaston. I heard of the work that the organization was doing in the Community and thought it would be a good candidate. Again, these organizations are not finalized....and in the spirit of ensuring that this project is continued, these two



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organizations will be removed from the agreement. The reality is, I have lived in ward 8 for 34 of my 35 years of life. To a person who has an agenda I can be associated with the owners of EVERY organization who works in Ward 8. The same can be said of my colleagues who are mostly life long Ward 8 residents.

8) Mr. Miller had 52 laptops delivered to me. As stated in the CBA, those laptops went to Elementary, Middle, and High School students in ANC 8B. It is not up to Mr. Watson to decide who should have received the laptops. There is a time designated for public comments at EVERY public meeting held by ANC 8B. If Mr. Watson wanted to give input, he should have been present at the meetings. Commissioner Leonard Lee Watson Jr, son of Leonard Watson Sr. is the current Commissioner for 8B01 where the project is being built. Currently, Commissioner Watson is incarcerated and unable to fulfill his duties. In such case, I, as the Chair of the Commission, have a duty to step in until another Commissioner is elected in his place. Commissioners of ANC 8B were given 7 laptops to give (at random) to students in their SMD. There were 10 laptops for Commissioner Watson's SMD because this is where the project is located. As we have not seen or heard from Commissioner Watson since the summer of 2019, I distributed the Computers to students in his SMD.

On Sunday, October 4, 2020, I received a call from Mrs. Khadijah Watson. Mrs. Watson claimed to have some concerns about the project. In speaking with Mrs. Watson, I learned that she and her husband did, in fact, know about the project in advance. Per Mrs. Watson, Mr. Watson saw notice of the project as he was getting off the bus near their home. After asking Mrs. Watson why they are now having an issue with the project she said "if they want to build this, they gon have to pay me" At that point, I proceeded to end the conversation with Mrs Watson because I then understood that just like the Ainger place CBA, this was simply another attempt at "using the community for personal gain". Suffice it to say, the Watson's have been long standing contributors to our community. However, it is sad to see that overshadowed by greed and a failed attempt to slandering myself and this Commission for personal gain.

In addition, Commissioner Paul Trantham, who is a friend of the Watson's signed the petition that was submitted. Commissioner Trantham (I use the term loosely) has not handled any ANC business with the Commission since January of 2020. We have been unable to reach him in any capacity. I am happy to see that he is alive and well, if it is actually his signature. In closing, ANC 8B, followed the letter of the ANC law. We handle ANC business with honor and integrity. We had, and still have, no reason to believe this project is being handled improperly. The Developer of this project has been in full cooperation with the Commission, and we stand by our vote to fully support this project.

In Service,

Chairwoman Keeon Johnson
Chair of ANC 8B
(202) 880-9313