

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Kelsey Evans <kelseyevans15@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 15, 2021 9:43 AM
To: DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: CASE 20-34: Written Tesimony

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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Kelsey Evans, and I am a SW DC resident, having lived in the community for just shy of a year. I fell in love with the area because of my partner, who has lived in the community for nearly 7 years and has developed deep ties with the thriving, tight-knit community. I first moved to the Modern on M building, and found the sterile environment squashed most of the things I had come to love about the area. My partner and I recently moved into a row house, and have felt lucky to develop close ties with our neighbors, many of whom have lived in the community for decades. This is what we love about the community-- the friendly people who have lived here for decades, who say good morning when they pass you on the street, and offer to lend a hand or ask for a hand when in need.

This is not what the Jemals Cotton Annex stands for. The Jemals Cotton Annex will promote the sterile environment found in large buildings like the Modern on M complex, and it will actively gentrify this neighborhood by attempting to stomp on the existing vibrant community present in the area. For these reasons, I ask that you **reject this development, unless/until the project design is an example of equity and inclusion per the SW neighborhood plan with 1/3 market, 1/3 workforce, and 1/3 deeply affordable units.** This development project would be irresponsible to the community and would actively harm the residents who have lived here for decades. Given that this is in a [D-8 Zone](#), the project's 8% planned affordable housing is not enough for such a change in the historic preservation to mixed-use. This is the bare minimum required by law, illustrating that Douglas Development is interested solely in checking necessary boxes and has no interest in community preservation. This will lead to actively racist outcomes. When only 8% of units are affordable and the Black median household [income is \\$42,000](#), less than a third that of White households, this project, by design, inherently excludes the majority of Black residents from being able to afford to live there.

Furthermore, if you are not concerned that this project will increase racism and gentrification in the community, this project should be halted point blank due to the conflict of interest of Commissioner Litsky. Commissioner Litsky failed to address that this project would result in a donation of \$100,000 to the Southwest Community Foundation, of which he is a current board member. It's unacceptable that this was not disclosed and that Mr. Litsky was permitted to vote in favor of this project, essentially securing additional funding for his own foundation through this back-alley dealing. If this conflict of interest is not enough on its own, the Southwest Community Foundation furthermore does not seem to even have ties to the community. None of my neighbors seem to know what the foundation does. Their website lists the renovation of the duck pond as their current project, which is a project I know anecdotally has been frustrating to community members, closing off one of the safe outdoor gathering points during this global pandemic.

As a community member, I beg of you to reject this project. It was approved immorally, it will further gentrify the community, it will push long-time community members out, and above all, it is actively racist. Please do the right thing. I remain at your service if I can provide any additional details.

Regards,
Kelsey Evans

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