

**Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)**

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**From:** Faith Wheeler <fewdcc@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 17, 2020 1:39 PM  
**To:** DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)  
**Subject:** Re: Testimony for Case #20209

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To whom it may concern,

Andre Carley brought to my attention that I had written the wrong house number in my submitted testimony for Case #20209. It should be **7521** 9th Street, NW. Below is my corrected testimony with the corrected house number:

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**Board of Zoning Adjustment  
Case #20209  
Request to Exempt extension of lot occupancy beyond allowable limit  
7521 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW. Washington DC 20012  
June 17, 2020  
Testimony of Faith Wheeler**

Dear Chair Frederick Hill:

Thank you for considering my testimony in this important case. The case is particularly important because it has rippling effects for this long-time, stable, family-oriented, middle class community. Depending on the decision of BZA, the effects can be either positive or negative.

First, some background: Takoma DC has a decades-long, proud tradition of neighborliness, mutual respect, and stability. Current residents in the neighborhood of 7521 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW cherish their sense of community. They fear that Mr. Ogbuokiri's proposal will eventually result in the disruption of their lives by changing the character of the neighborhood and chasing them out. They fear that this proposal is just the first step in eventually turning the enlarged, bulky building that he has designed into small multi-family apartments or condos. We see the first sign of that in Mr. Ogbuokiri's proposal to move his parents from their current home in that same neighborhood into the enlarged home that he wants to create.

It is very difficult, these days, to find a stable, family-oriented, middle-class community of single-family homes in Washington DC. During the couple of months of living with this COVID pandemic, many of us have experienced what it's like to seldom venture out beyond the walls of a relatively small, confining, residential space. And when we do, to keep a safe distance between ourselves and the next person. We're told that the threat of this virus is likely to continue for at least several months, if not over a year or more. We're also told that more pandemics lie ahead. We're told that those who can, escape to the suburbs or to their second

homes in secluded places. Some are considering moving out of DC permanently to where they'll have more outdoor space. Many of us don't have those options.

The neighborhood CURRENTLY around 7521 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW affords a physically and emotionally healthy life-style right here in the District of Columbia -- especially important during this era of the pandemic. It is different from living in a multi-unit residence such as what Mr. Ogbuokiri proposes to build. Mr. Ogbuokiri's proposal would significantly change the very desirable character of this stable neighborhood, to its detriment. The current character of this neighborhood is a treasure to keep and protect.

Therefore, I join the 9<sup>th</sup> Street neighbors in opposing Mr. Ogbuokiri's proposal to extend the length of the building by 4% over the allowable lot occupancy, which would include a 3<sup>rd</sup> floor master bedroom also extending the length of the building by the same 4%.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration.

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Faith Wheeler  
Takoma DC

