## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA <br> $+\quad+\quad+\quad+$

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD

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MEETING

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IN THE MATTER OF:
Rito Loco, LLC
t/a Rito Loco-El Techo
606 Florida Ave NW : Protest
Retailer CR - ANC 6E : Hearing
License No. 104119
Case #22-PRO-00072
(Application to
Renew the License) :
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Wednesday December 7, 2022

The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board met via WebEx videoconference, Chairperson Donovan W. Anderson presiding.

PRESENT:
DONOVAN W. ANDERSON, Chairperson
BOBBY CATO, JR., Member
EDWARD S. GRANDIS, Member JENI HANSEN, Member JAMES SHORT, JR., Member

## ALSO PRESENT:

JOSE ORELLANA, DC ABRA Staff LOUIE HANKINS, Applicant ANDREW KLINE, Applicant Counsel SIDON YOHANNES, Applicant Counsel
ALEX LOPEZ, ANC 6E
LARRY HANDERHAN, ANC 1B
RAMI BADAWY, Protestant
CRAIG KUJAWA, Protestant INVESTIGATOR KEVIN PUENTE
STEVEN LAWRENCE, Witness
DANIEL HATEM, Witness
MARTIN BEAM, Witness
JONATHAN HORSFORD, Witness
PAUL BARANOWSKI, Witness
MARGO BADAWY, Witness
LYNNE VENART, Witness
P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S
2:14 p.m.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good afternoon, and welcome to the afternoon session of the ABC Board. My name is Donovan Anderson, chairman of the Board. Joining me this afternoon are four other staff and board members: Mr. James Short, Mr. Bobby Cato, Ms. Jeni Hansen, and Mr. Edward Grandis. The Board has five members in attendance for the conduct of business this afternoon and we have a quorum.

In looking at our calendar this afternoon, we only have one case, I believe, yes. We have just one case on our calendar. So once that case is called, we'll take a moment for IT specialists to elevate your rights and then we can start the hearing.

So our next case is a protest hearing Case No. 22-PRO-00072, Rito Loco-El Techo, License No. 104119.

Mr. Orellana, can you please elevate the rights of the parties in this case, please?

MR. ORELLANA: Sidon Yohannes, your access has been elevated. Craig Kujawa, your access has been elevated. Larry Handerhan, your
access has been elevated. Rami Badawy, your access has been elevated. Kevin Puente, your access has been elevated.

There are many more in attendance.
Should they also be elevated?
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, you can elevate everyone who, better yet, not as yet. Let me -- let me -- just give me one minute and once I have the representatives identify themselves, then I will ask them whose rights should be elevated.

So let's -- we should definitely elevate the rights of the ANC, ANC 1B, ANC 6E. So if you are from ANC 1B, I think maybe that's Mr. Handerhan.

MR. HANDERHAN: Yes, Commissioner Larry Handerhan from 1B. Hi, everyone.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: 1B. And we should have a Commissioner from 6E. Do we have a Commissioner from 6E? If we have a representative from ANC 6E, please identify yourself and we will elevate your rights.

I believe that -- I know -- who represents the --

MR. HANDERHAN: Commissioner Alex

Lopez is the Single Member District rep, I believe to answer --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, so if you see Mr. Lopez, please elevate his rights. And think another person that we're looking for, the Badawy Group?

MR. BADAWY: Yes, Mr. Chairman, this is Rami Badawy. I'm here representing --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry, no, not -- K-U-J-A-W-A. Kujawa. Please -- who is that protestor? Who is representing that group?

MR. KUJAWA: Mr. Chairman, this is Craig Kujawa. I am present in my protest as well as those of the ANC and the Group of 31 are being represented by Mr. Badawy today.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: No, I'm aware of that, but $I$ just want to make and I'm sorry, Mr. Kujawa, I want to make sure that those folks are on the line and then we can figure out -this is a lot of folks, and then those protestants can let me know who else needs to be elevated. So that's why I looked at -- it was my understanding that one, two, three, four -- there are four protestant groups. I just want to make sure that the representatives for all protestant
groups are -- their rights are elevated and then I can be directed who the witnesses are and then we'll figure out who else needs to be -- as Mr. -- as I was informed that there are significant amount of people on the line, so I just want to make -- once, we have identified who the protestant representatives are, then we'll figure out who else -- whose rights needs to be elevated.

Good afternoon, everyone, this is the protest case on Rito Loco-El Techo and so let me have the parties identify themselves. Let's start with the licensee's representative?

MR. KLINE: Good afternoon, Chairman Anderson and members of the Board. Andrew Kline, here on behalf of the applicant. And Sidon Yohannes of the Veritas Law Firm is with me today as well.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good afternoon. MR. KLINE: Along with Louie Hankins is principal of the applicant.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Is Mr. Hankins on line? Okay. All right, Mr. Hankins is on line. Okay. All right. I just want to make sure.

All right, let's have Mr. Handerhan, please introduce yourself for the record and your relationship to this case, please.

MR. HANDERHAN: Sure. Thank you, Chairman. My name is Larry Handerhan. I'm the ANC for $1 \mathrm{B01}$ which is directly across the street from this property and representing the 1B Commission which has a protest, an active protest.

I should also note that my district has not significantly changed in the redistricting process, so I am the current ANC and will be the future ANC for the directly across the street neighbors moving forward.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now do we have Mr. Lopez from ANC 6E?

MR. HANDERHAN: My understanding is he is unavailable today, but sent a note about his designated representative. I'm not sure --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Who was it that was identified. I'm not aware. Can someone tell me who was -- who is the designated representative for ANC 6E?

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Chairman, this Rami Badawy and Mr. Lopez designated me to represent
the ANC 1D at the hearing today.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, that's fine then.

So Mr. Badawy, you are representing ANC 6E. You're also representing the Group of Five or more and you are also representing ANC 6E and you're also representing -- no, I'm sorry, and the Group of Five or more, is that correct?

MR. BADAWY: Yes. Mr. Chairman, yes, that is correct.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kujawa. Can you please spell and state your name for the record and who you represent, sir? You're on mute, sir. Unmute yourself.

MR. KUJAWA: Rookie mistake. I apologize. My name is Craig Kujawa spelled C-R-A-I-G K-U-J-A-W-A. And I am the abutting property owner protestant.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay, so you are abutting.

Mr. Kline, is there a witness that we need to elevate that was not on line but we need to elevate that person who is in the waiting room?

MR. KLINE: I have a number of
witnesses. I don't know that we need to elevate them yet --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay, fine. All right. I just wanted to make sure. So everyone is there and if they're called as a witness, then we need to elevate their rights, so that's what I'll do for all the parties.

So right now we have all of the representatives for the parties and at a later date, at a later time in the hearing, you can identify the witness and then you will elevate their rights, all right.

All right, are there any -- so this is a protest hearing on a renewal application. Are there any preliminary matters that at least -let me start from the licensee, any preliminary matters that need to be brought to the attention of the Board.

MR. KLINE: Not other than the pending motion for a continuance that was filed.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So the motion was -- there's a motion that was filed and it was opposed by the Protestants and so therefore, on our legal agenda this morning, the Board voted on our legal public agenda this morning to deny the
request for a continuance because it was opposed by the Protestant. So it was on our legal agenda this morning. All right.

> Are there any stipulations? I mean this is a renewal application, so is there agreement or disagreement? I know the licensee wants their license to be renewed and so I guess I'll start from the part of the Protestants. Let me start with ANC 1B, are they in agreement that the license should be renewed? I'm trying to see if we can streamline this hearing if there's agreement on renewing the license?

MR. BADAWY: Pardon me, Mr. Chairman. I do believe there was one preliminary matter that the Protestants would request to address. CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Hold on one moment, please.

Mr. Orellana, can you please elevate the rights of Mr. Lopez, please. I see that he placed a note in the chat that he is there. So please elevate the rights of Mr. Lopez, please.

Yes, Mr. Badawy, go ahead, sir.
MR. BADAWY: Yes. Mr. Chairman, and again, I don't know whether it's appropriate to

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Hold on a minute. Mr. Lopez, can you please identify yourself for the record, please?

MR. LOPEZ: My name is Alex Lopez, A-L-E-X L-O-P-E-Z. And I an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner representing Single Member District 6E02 virtually on behalf of Protestant ANC 63.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay. Thank you.

Go ahead, Mr. Badawy.
MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and again I don't know if it's appropriate to do this now or to go through the stipulations, but the Protestants do have a preliminary matter to address and that is the Protestants' argument that the PIF and disclosures that were filed by the licensee were filed late. As the Board is aware, the Board directed both parties to file their PIF and disclosures within seven days, excuse me, seven days prior to this hearing. We were informed of that by the chairman on November 9th at our status hearing.

Additionally, the Title 23 of the D.C. Municipal Regulations, Section 1722 require the

PIF and disclosures, the exhibit list, the exhibits, and the witness list to be filed with both counsel or ABRA and the Protestants, the parties seven days prior to hearing. We did not receive those. Those, in fact, were served on us by email at 11:51 p.m. on Monday night, December 5th. This, in fact, prejudices the Protestants as we have not had ample time to review and prepare for cross examination effectively. Additionally, I would add that the filing that was received is deficient to one witness and that is the proposed expert witness Martin Beam, who will testify, I believe, regarding acoustics.

As the Board is aware, the D.C. Municipal Regulations require expert witnesses to have filed a CV or resume and what was filed for this witness does not amount to a resume. It is part of a LinkedIn page that describes some work history and a degree in mechanical engineering. The Protestants will argue that it doesn't contain what typically is associated with expert witness information including professional associations, certifications, any continuing education, any published articles, and whether or
not the witness has ever been qualified to testify as an expert before this Board, another board, or a court of law. Therefore, the filing is deficient and again, the Protestants are prejudiced because of that.

At this time we would make a motion to preclude the licensee from presenting witnesses and exhibits at the hearing today. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: When was the PIF due?

MR. KLINE: Mr. Chairman, we got an email --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Hold on a minute, Mr. Kline, hold on.

MR. KLINE: Sorry.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You will be allowed to respond. I'm trying to find out from Mr. Badawy when was the PIF due?

MR. BADAWY: The PIF and exhibits were due seven days prior to the hearing, so that would have been November 30th and that is when the Protestants filed their PIF, exhibit list, witness list, and exhibits and served those on counsel for the licensee and the Board by email.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And you got it
what date?
MR. BADAWY: I received licensee's filings on Monday, December 5th at 11:51 p.m. by email.

MR. KLINE: Mr. Chairman, we were fully prepared to file earlier than that. We received an email from the Agency requesting that the information be filed by Monday and that's what we did. I believe that the Protestants received the same email. It's a little misleading for that to be admitted in the presentation that was just made.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm not aware -- I mean if you're saying that can somebody -can someone provide me with a copy of the email that the Agency sent? I'm not aware of that. I need to see it. So this is something that is pertinent to this case and I need to --

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Kline is correct. At the base of the email, I think it was one email, it said that these were due I think by Monday, December 5th. And the Protestants did not rely on that because of the direction of the Board and because of the regulations which is why we filed ours on

November 30th and frankly, is what we expected.
MR. KLINE: The email is dated December 1st, 2022 at 10:49 a.m. from the Board's legal counsel's office.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Are you able to share -- can someone share their screen with me -- who has the email that can share this with me? I want to see the email because I was unaware of it, so. You don't have to share this with me. I'm going to get the email. Let me look at the email.

I'm waiting to get -- I'm waiting to hear (audio interference).

MR. KLINE: Mr. Chairman, I can share my screen.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay. Hold on. There is a --

MR. KLINE: It seems to me if the Protestants have an issue with that they should have responded immediately rather than lying in wait, sandbagging, and now saying oh, gee, despite the email from the Board's legal counsel, you're late.

MR. BADAWY: So I would counter with that that counsel's comment that they were
prepared to file in a timely fashion which would have been November 30th is disingenuous as this email is dated December 1st and again the filings were due on November 30th.

Additionally, I am not aware of anything that says that an email from office counsel, absent an agreement by both parties, can they waive municipal regulations and/or the Board's direction.

MR. KLINE: Mr. Chairman, in our practice before the Agency if we are unable to rely on what's communicated to us by Board's counsel, then we have much larger issues than whether this is timely filed because in our regular practice before the Agency what counsel says on behalf of the Board is gospel and we take it as such until the Board says otherwise.

I would hope that that would not discontinue because it's an efficient way for matters to be before the Board.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, please close your screen. I hate when -- I hate to speak when -- yes, go ahead, Mr. Kline.

MR. KLINE: With respect to the second issue, what we filed has been accepted by the

Board before reflects who Beam is. It reflects his professional education. And it reflects the other things that would be contained in something called CV. What it's called I don't think is all that important. The fact that he's identified, his credentials are there, and a determination can be made as to whether he's an expert witness. The Board has heard from him many times before and is very familiar with his expertise in these matters.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: On the issue of the expert witness, Mr. Badawy, you are -- you will have an opportunity -- prior to this, if you had some concerns with it. I'm just speaking generally because I'm not prepared to make a decision on your earlier motion, but the second motion regarding the expert designation, if you don't have enough information currently before he testifies, before he testifies, you can -- we can do voir dire where you'll have an opportunity to ask questions of him and so we can independently make a determination whether or not the parties can agree that he is an expert if his resume is not sufficient.

Regarding the PIF issue and are there
any other questions that anyone else has they want to make, any other arguments to be made by either side?

MR. BADAWY: None from the Protestant, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

MR. KLINE: The only thing that I would add is that there's an email from Mr. Lopez dated December 5th, 2022 in which he specifically reaffirms the previously-filed PIF of November 30, 2022 designating Mr. Badawy as the representative and it doesn't raise any issue in terms of timeliness. So, you know, I'm a little confused when we got an email from the Agency -to hear opposing counsel setting a date for filing and hearing opposing counsel or it be that it's not timely without any indication beforehand that that's an issue.

And the other point that I would make is if Mr. Badawy truly claims prejudice, then we file a motion to continue and ask the Board to reconsider that motion, if indeed, he is so prejudiced. And that will give him plenty of time to do whatever preparation he thinks he needs to do.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So Mr. Badawy,
so what you're asking here to do is you want us to move forward with the protest, but you're saying that the counsel didn't comply with the disclosure of time line that we should prevent them from presenting witnesses. I guess at this juncture I would not -- anyway, so you're asking us that we should prevent them from putting their case on. That's your position?

MR. BADAWY: I think they should be, again, Mr. Chairman, they are to comply with the rules. At this late date, if it does prejudice to Protestant should result in preclusion. I think it's reasonable to let Protestant to expect that well, the owner would testify and perhaps a co-owner, but beyond that, we are prejudiced.

MR. KLINE: And that prejudice can be easily eliminated by continuing the hearing -excuse me, by the Protestant. So we can eliminate all prejudice by continuing the hearing. We would be prejudiced by relying on an email that was transmitted by the Office of the Board's counsel, so we would likewise claim prejudice. If Mr. Badawy truly believes that he's prejudiced, then I would suggest that the Board reconsider a motion to
continue the hearing and that way we will have ample time to prepare.

We are prepared to go forward today, but if his position is he's prejudiced, then the Board should continue the hearing. If the Board's position is that we were wrong to rely on the communications from the Board's counsel, we would claim prejudice and we would ask that the hearing be continued.

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Chairman, the only thing I would say in response to that is again, the regulations and the rules are very, very clear. Our documents were filed in a timely manner before that email has come out. The licensee's documents were not filed in a timely manner and then now they're relying on that email from counsel and they didn't file their documents in the first place.

They are experienced counsel. They understand the rules and the regulations. They were present for the -- at the status hearing where the direction was very clear. To claim otherwise now I think is disingenuous. We are -excuse me, if I may finish.

We are prepared to go forward today.

We have our witnesses here. It would be a major imposition on our witnesses, who have already taken time off to come here and provide testimony today which is why we're arguing for preclusion. And that's my final argument, Your Honor. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. As Chairperson of the Alcohol and Beverage Control Board for the District of Columbia and according to D.C. Official Code Section 2575 of the Open Meetings Act, I move that the ABC Board hold a closed meeting for the purpose of seeking legal advice from our counsel on Case No. 22-PRO-00072, Rito Loco-El Techo, pursuant to D.C. Official Code Section 2-575(b)(4)(a) of the Open Meetings Act. Is there a second?

MEMBER CATO: Cato seconds.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Cato seconds the motion.

We'll have a roll call vote.
Mr. Short.
MEMBER SHORT: Short. I agree.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Cato.
MEMBER CATO: Bobby Cato. I agree.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Hansen.

Grandis.
Mr. Grandis and I agree. It appears that the motion has passed. I hereby give notice that the $A B C$ Board will recess these proceedings to hold a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2-575 of the Open Meetings Act.

The Board is going to go off the record to into executive session. I will ask everyone to hold tight. The Board will come back and we will make recommendation once we have -once we spoken -- once we consult with our attorney, we will come back and we will make a determination. All right? Hold tight. Please do not log off, but you can turn your cameras off and microphones. All members should return to executive session for further action. Thank you.
(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 2:45 p.m. and resumed at 3:06 p.m.)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm trying to see who's not here. So all the parties are here. Mr. Short, you're logged on twice. So I'm not sure -- and I'm not seeing you. So I'm not quite sure which one of the lines you're on, sir. I cannot see you, Mr. Short, and you're logged on
twice. As soon as Mr. -- I'm able to see Mr. Short, then we'll start back.

Mr. Short?
MEMBER SHORT: Can you hear me?
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Short, you're logged in twice, sir. You need to log off on one of the machines you're logged in. I cannot see you, but you're logged in twice. So you need to log on one of the machines that you're logged into.

Mr. Short? Mr. Short?
MEMBER SHORT: I'm trying, Mr. Chair.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Short, you are logged in on two different equipment. Please log off on one of the equipment, sir. Now whatever equipment you're on, I cannot see you, but --
(Pause.)
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm working with our IT to see what is going on with Mr. Short. As soon as I'm able to get him online, then we can move forward.

He should be back on shortly. I was told he had to reboot his system. So hopefully, he should be back on.

I'm going to move on. He should join us -- we do have a quorum. As long as there are three Board members present, there is a quorum. And we currently have four Board members.

All right. The Board went into executive session to discuss with our attorney the motion that was filed by -- the motion that was raised by the protestant. There are two things going on here. There was -- an email was sent from our legal office.

And email was sent by one of the protestants to our legal office on November 21st requesting further instructions regarding the PIF because pursuant to my instruction, I had informed the party that our legal office had provided further instruction. So on the 21st an email was sent by one of the protestants to our legal office asking for guidance regarding the submission of the PIF. Our legal office responded prior to the deadline on the 28th to advise the parties the process to file a PIF.

And the parties were also informed that they had up through December 5th to file the PIF. There were no objectives received filed by any of the parties. But it was a joint email
that was submitted to all the parties to inform them that the PIF was due because they had through December 5th to file the PIF.

And even without that email, Section 17.29 .9 states that the Board may allow parties to submit their PIF and exhibit forms or amend their PIF and exhibit form after submission deadline set forth in Section 17.22.8 for good cause. I believe that good cause was shown. And so I believe I'm going to make a motion that the Board allow the introduction of the PIF on the part of the applicant. Is there a second?

MEMBER CATO: Cato seconds.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Cato second the motion. We'll now have a roll call vote. Mr. Cato?

MEMBER CATO: Bobby Cato, I agree. CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Hansen? MEMBER HANSEN: Jeni Hansen, I agree. CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Grandis? MEMBER GRANDIS: Edward Grandis, I agree.

> CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Passed 4-0-0. All right. Let's move on. So now that we've addressed, are there any other preliminary
matters that needs to be addressed? As I stated before, Mr. Badawy, if Mr. Kline decides to call Mr. Beam as a witness, you can object to his qualifications at the beginning and we'll do voir dire. So you'll have an opportunity to further question him prior to this testimony.

And if based on the questioning, then we'll determine whether or not -- I mean, if you're satisfied with his qualification, the Board can make a determination and declare him an expert if we disagree with -- if there's disagreement. Okay? All right. You're welcome. Any other preliminary matters that needs to be raised before we move forward?

No?
(Simultaneous speaking.)
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. And the question $I$ asked before, is the protestant -and I'm just trying to find whether or not this renewal application, are the protestants in agreement that the license should be renewed? And I'll start with you, Mr. Badawy.

MR. BADAWY: No, Mr. Chairperson.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I don't need to ask the rest of the protestants because if one
protestant says no, then we have to move forward. So all right, fine. So I'm not saying that the other protestants agree or disagree. But since it would have to be unanimous, and we don't have a unanimous decision by the protestants.

So all right. So the Board needs to decide whether or not the license will be renewed and as a starting point. All right. What will occur is that we'll have opening statement by the applicant. We'll have an opening statement by the protestant. And it's my understanding -well, it's not my understanding that you, Mr. Badawy, that you will be representing all the protestants. Is that correct?

MR. BADAWY: That is correct, Mr. Chairperson. Thank you. And that's by rules basically says that where there are multiple protestants, then the Board ask the parties to designate who it is that's going to represent the protestants.

I don't know and I probably need to look at the PIF to see how many witnesses. But -- and let me ask a question. Mr. Kline, how many witnesses do you plan to call?

MR. KLINE: Six, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Six witnesses?
MR. KLINE: Yeah, some of them will be brief, but yes, six.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And Mr. Badawy, how many witnesses do you wish to call?

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Chairperson, I believe the roll -- excuse me, status hearing we were told that we could only call five witnesses. So we are prepared to call five witnesses.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kline, I'm going to comply with that requirement. I think this is -- I've told everyone that this is a matter we're doing these hearings. We've cut down on the time, and I'm not -- I thought -well, anyway.

So all right. So five witnesses, sir, as per -- I will look at -- I mean, I will look at my instructions. And we're going to comply with the witnesses as provided in the instructions. Okay? All right.

So anyway, so as I stated before, the licensee will make an opening statement, then the protestant will make an opening statement. The Board will call its first witness. Once the Board calls its witness, the Board members will
question the witness.
Then the licensee will have an opportunity to ask questions of the question. And the protestant will have an opportunity to ask questions of the witness. Then the licensee -- the applicant will present its case. And after applicant presented its case, the protestant will have an opportunity to present its case.

After closing arguments, we'll close the record and then we'll move on from there. All right. So Mr. Kline, do you wish to make an opening statement?

MR. KLINE: Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, members of the Board. I'm Andrew Kline on behalf of the applicant.

We are here on behalf of Rito Loco, LLC trading as Rito Loco-El Techo to request that the Board grant the application for renewal of the license without additional condition. It appears to us from our understanding of the parties interactions the primary issue seems to be noise. And the evidence will show that the applicant has made continuing attempts to address
the issues and will continue to do so.
This establishment started -- you'll hear from Mr. Hankins it started, it was a food truck. And Mr. Hankins decided to try the brick-and-mortar route which he's done and he's managed to survive through the pandemic and through all of the difficulties he's faced in the last three years. The evidence will show that he's made substantial changes in the nature of the operation in an effort to address the concerns that have been raised by the protestants with respect to noise.

You'll also here from an expert witness, Mr. Marty Beam. He's a noise consultant, sound consultant, sound engineer who will talk about other efforts that will be made and other changes that are contemplated to the establishment in an effort to further address the issues that have been raised with respect to noise. You will hear from Mr. Hankins how the curtailment of his activities in an effort to meet the objections of the neighbors has cost him financially at a time when he's just coming out of a pandemic.

But he's committed to addressing
issues and will continue to do so. At the conclusion of the evidence, at the conclusion of the case, we will request that you approve the application without further condition. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, sir.
Mr. Badawy?
MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr.
Chairperson. Thank you, members of the Board, Mr. Kline, and Ms. Yohannes. The protestants have a tremendous amount of information to provide today. At its core, out case is quite simple.

As a matter of law, the licensee shall have the burden of proof to show that the establishment meets the appropriateness standard in accordance with D.C. Official Code Section 1711.5. The protestants intend to show through documentary evidence and through witness testimony that the licensee does not meet the appropriateness standard and that no reasonable person could construe the available facts to conclude otherwise. Our case today will focus on two specific elements of the appropriateness standard, the many ways the establishment
adversely affects the peace, order, and quiet of the area on the one hand and on the other its record of compliance.

Our evidence and testimony will proceed along three main lines argument. First and most important, the establishment has over an extended period of time regularly generated noise in the form of amplified music, particularly techno, trance, and electronic music played by live disc jockeys that can be heard in the neighborhood residence not just in the adjacent building but other hundreds of feet away across a busy avenue. This is in direct violation of Section 725A.

And although this is substantiated and documented in the investigative history, we will supplement it with firsthand witness testimony from multiple neighborhood residents. Second, the solid waste generated by the establishment has again over an extended period of time been permanently stored in a manner that, A, provides food, coverage, and breeding places for rodents, cases a nuisance both as an eyesore and constriction of a narrow vehicular alley, constitutes an illegal unpermitted used of a
public space, and violates directly a summary order of the Board of Zoning Adjustment. Each of these issues violates the litter provision of Section 726 of the D.C. Official Code or other statutes.

And third, we will argue that the Board must give great weight to the establishment's record of compliance when considering what licensing actions take. We have cited a number of violations already. But we wish to draw specifically to the licensee's documented record of violations and the settlement agreement reached with residents of the neighborhood. At its fire renewal hearing -at its fire renewal several years ago, a licensee may try to characterize the protestants as a small group of disgruntled, unreasonable, and impossible to please neighbors who simply don't want to borrow a restaurant in their midst.

This is not true. The volume of complaints and the reach of the licensee's adverse impacts on the neighborhood are such that two different advisory neighborhood commissions voted to protest the establishment's license renewal. And a group of five or more individuals
protest was joined by no more -- excuse me, no fewer than 30 neighborhood residents who are directly affected by the persistent actions and behavior of the licensee. Thank you for your attention and your time this evening, and we look forward to proceeding.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
Thank you. All right. The Board will call its first witness. And so our first witness is Mr. Kevin Puente. Ms. Puente, can you raise your right hand, please? Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth and nothing but the truth? All right. Turn your volume up a little bit, please, Mr. Puente. Mr. Puente, can you spell and state your name for the record, please?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Kevin Puente, K-E --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I can't hear you, Mr. Puente.

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Can you hear me now?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You need to raise your volume, please, sir.

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Can you hear me now?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, that's perfect. All right. Just one more time, Mr. Puente. I'm sorry. I'm trying to access some documents. I apologize. All right. So Mr. Puente, can you again spell and state your name for the record, please?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Kevin Puente, K-E-V-I-N P-U-N-T-E.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And where are you currently employed, sir?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: The Alcohol Beverage Administration.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: How long have you been employed by the Agency?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Approximately seven and a half years.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: What's your role in working for the Agency, sir?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Investigator.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And what are your duties and responsibility as an investigator?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I conduct inspections and investigations of licensed ABC establishments throughout the District of

Columbia.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And are you familiar with this establishment -- are you familiar with the Rito Loco-El Techo, the applicant in this case?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, I am.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And how did you become aware of this case?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I was assigned a protest investigation.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Did there come a time that you draft a report for this investigation?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, I did.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you have a copy of the report available that you can share with us?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, I do.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Can you
identify the document on your screen, sir?
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: This is my protest investigation.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And when did you draft this?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: December 2022.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Did you get an opportunity to speak to the parties in this case? INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, I did. CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And specifically who did you speak to?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I spoke with the abutting property owner, Mr. Craig Kujawa. I spoke with the group of 31 representative, Mr. Rami Badawy, and I spoke with ANC 6E, Mr. Alex Lopez and the owner of Rito Loco-El Techo, Mr. Louie Hankins.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Can you tell us what, if anything, you were able to -- and you say you spoke with Mr. Kujawa. Can you tell us what was -- share with us the nature of your conversation.

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, so on Monday, November 21st, 2022, I telephonically spoke with Mr. Kujawa. Mr. Kujawa advised me that he lived in his residence well before Rito Loco came along. He said the biggest issue for him is the noise.

He abuts the property, and he constantly hears the base and the music from the summer garden. He said Rito Loco-El Techo was
trying to create a nightclub. And even though he's the abutting property owner right next to his establishment, he said his whole building can hear the noise and other neighbors are complaining about it as well.

Mr. Kujawa stated that he'd like to see the establishment comply with the settlement agreement and noise regulations. He also advised me that they've been having problems with the trash. The establishment is putting their trash bins out on a public space in an alley. And he said just recently most nights he's been awake most nights because of the noise that's emanating from the establishment.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Who else did you speak to?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Mr. Rami Badawy who was the representative for the group of 31 .

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: What was the nature of your conversations with Mr. Badawy? INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Mr. Badawy stated that the noise starts on most weeks is an afternoon and goes well into the early morning hours. He stated that even with the windows and doors closed, the group of 31 can still hear the
music and the noise that travels. Mr. Badawy stated that he'd like to see compliance with the noise ordinance, the regulations, and a settlement agreement that Rito Loco currently has.

Mr. Badawy stated that residents have made the owner, Rito Loco, aware numerous times of the noise but must times the concerns go unresolved from the establishment. Mr. Badawy stated that the establishment cannot come to compliance with the regulations and the noise ordinance. They would like to see the entertainment endorsement be removed from $A B C$ license.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Did you have an opportunity to speak to anyone from ANC 6C?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, I spoke with Mr. Alex Lopez. Mr. Lopez advised me there was three main issues: noise, trash, and parking. Mr. Lopez advised that noise has been the main issue for the neighborhood for a while now.

Mr. Lopez advised that it goes on all night starting in the afternoon into the early morning hours. Mr. Lopez advised me that the ANC would like to see a reduction of the
entertainment hours. If that cannot happen, ultimately the establishment would not like to see their entertainment endorsement taken away.

The second issue was the trash. They had advised establishments in that area to stop placing their trash bins in the alley on public space. It was attracting rodents and other litter throughout the alley in the neighborhood.

The third issue that they had is parking. There's not much parking in the area due to being right on Florida Avenue. And patrons are parking on the side street as well as I've seen staff and the owners park on the sidewalk right in front of the little island right next to the establishment. And they've seen cars parked there before and people go into the establishment.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Did you get a chance to speak to the owner of the establishment?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, I went and met with Mr. Louie Hankins on Tuesday, November 21st. Mr. Hankins showed me around the establishment. He showed me steps he has taken to reduce the noise by putting mitigating
material up on the walls. He also has installed a decibel reader right in front of the disc jockey so they can see where they are to make sure they're not going over 90 decibels. Mr. Hankins had one of his employees play the music at 90 decibels and walk me around the neighborhood so we can hear the noise and bass.

Mr. Hankins also advised me that the year following COVID and the closures by D.C. government and the city, he lost a lot of money admittedly that first year. He takes blame for the violations that occurred after the reopening of D.C. But Mr. Hankins advised me that since 2021, the establishment has not had any violations.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I know that you're a sound engineer, Mr. Puente. Tell me a little bit about the state of the noise. As you had said, it was turned up to 90 decibels and that you walked around the neighborhood. Can you just elaborate on that a little bit more for me, please.

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir. Mr. Hankins owns an office right behind the establishment in one of the buildings. So he
took me in there to hear it, and it's directly right behind the DJ booth where he had us. And we could hear a little bass, but it wasn't that loud where we were.

When we were outside, there was a delivery truck that was occurring. So that kind of made more noise than us hearing the music. We were walking around on Florida Avenue and 6th Street, Northwest.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you recall approximately about what time this was when at least when you visited the establishment with the owner?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, it was around 1:00 p.m.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. So tell us about just the characteristic of this neighborhood, please?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yeah, so Rito Loco is located in a mixed-use area. According to the GIS map, a mixed-use zone provides for mixed-use development that permits a broad range of commercial, institutional, multiple dwelling unit residential developments at varying densities. In the area of Rito Loco-El Techo,
there are 42 establishments.
Ten establishments listed have a Class CR restaurant license. And those are Quattro Osteria, FishScale, BKK Cook Shop, 801 Restaurant and Bar, VIP Lounge, Appioo, Emmy Squared, Cortez, Gogi Yogi, and HalfSmoke. Five of the establishments have a summer garden endorsement, and those are BKK Cook Shop, 801 Restaurant and Bar, Cortez, Gogi Yogi, and HalfSmoke.

Five of the establishments have an entertainment endorsement and those are VIP Lounge, Appioo, Cortez, HalfSmoke, and Quattro Osteria. There are no public schools or libraries within 400 feet of the establishment. Rito Loco is located at 606 Florida Avenue, Northwest.

> It's a two story medium sized establishment that abuts the neighboring establishments on both sides and a residential building abuts the back of the establishment. Rito Loco is a two story establishment with a total occupancy load of 79, a summer garden with a total occupancy load of 79. The license includes entertainment and carry out and delivery endorsements and a summer garden endorsement.

The first floor has a kitchen and carry out area for guests to pick up their food for to-go orders as well as limited seating for guests to eat there. The second floor is mainly comprised of a summer garden with a bar and seating for guests. The summer garden has a retractable roof deck that can open up in the summertime as well as size that can open up during the summertime.

I monitored Rito Loco-El Techo on seven separate occasions from Tuesday, November 17th through Wednesday, November 23rd. I reviewed ABRA records from November 1st, 2022 to November -- I reviewed ABRA records from November 1st, 2021 to November 16th, 2022. And there have been 45 noise complaints made against Rito Loco-El Techo, the sound violation on two separate occasions, November 13th, 2021 and December 2nd, 2021. And both those cases were adjudicated by the Board and OAG. And that's all, sir.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You stated that you observed -- you did observations (audio interference) you visited the premises. And so was that a variation of times -- different time
periods that you visited the establishment?
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
(Simultaneous speaking.)
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yeah, from late early morning hours from after midnight to 2:00 a.m., I visited the establishment several times.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And did you observe any violations during the period of time that you did your observation?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: No violations. I noticed pedestrian traffic was light to medium due to the area. There was no parking. I had to park in the alley on must occasions right there and walk up due to Florida Avenue being a main artery right there.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And let's go through the exhibits. Can you please identify the exhibits in your report, please?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir. So the first exhibit is from ANC 1B protesting the license. Exhibit 2 is a letter from ANC 6E protesting the license. Exhibit 3 is a letter from the group of 31 protesting the license.

Exhibit 4 is a letter from the abutting property owner, Mr. Kujawa, protesting
the license. Exhibit 5 is the GIS -- or is a copy of the zoning map. Exhibit 6 is the GIS map of establishments within 1,200 feet of Rito Loco-El Techo.

Exhibit 7 is a GIS map of any
libraries and public schools within 400 feet of Rito Loco-El Techo. Exhibit 8 is a photograph of the first floor take out area for customers to get their food. Exhibit 9 is another photograph of the first floor.

Exhibit 10 is a photograph of the summer garden. Exhibit 11 is another photograph of the summer garden. Exhibit 12 is another photograph of the summer garden.

Exhibit 13 is another photograph of the summer garden. Exhibit 14 is another photograph of the summer garden and bar area on the summer garden. Exhibit 15 is a photograph of the front of the establishment.

Exhibit 16 is a photograph of the retractable roof inside the summer garden. And Exhibit 17 is a current copy of their settlement agreement that they have on file with ABRA. And Exhibit 18 is a copy of the regulatory inspection I conducted at the establishment.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Puente, what type of license does this establishment have?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: It has a Class CT.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: A CT? They have a tavern license?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And I just want to ask you. What kind of endorsement do they currently have on their license?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: They currently have carry out and delivery, summer garden, and entertainment endorsement.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And what are their current approved hours of operation?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir. So the hours of operation are Sunday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. The hours of sale are from on Sundays, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m., Monday through Thursday, 11:30 to 2:00 a.m. On Friday and Saturday, the hours of operation are 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m.

And the hours of sale are from 11:30 to 3:00 a.m. The entertainment is Sunday through

Tuesday, 6:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. and Friday and Saturday from 6:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. The hours of the summer garden are 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. Sunday through Thursday and Friday and Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 a.m.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now do they have -- are they approved to have entertainment in their summer garden?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: What are those hours of entertainment in a summer garden?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: The same time as the hours of the operation of the summer garden, from 10:00 a.m. -- take that back. So Sunday to Thursday goes from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. and then Friday and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 a.m.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. You can close your screen. I don't have any other questions. Any questions by any Board members? Go ahead, Mr. Short.

MEMBER SHORT: Thank you, Mr.
Chairman. Good afternoon, Investigator Puente.
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Good afternoon, sir.

MEMBER SHORT: Now how many years have you been with ABRA?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Seven and a half years.

MEMBER SHORT: And for the record, what zone is this establishment in?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: It's in a mixed-use zone.

MEMBER SHORT: Which allows what for the record?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: According to the D.C. zoning, mixed-use zone provides for mixed-use development that permit a broad range of commercial, institutional, and multiple dwelling unit residential developments at varying densities. The MU zone is a mixed-use zone that is intended to be applied throughout the city consistent with the density designation of the comprehensive plan.

MEMBER SHORT: The comprehensive plan that's mentioned by the city means that residences will be right next to businesses and pretty much throughout that whole zone?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I believe so, sir.

MEMBER SHORT: And so basically the noise complaints, you mentioned that you visited -- or you mentioned something about 45 noise complaints?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir. According to ABRA records from November 1st, 2021 to November 21st, 2022, there's been 45 noise complaints.

MEMBER SHORT: Were any actions taken about these noise complaints? Or were they just -- were they investigated? Or what actions were taken about these 45 noise complaints?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
There's several written throughout the past year. One was a warning, another one on the statute they had to pay a fine.

MEMBER SHORT: How much was the fine?
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: For Case No. 21-CMP-0068, it was a 2,000-dollar fine.

MEMBER SHORT: Is that normal for this zone or this area?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yeah, we get a lot of noise complaints in that area with it being the 9th Street corridor.

MEMBER SHORT: How many establishments
have you investigated or that you know of through ABRA to have received a noise complaint of 2,000-dollar fine?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Not many, sir, if any.

MEMBER SHORT: Would that mean that they are a little off the beaten path, so to speak, for other businesses who have similar endorsements and similar type businesses?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MEMBER SHORT: Have you as an investigator had a talk with the establishment regarding these noise complaints, 45 and the fine? Or is that something that you can discuss right now under this testimony?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Oh, yes. I've been out several times throughout the past several years for noise complaints. Most recently in October of this year, I went out to a noise complaint. And one of the abutting property owners invited us inside so we could hear. But the problem we had at that visit was we also heard the neighboring establishment. And we determined that was a neighboring establishment at that time.

MEMBER SHORT: It was not this operator. It was another operator that was making the noise that the complaint was made about?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yeah, the owner said that it seemed like the bass was turned down just as we got there. So we heard more of the neighboring establishment's summer garden music. MEMBER SHORT: What month was this?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: October 2022.
MEMBER SHORT: And the parking again, is it -- how is parking in that area or close to where this location is? What is it, 600 Florida Avenue? How is the parking there in that area?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: There's not much parking. There's only available parking on 6th Street, Northwest right there. With Florida Avenue going under the construction right now, there's a lot of lane closures. So mainly 6th Street, Northwest, 7th Street, Northwest is where I can find most of the people parking at.

MEMBER SHORT: My last question, have you as an investigator had a talk with the owners of this establishment? And if so, how did the conversation go? What recommendations, if any,
did you make to them? Or how did your visits to this establishment regarding the noise and parking and trash? How did it go?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Mainly for the noise complaints which I visited, I spoke with, I believe, one of the $A B C$ managers. And they turned it down for us on every visit I've been to over the past few years.

MEMBER SHORT: So it was loud and they turned it down when you came to visit?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yeah, because we couldn't get inside any of the neighbors houses at the time. It was during COVID and stuff. So we didn't go inside. So asked them to turn it down because we could hear it walking up the stairs to the summer garden.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. Thank you very much for your testimony, and thank you for your excellent report and investigation. Thank you. That's all I have, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Short. Any other questions by any of the Board members? Mr. Kline?

MR. KLINE: Afternoon, Investigator Puente.

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Good afternoon, sir.

MR. KLINE: You indicated that there were 45 noise complaints, many in the last year. Is that what $I$ understood your testimony to be?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir. I asked the supervisor to pull the noise complaints from November 1st, 2021 to November 21st, 2022.

MR. KLINE: And are those represented on page 10 of your report?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: Do you have that in front of you?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes.
MR. KLINE: And in fact, the last one was just over a year ago, wasn't it?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Only for the noise complaints.

MR. KLINE: Well, that was for any violation, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir. The last violation was December 2nd, 2021.

MR. KLINE: Okay. And was there any finding of a noise violation since then that's not reflected in your report?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: No, sir.
MR. KLINE: Okay. And there were some discussion -- much was made about the resolution of Case No. 21-CMP-00068 and the 2,000-dollar fine. And your testimony was that you agreed -I don't know if it was your testimony. But you agree that was excessive for a noise complaint?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Oh, yeah. When I read the -- because there was a global OAG for that case and several other cases. And all it said was Charge 1, played music at such an intensity that it was heard in a premises outside of the establishment. Statutory authority D.C. Code 25-725A. The charge was dismissed. Charge 2, failed to file a settlement agreement. Statutory authority D.C. Code 25-823, a fine, 2,000-dollar payable within 120 days.

MR. KLINE: Now the 2,000-dollar fine was not for a noise complaint, was it?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I'd have to view the case to see what it was.

MR. KLINE: Wasn't Charge 1 the noise complaint? Isn't -- that's under number 4 on page 10 of your report?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yeah, Charge 1
says played music at such an intensity. But I also know their settlement agreement states that no music should be heard inside the residence in their settlement agreement.

MR. KLINE: Okay. But in terms of a legal statement, this was a settlement agreement violation, not a noise violation, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: All right. So it may not be so unusual that for a settlement agreement violation the funds might be higher, right?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: Now in terms of -- we talked a little bit about the character of the neighborhood. There are a number of establishments -- and you testified before and I think, of course, all of this is in your report. There are a number of establishments near Rito Loco, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: And in fact, on your visits there, you hear noise from at least one of those establishments, didn't you?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: And a number of those
establishments have summer gardens, sidewalk cafes, or other outside seating facilities, don't they?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes.
MR. KLINE: And noise is audible from those other establishments, isn't it?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: In fact, this
establishment is not in but it's right on the edge of the ARTS Overlay District, isn't it?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: And we know that the ARTS Overlay District is one in which 18 hour activity is encourage under the zoning code, don't we?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: Now what was the latest time that you were in the neighborhood or near El Techo or at El Tech/Rito Loco?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: The latest visit was -- double check real quick. It's 12:30 -12:00 a.m. to 12:30.

MR. KLINE: Okay. So you don't really know how late they went with respect to entertainment on any of your visits there. Is that a fair statement?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: Now if I could, could you pull up Exhibit 5, please, of your report?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Okay, sir.
MR. KLINE: Who is sharing that report?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I'll share it. I can share it.

MR. KLINE: Okay, great. That will be helpful. Thank you. All right. Now the little drop in the middle, that's where the establishment is located in the green?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: All right. Now you
testified about a visit to the establishment where you went to the office?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: Can you show with your cursor approximately where within that rectangle the office is located?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: It was right -so this is Rito Loco --

MR. KLINE: Yeah.
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: -- I believe.
This is Quattro Osteria right here. It's right
behind Quattro Osteria, so right about here.
MR. KLINE: Okay. And you didn't hear noise. You did a bit of a noise test when you went there, right?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, I was with Mr. Hankins where he was. We were right behind the DJ booth. Me and him were having a conversation at a normal level. You could hear it a little bit. But we weren't speaking loud to each other, but we were able to have a perfect conversation.

MR. KLINE: What time was that?
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: 1:00 p.m. when I went out there.

MR. KLINE: So it was just turned on. The music was turned on as a test so that you could hear it?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: When you were there, your visit -- I think we covered the is, but let me just make sure. You did hear noise from other establishments in the neighborhood, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: This is actually even though it seemed to be quiet on your visits,
you've had occasion to visit this neighborhood at other times other than in connection with this investigation, haven't you?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes.
MR. KLINE: And it's actually a pretty bustling part of town, isn't it?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, it is.
MR. KLINE: And there's typically a great deal of ambient noise in the neighborhood as well?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: And what is that? What do you typically hear when you're there?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: You hear the cars passing by, horns. At times, MPD will shut down Georgia Ave. right there. So the buses will have to reroute when they did the nightlife task force. On occasion, I saw trash trucks picking up trash, the city trash trucks from the city trash bins.

MR. KLINE: And with respect to trash, did you see any issue with respect to trash when you were there?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I only saw the trash bins in the alley right next to the
neighboring establishment, 600t.
MR. KLINE: Okay. And they were closed and orderly?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yeah, they were all closed. There was nothing out. All the lids were closed. I was just advised that that's where Rito Loco puts their trash.

MR. KLINE: So I noticed that there's nothing in your report concerning the trash issue. Do we take from that that you didn't find any particular issues with trash when you were there?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: No, I didn't see any over trash bins or anything. There was probably, I think, 10 to 12 trash bins in the alley lined up against 600t.

MR. KLINE: All right. And turning back to noise, isn't Howard Hospital right there as well?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes.
MR. KLINE: And we hear noise from ambulances and other vehicles?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: Police cars?
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.

MR. KLINE: Motorcycles?
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yeah.
MR. KLINE: The whole range. All right. Thank you. I have no further questions of the witness at this time. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you. Mr.
Badawy?
MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And good afternoon, Investigator Puente.
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MR. BADAWY: I want to thank you for your testimony today. And I want to thank you for the work on your report. If I could just have rights to pull up a report here and share the screen.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Orellana, can you please allow Mr. Badawy to share his screen, please?

MR. BADAWY: Okay. And Investigator Puente, can you see your report here?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, I can.
MR. BADAWY: Okay. A couple of questions right off the bat. I think you testified that this establishment has a CT license. In fact, doesn't it have a restaurant
license?
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, it's a restaurant. That's my apology.

MR. BADAWY: A CR, correct? That's what --

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: -- it goes by? And you said that you were there on seven separate occasions trying to listen for music from the establishment. Is that correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And at any of those times, was there a DJ playing in the establishment?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: The two times I went, yes.

MR. BADAWY: Okay. And you also indicated that on one occasion you went into Mr. Hankins office in an abutting property and you can hear music coming from the establish in his office, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And that was 1:00 in the afternoon $I$ think you said?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, when I did
the walkthrough with him.
MR. BADAWY: If I can draw your attention to page 9 of your report. You indicate that there were 45 -- excuse me, on page 9, you indicate that there were 45 noise complaints made against Rito Loco-El Techo between November 1st, 2021 and November 16th, 2022, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And when you say noise complaints, what does that number actually mean?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: So any call that's made to the ABRA hotline, the supervisor logged it if someone is reporting noise as well as the eComplaint we have on our website. Any eComplaints that are sent in regarding noise, it's logged by the supervisor.

MR. BADAWY: Does that also include voicemails that may have been left?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And you only went back for this period, correct, November 1st, 2021 to November 16th, 2022?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes.
MR. BADAWY: Okay. Is there a reason you didn't go back further than that, say, for
the period that the license was last renewed? INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Oh, no. We just have a habit of doing the past year.

MR. BADAWY: So you don't know or your report doesn't contain complaints that may have been made before November 1st, 2021, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: No, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And when you talk about a noise complaint, a noise complaint is different from a complaint that's substantiated, correct? INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir. MR. BADAWY: And what does it take to substantiate a complaint at ABRA?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: So for noise, it'd take for the investigator to come inside the residence if the establishment has a settlement agreement or a Board order saying noise can't be heard inside the residence because under the current noise regulation, if the resident lives in a mixed-use zone or some other zones, then it wouldn't be a violation. So we would have to come in and determine if we hear the music. Then it can be a violation.

MR. BADAWY: In this same section here beginning on, I guess, sort of the -- I guess,
beginning on page 10 really after page 9, you indicate that the establishment was found in violation on two separate occasions, November 13th, 2021 and December 2nd, 2021. What do you mean -- what does violation mean in this context? INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: So when they were adjudicated by the Board and OAG.

MR. BADAWY: And does your report indicate instances where substantiation was not possible? So for example, does your report indicate when, for example, ABRA investigators were not permitted to go inside residences due to COVID policies?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: No, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And does your report indicate instances in which ABRA investigators were unable to respond to a residence due to staffing issues?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: No, sir.
MR. BADAWY: On -- excuse me, going on
to page 9 of your report, I believe it's --
excuse me, Section 9, you indicate that you made a request for calls for service from the Office of Unified Communications that the results had not come in yet. Is that correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: The time you completed this report?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And have you received a report of the calls for service since you completed this report?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I have not.
MR. BADAWY: And just for everyone, can you tell us what a call for service means? INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Call for service is a call that's taken by 911 or 311 . That goes through the Office of Unified Communications. And they usually keep track of all calls to a certain address.

MR. BADAWY: And presumably calls, a loud noise complaint sometimes go to -constitute a call for service, right, in addition to --

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes.
MR. BADAWY: Right?
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And that would be separate from a call to ABRA's hotline, correct? INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.

MR. BADAWY: Let's talk a little bit about the legislative history -- or excuse me, the investigative history here that, again, is beginning on page 10 of your report. I know it's a lot to sift through. But in your report with this section, were you able to ascertain how many times the establishment has been cited for charged with a primary care violation of the alcohol beverage regulations?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: You're talking about all regulations?

MR. BADAWY: Primary care, right? Primary care violation.

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: So just looking at it on the first page, Item No. 2 is a primary tier violation that was adjudicated, if you're able to scroll down, sir. Item No. 4 was another, I believe, primary tier as well. Oh, no. That's secondary. Never mind. That's a settlement agreement secondary charge.

There's only -- so Item No. 6 is a primary tier charge factor in COVID during the Mayor's Order. So that's two primary tiers right there as well as Item No. 8 was another primary charge. But that was a warning, so three.

MR. BADAWY: Maybe, Investigator, for sake of time, is it fair to say this report indicates that there are seven primary tier violations during this investigation period? INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir, yeah. MR. BADAWY: And looking at that investigative report, can you tell quickly how many times the establishment has been charged with a second tier violation of the $A B C$ regulations?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Actually 15 from what $I$ can tell.

MR. BADAWY: And finally, does your -would you say that section of your investigation shows that the establishment has been charged with violations of the settlement agreement that was in place six times?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: Based on your experience conducting these types of protest investigations, is it common for a Class $D$ restaurant licensee to have this number of primary and secondary tier violations in their investigative history?

MR. KLINE: Objection. Objection. We're confusing violations and charges. They're
not violations unless and until they're adjudicated or there's an offer in compromise. CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Rephrase the question, Mr. Badawy.

MR. BADAWY: I will rephrase it. Based on your years of experience conducting these types of protest investigations, is it common for Class C restaurant licensees to have this number of primary and secondary tier citations in their investigative history?

MR. KLINE: Objection. I don't know what the term citations means. Citation is if there's a ticket. Is that what we're talking about? And that was not the previous examination. So it's a little misleading.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I think he's reading as it's written. So I'm going to overrule the objection. If the investigator can respond, he can.

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: What's the question, sir?

MR. BADAWY: I'm sorry. The question is based on your experience as an ABRA investigator investigating these types of establishments, is it typical for Class -- or
restaurants seeking renewal to have this many primary and secondary tier citations?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Not for a restaurant, sir.

MR. BADAWY: Investigator Puente, early in your report on page 4, you've indicated that the establishment is in the MU-4 zone, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: Does your report indicate the distance between the establishment from neighboring zones?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: No, sir.
MR. BADAWY: I'm showing you here what's marked as your Exhibit 5 in your report. Can you tell me what the large green rectangle right here is indicated in your report?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: That's -- yes, sir. So that's an ART-2 zone. So that's mostly likely Howard Theatre.

MR. BADAWY: Do you know whether or not there are any large apartment complexes to the west of the establishment?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, in between Rito Loco and Howard Theatre. I believe there's
one apartment building.
MR. BADAWY: Do you know the name of that apartment building?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I think it's the Shaw if I'm right.

MR. BADAWY: And what are the sort of yellow rectangles immediately to the south of El-Techo?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Those are usually residential markings for residential housing.

MR. BADAWY: And the screen area here, RF-1, that's a residential zoned area?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And is there a reason that this map right here doesn't show any areas either to the northeast or the east or the southeast of the establishment?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: No, sir. We go on the Department of Zoning's website and we put the address in. And this is what usually comes up, a certain radius around the establishment.

MR. BADAWY: We're looking now at Exhibit -- I believe this is number 6.

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.

MR. BADAWY: And again, here we don't have anything to the east or the south, correct? Any of the other establishments in the area? INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.

MR. BADAWY: And there's a reason for that?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yeah, when the person gave me the map for the GIS map, she blew it up so I can see all the establishments that are right in the vicinity of Rito Loco-El Techo.

MR. BADAWY: And going to the east El-Techo, are you aware of any other establishments in the area that are not shown on this map?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I believe so. Right across the street from Quattro Osteria, there's another restaurant there.

MR. BADAWY: Do you know the name of that restaurant?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: It escapes me right now.

MR. BADAWY: Okay. And are there any other restaurants going further east that are not depicted here?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Further east?

If you cross New Jersey Avenue right there on Florida, there's some establishments on the left side going east.

MR. BADAWY: And then my question here is earlier in your report it states there -- your report stated that there are certain number of other ABC licensed establishments within so many feet of this establishment. Does your report indicate anywhere how many individual private residences are within any given radius of this establishment?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: No, sir.
MR. BADAWY: I think you already testified to Exhibit 10 and what this is. Can you tell me in this exhibit this is inside El-Techo. Is that correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: Can you tell me whether this is facing -- what direction this view is facing?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: This is facing the abutting property owners. The abutting property owner will be on the back side of that wall.

MR. BADAWY: Let's see if $I$ can rotate
this now. This is Exhibit 11 to your report, correct, Investigator?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And can you tell me what this dark area right here is and sort of where my cursor is?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I believe it's a storage area.

MR. BADAWY: And what is the light colored area here on the upper portion of the image?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: So they have a retractable roof, and they can open up the sidings on the back side.

MR. BADAWY: And do you know what that material is made of?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I do not, sir, no.

MR. BADAWY: I'm going to Exhibit 12 here, a picture. Do you know what this exhibit depicts?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, so this is the table seating facing Florida Avenue, Northwest.

MR. BADAWY: And again, what is the
very light colored area in the right half of the image do you know?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: That's the siding of the summer garden.

MR. BADAWY: Do you know what that siding is made of?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I do not, sir.
MR. BADAWY: Going to Exhibit 13, do you know what this photograph depicts?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, more tables and seating. The restrooms are in the back right there, and then more of the siding on Florida Avenue, Northwest.

MR. BADAWY: And you said again this is facing Florida Avenue, Northwest?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And what is the very light colored area in the background of the image?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: That's more of the siding on the summer garden. MR. BADAWY: And again, you don't know what's that made of, do you?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: No, sir.
MR. BADAWY: Okay. This is Exhibit 15
of your report. Is that correct?
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And earlier in Section 4 of your report, it stated that, quote, the summer garden has sliding windows along with a retractable roof that can open, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And are those sliding doors shown in this photograph?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And what sliding doors? Are we talking about these things right here where my mouse is aiming to?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And have you ever seen the actual operation of the sliding doors, how they go from open to close?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I have not, sir, no.

MR. BADAWY: And again, can you describe the material that these doors appear to be made of?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I cannot, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And can you give me an estimate of the overall height and length of this
street facing area of the summer garden?
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: The size of the sliding glass windows or the whole summer garden?

MR. BADAWY: Yes, the whole -- this -the whole side here of the summer garden facing Florida Avenue?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: If I had to guess, maybe 60 feet.

MR. BADAWY: And does this image also depict the roof of the summer garden?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes.
MR. BADAWY: And can you describe the roof of the summer garden?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, so this picture, it's open. As you can see, the siding is kind of open in the air.

MR. BADAWY: And this is Exhibit 16, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: Can you tell me what this exhibit depicts?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: This is showing the roof of the summer garden where they have these decorations hanging from it right now.

MR. BADAWY: Okay. And other than up,
do you know what general direction this image is facing?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I do not, sir, no.

MR. BADAWY: What is the white-looking area on the right here?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: That's more of the siding of the summer garden enclosed.

MR. BADAWY: And the ceiling again is the center of the image, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And again, do you know why that's white?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: The material that's used -- that they use.

MR. BADAWY: Again, do you know what that material is?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I do not.
MR. BADAWY: Does the material making up the roof appear to be the same material that makes the sliding doors?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, I believe so.

MR. BADAWY: Okay. Investigator, just a few more questions here. I'm showing you
what's marked as Exhibit 17 of your report. Is that correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, the settlement agreement.

MR. BADAWY: Settlement agreement, right? And in paragraph 4 of the settlement agreement or paragraph -- would you agree with me that the settlement agreement states that the applicant shall install sound absorbative materials and barriers to maintain sound levels as required by law? Is that in the settlement agreement?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: So paragraph 4?
MR. BADAWY: So here, just right here, number 4, outdoor mitigation?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, it does. MR. BADAWY: In the course of your visits, I think you said there were seven visits to El-Tech. Did you observe any sound absorbative materials on any part of the summer garden, the ceiling of the summer garden? INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Not the ceiling so much. But he showed me -- Mr. Hankins showed me material that's on the abutting side that they installed.

MR. BADAWY: When you say abutting side, what do you mean?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: The side that abuts the property owner, that wall.

MR. BADAWY: Okay. And can you describe that absorbative material, what it was?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: It was -- I've seen it in other establishments. It's, like, a very thick piece, like, sponge Styrofoam kind of thing that they put up to help trap the noise inside.

MR. BADAWY: Okay. Thank you, Investigator Puente. I have no further questions.

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Thank you, sir.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy, please close your screen. Yes, Mr. Grandis?

MEMBER GRANDIS: Thank you.
Investigator Puente, thank you for your report and your testimony today. They took it off the screen, but you were just asked about the outdoor noise mitigation. It said by June 1, 2020. Your report is basically in '21 and '22, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: It says here the
order for the noise mitigation, it can include shrubbery, cinder block, or wooden walls perhaps with vines, trees and planters, fountains with running water, other muffling objects. Now I think you just testified that you believe you saw some Styrofoam type material on a wall that abuts the wall of one of the protestants?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: I don't believe that material is listed in their settlement agreement. So did you see cinder block or wooden walls perhaps with vines? Did you see that in areas that would muffle the sound so it would not get into people's apartments?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: They have, like, plants and, like, stuff inside the summer garden. But I didn't see any -- I can't recall if I saw planters or cinder blocks.

MEMBER GRANDIS: What about wooden walls and fountains with running water?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: I'm not sure about the fountains, but $I$ believe there was a panel of wood behind the, like, Styrofoam noise mitigation stuff.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Do you think that was
nailed on one on the other perhaps?
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir, yes.
MEMBER GRANDIS: And if I understood your testimony, the roof opened up. Do you know when they would open up the roof? In any of your visits, was the roof open?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Not during this time of the year. But usually in my past visits in the summer or spring when it's warm out, the roof would be open.

MEMBER GRANDIS: And is the DJ on that floor where the roof would be open?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: And does that roof abut the building where some protestants live?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yeah, so some of the protestants in that building will be above the summer garden. So they will be able to hear it.

MEMBER GRANDIS: So in other words if it's open, it's more likely the sound would go up and hit the exterior walls of that apartment building or condo building?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes --
(Simultaneous speaking.)

MEMBER GRANDIS: There was -- I'm just going back through the document. There was a zoning -- looked like a zoning plat. I think you testified that you did not have a list of how many residents were within the proximity of the distance that you follow. But are aware of the use of the buildings directly across the street? I think that would be Florida Avenue?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir. Florida Avenue, sir.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Directly across the street, are you familiar with the use and the zoning of those -- that row of buildings?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, so usually across the street, there's residents that go all the way down Florida on the --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MEMBER GRANDIS: Going towards 5th?
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Yeah, but -- okay. So those are residential buildings. And as far as you know, there's no commercial activity in those buildings.

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Not directly across. But you go up. If you're going west
towards --
MEMBER GRANDIS: Yes, sir.
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MEMBER GRANDIS: I haven't gotten there yet. I'm talking about the block that goes towards 5th, going towards the east I guess you would say.
(Simultaneous speaking.)
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Now going to the block you mentioned, it's also across Florida Avenue. But it's a little -- I guess a little bit more distance. I think you're aware that there is commercial activity there?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: And there are
licensed establishments that would be on your list, I guess, nightclubs or CTs that had DJs such as Uproar would be there?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
Uproar, Flash, and I believe --
MEMBER GRANDIS: Flash.
INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: -- FishScale.
MEMBER GRANDIS: FishScale. Well,
FishScale, okay. It's more a restaurant I
thought. So any of the times you were there during your reporting of the 2021 and 2022, were either Uproar or Flash operating?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir. They both were.

MEMBER GRANDIS: And do they each have a summer garden on the roof?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Were you aware that noise that may have been perceived coming from the licensed establishment we're talking today could possibly be coming from another roof deck?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Chairman, that's all I have. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you. All right. Thank you very much, Mr. Puente, for -I'm sorry. I wasn't planning to go back around this line of questioning. But I will -- and then you'll get a chance, Mr. Badawy. Go ahead, Mr. Kline.

MR. KLINE: Investigator Puente, you were asked whether it was typical for a licensee to have this many violations seeking renewal. And you responded not for a restaurant, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: All right. In looking at the investigative report on page 10 of your report, 10 and 11, aren't six of the violations failure to file a quarterly statement?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: And those are violations that can only be committed by a restaurant licensee, correct?

INVESTIGATOR PUENTE: Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: Thank you. Nothing further.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'll give you one question, Mr. Badawy, if you have one, one pressing questions that you need to ask.

MR. BADAWY: No further questions.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
Thank you. All right. Thank you, Mr. Puente. Thank you for your testimony. All right. Okay. We're going to have the licensee call his first witness, but we're going to take a break. And what I'm going to do, I will take a scheduled break every two hours.

So it's 4:33, and I'll take a ten minute break. So we'll come back on the record
at 4:43. So ten-minute break.
(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 4:33 p.m. and resumed at 4:44 p.m.)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: We're back on the record.

Who's the first your first witness, Mr. Kline?

MR. KLINE: Mr. Louie Hankins.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Actually, Mr. Hankins is online already.

Mr. Hankins?
Mr. Hankins, can you turn your camera on, please?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Can you --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- raise your right hand please?

Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth and nothing but the truth?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir, I do.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Your witness, sir.

MR. KLINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

State your name, please?
MR. HANKINS: Louie Hankins, L-O-U-I-E H-A-N-K-I-N-S. DIRECT EXAMINATION

Q And, what is your connection to Rito Loco-El Techo?

A Founder.
Q When did you open the establishment?
A Started as a food truck in 2012.
Q You started as a food truck?
A Yes, sir, Rito Loco.
Q And, how long did you operate the food truck?

A The food truck is actually still viable to operate, but we operated heavily from 2012 through 2017, trying to you know, build a brick and mortar, and continue to grow our success.

We've been named D.C. Food Truck of the Year on four separate occasions, Forbes Number 3 Food Truck in America.

At one point in time, also held licenses in southern Florida, where we won numerous awards, as well.

Q And when did you turn your attention
to a brick and mortar establishment?
A After the first year. Directly after the first year. We were at a event at a law firm on K Street, where I met one of the employees of the D.C. DMPED Great Streets Grant Program.

And they told me that I should definitely, they realized that $I$ was on the 7th Street Corridor, and that I should apply for this grant to help build out my restaurant, so.

Q So, when did you ultimately open the restaurant?

A It took 27 months to get my 700 square foot burrito-taco restaurant opened.

Q So it was 700 square feet. Where was that located?

A 606 Florida Avenue, Northwest.
Q Right, but what, what floor is this building?

A What's that, sir? Sorry.
Q What floors, what stories of the building?

A The ground level.
Q Ground?
A Ground, Takeaway Taco Shell.
Q Okay.

So it was just takeaway tacos at that point?

A Burritos and tacos, yes, sir.
Q And did you immediately apply for an alcohol license?

A I believe we did, sir. I, that's a long time ago. There's was a lot, there was a lot going on.

I was trying to manage getting the grant from the city.

Q Okay. And so you ultimately opened on the ground floor, and you ultimately were -(Simultaneous speaking.)

A In 2015.
Q 2015?
A Yes.
Q Okay. And there came a time that you expanded the premises?

A Yes, sir. After the grant was finally issued, we had to use the money to improve the property at 606 Florida. If not, not on paying back our debts or anything like that.

So we built a rooftop. That process took us 36 months. Permits, delays, et cetera,
et cetera, on both jobs ultimately put us over \$1 million in debt on our project.

Q And when did you ultimately open the rooftop area?

A August 17, 2017. So we just passed our 5 year anniversary.

Q Three of those were marred by COVID, we all know?

A Yes, yes. Where most people sat at home, we stayed and worked. And we're a place where people can come and escape the craziness of COVID, and feel like they were in a favorite destination place.

Obviously nobody was traveling by air, so it was, I think it was really something that people really enjoyed.

Q And what's, so do you have a concept for this establishment? A vision as to what it is?

A Yes, for sure. El Techo, it's pronounced El Techo, not El Techno, or anything like that. People like to play semantics and say you know, we play techno music at El Techo, but that's not the case. It's El Techo, which means the rooftop.

When I lived in Europe back in 2008, I found some of my favorite experiences were going to just that: places that were experiences.

It could be classified as a restaurant by day, and you could get there at 6:00, 7:00 p.m. for you know, happy hour European time and have some drinks with friends and then you know, now you're having some bites.

And then a DJ comes on you know, later in the evening and you can meet a girl, a partner, or whatever and the next thing you know, you're on the dance floor and you just have a really great time.

You're touching, as the proprietor you're touching all fives senses of your customers' aura. Your sight, smell, sound, everything. And that's what I wanted to bring to D.C.
D.C. had a very clearly, a clear line drawn between there's night clubs, which I had definitely frequented as I've been a resident for DC all my life. I've been going out in D.C. since 1991. Or restaurants.

And there was really nothing in between that served great food, and provided
music.
Q Okay, how do you, so you differentiate yourself from night clubs. How do you, what's the difference? Why are you different than, than a night club?

A Well, like I just, the story I just painted for you was you know, like you're out to dinner with friends and so forth like that.

I mean I would never walk into Flash and expect to go and have dinner on their dance floor. That's just not feasible. It's way too loud. It's just not the environment.

I think of all of the Investigator Fuentes' pictures, you saw tables in every single picture.

Additionally, it's something that you saw or maybe didn't see in Investigator Fuentes' pictures, was big huge speakers.

You know, I know going into many music venues, there's speakers taller than I am, you know?

You can go back and look at those and you might see a couple small speakers stapled, attached to the roof of the bar.

But we don't have 18 inch, 20 inch
subwoofers. We don't have 12 inch self-powered speakers and things of that nature.

We're not throwing sound all over the neighborhood. You know, might be we were guilty of that in the past, and when we first opened and didn't have any money to afford a proper sound system.

But we've continually made
improvements in our establishment since day one, and continue to not pay off our debt, and continue to try to exist in the neighborhood.

Q So during the course of your operation, you have heard complaints from neighbors, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q And have you tried to address these concerns in any way?

A Yes, sir.
Q What have you done?
A As I said, the, it did take us three years to get open. Unfortunately, the permitting process with DCRA was not the smoothest.

That really like I said, put us behind the eight ball financially. A lot of our budget was eaten up, in terms of things that we wanted
to do.
So when we first opened, it was strictly a open-air venue. There was no, there was no roof, there was no walls, there was no nothing.

In fact, the day that we opened it was a huge rainstorm. We were all standing behind the bar under the roof of the bar, 30 of us.

And you know, people would come. It was the craziest thing. People would come and eat tacos and bring their own umbrellas, and sit there on our open air deck with an umbrella and eating a taco. And I just, I could never understand it but it was great.

But over the last five years, we've tried to survive winters, and we've continually made it as enclosed as possible when we need it to be.

And more like a convertible where things can move and operate accordingly with the weather, and things of that nature.

Additionally, like I said, back when we first opened, we were using self-powered speakers that were throwing music you know, all around the neighborhood.

We are now elevated our speakers to a high-fidelity sound system. Our speakers are eight inches in diameter, which is about that big.

You know, not these big speakers like this that most night clubs have. You know, that that's what we're being likened to.

That sound system cost us $\$ 35,000.00$. We removed all of those bigger speakers. We removed any subwoofers, things of that nature. We've added decibel readers. We've trained our staff. I mean we've engaged, we've engaged sound engineers.

So yes, I mean I think we continually try to do stuff.

Q You mentioned a sound meter. What do you use that for?

A So we have determined throughout the 45 visits from the ABRA and DCRA investigators, through the use of their sound meters, where our sound level can be to be within the framework of the law, right?

And the framework of the law is that 60 decibels on the sidewalk outside of the establishment.

So what we have done is we've put a sound meter in place right in the middle of the restaurant, which is in clear view of our DJs that play on Friday and Saturday evenings. We've trained our management staff and all of our employees, and also the gentleman that books all of our DJs to make sure that everybody knows what that level is.

And you know, I have to say that most times when the investigators show up, and they do have their meters, we're at 60 decibels on the sidewalk, 60 decibels off the alley off the back, which is adjacent to the Shaw apartment building.

And then as they start coming up the stairs, because the door to El Techo once you get to the top of the stairs is usually open during the summer and nice days, once they start walking up the stairs, then their decibel reader will start reading, you know, 65, 71, 73, till they get to the top of the stairs.

You know, so, but on the ground level we're at 60.

Q Now you have an entertainment endorsement that allows you to operate until 2:00 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 3:00 a.m.

Friday and Saturday, correct?
A Our hours of operation for entertainment are till midnight on weekdays, and then 1:30 on weekends.

Q That's -(Simultaneous speaking.)

A We are not -- sorry.
Q Go ahead, I'm sorry. I cut you off.
A We don't have a typical night life endorsement, as most places would.

Q Okay, but I mean your license allows you to go to 2:00 and 3:00, correct? I mean you've voluntarily?

A For alcohol, I think it's midnight and 1:30. I think that's part of our settlement agreement.

Q And during the last couple of years, have you made other changes in an effort to satisfy the neighborhood, or address what are the perceived concerns with the operation of your establishment?

A We're continually trying to work within the neighborhood. We don't want to be the pariah like they make us out to be later in the conversation.

I used to have a DJ seven nights a week. Now we only do Fridays and Saturdays in the evening times.

Q And that --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
A We just, we just, we engaged Martin Beam back in July, who has had tremendous success with friends of mine in Washington, D.C., at mitigating their type of noise and so forth.

So we are in full swing of you know, trying to make additional measures.

Q All right, and are you committed to following through what Mr. Beam might recommend
(Simultaneous speaking.)
A Absolutely.
Q -- with respect to further noise mitigation?

A Hundred percent.
Q Okay.
Now you testified that when you first opened the rooftop it was unenclosed, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q All right. And there came a time that you enclosed it, right?

A Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: All right. I would like to have Ms. Yohannes be able to share a copy of the complete settlement agreement.
(Pause.)
MR. KLINE: He's been given sharing privileges?

MR. ORELLANA: Access has been granted.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry, that's one of the reasons why I do not like to put myself on mute.

She has those privileges. Go ahead, I'm sorry.

MR. KLINE: Thank you. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Can you open it up? Can you, we see your directory but we don't see any. There it is.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: What are we looking at? Is there a file we're looking at, sir? I believe we --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MR. KLINE: Yes, these two, where are they? These two photos.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Hankins, is
that noise coming from your, your location, sir?
MR. HANKINS: I don't know what noise you're referencing, sir.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: There's, all right.

MR. HANKINS: I'm in an office.
If you're hearing anything, it would be background noise of Florida Avenue.

MS. YOHANNES: Do you see the exhibit?
MR. KLINE: No -- now we do.
All right, Mr. Hankins, you're
familiar with your settlement agreement?
MR. HANKINS: Yes.
BY MR. KLINE:
Q Do you know what this is that's being shown right now?

A That is the northeast side of the building facing towards Florida Avenue and 6th Street, north side, in the direction of Mr. Badawy's residence.

Q Right, but it says Exhibit A. What's that an Exhibit A to? Is that an exhibit to your settlement agreement?

A It's got to be, yes, sir. You're saying it is and that's it, yes. Polycarbonate
tri wall wall panels. They have a CT rating of 18, I believe.

Q Okay, so when paragraph 4b says, to further mitigate noise, the applicant has installed polycarbonate wall panels in the summer garden, see Exhibit A, this is the Exhibit A that we're talking about?

A Yes, not as, not as beautiful as looking out on the, Florida Avenue.

Q Okay, all right. But you did install those?

A Yes, sir.
Q And is there an agreement in the settlement agreement, as to when they're to remain in place?

A Yes, sir. 10:30 weekdays, midnight weekends, 9:00 p.m. on Sundays.

Q All right.
And what's the purpose of these panels?

A Sound transfer. To eliminate sound transfer.

Q And, do you comply with the requirements as to when they're to be closed, and when you can have them open?

A Yes, sir.
MR. KLINE: All right, we can have her stop sharing at this point.

Now have you taken other steps, or do you plan to take other steps, to address noise at your establishment?

THE WITNESS: Yes, like I said, fully committed to whatever Martin Beam instructs us to do.

BY MR. KLINE:
Q Hear from him in a minute.
Now, have you been available to confer with residents concerning their perceived issues with your establishment?

A I'm here all the time. Yes, I, I think Mr. Kujawa could attest to the fact that I'm here most of the time.

We typically pass each other with a head down, or a slight grin and that's about it. There's not much conversation going back and forth.

Q Now in the last couple of years you've as a result of these complaints, voluntarily curtailed some of the activities at, at the establishment on the rooftop.

Is that correct?
A Yes, sir.
I mean you know, self admittedly coming out of the pandemic last year, we obviously needed to earn as much revenue as possible. Narrowly escaping and surviving through the pandemic.

And, we contracted with a local D.C. promoter and they threw several parties where they brought in excessive amounts of speakers and sound.

And the bottoms were 18-inch subwoofers; the tops were $15-i n c h . ~ A n d ~ i t ~ w a s, ~$ it was excessive you know, no questions about that.

And you know, I think that we all kind of got a little bit lost at you know, during that timeframe of being, being free again and so forth, and things of that nature.

But you know, November, December, we definitely took the advice of the ABRA investigators of cleaning up our act, and things of that nature.

And we ceased that relationship with that promoter, and have been doing things on our

OWn.
And I was actually just looking back at our three month report. We've actually lost, we've lost over \$150,000.00 in alcohol revenue in the last three months, compared to 2021.

That's a pretty significant, pretty significant over a three month period.

Q But you're committed to maintaining the current program, in terms of dispensing with the use of these promoters?

A Yes, never, never again. Absolutely not. Those promoters found a nice little home over in the Mid-town corridor. So, they're fine.

I'm fine doing what I do, so.
Q Have there been particular individuals in the neighborhood with whom you've successfully worked to address issues related to your establishment, ANC commissioners or otherwise?

A Yes, I mean Mr. Tony Brown, who is our commissioner before Alex Lopez, I think understood our concept and our vision. Appreciated it for what it added to the Florida Avenue 600 block.

That it includes the Howard Theater, Flash, Half Smoked, the Go Go Spot, you know, the
lot across from Howard Theater. You know, all these establishments that create a lively scene in Washington, D.C.

Plenty of the residents in the neighborhood thanked me for being here for the last 10 years, and truly come and enjoy the space, so.

Q Did you at some point enlist the mayor's office on night life and culture, with respect to complaints about your establishment?

A Yes. We had the most recent night life mayor out, Talana. We invited her to come have dinner with us one Friday evening.

And yes, she I mean was fully supportive of what we were doing.

MR. KLINE: I have no further questions of this witness at this time.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy?
MR. BADAWY: Good evening, Mr. Hankins, how are you tonight?

MR. HANKINS: Fantastic, and you, sir?
MR. BADAWY: Good, not bad. Thanks for asking.

CROSS-EXAMINATION

BY MR. BADAWY:
Q Mr. Hankins, if, well first of all, may I share my, share content, please?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: If Mr. Orellana can you please allow Mr. Badawy to share his screen, please?

MR. ORELLANA: The access has been granted.

MR. BADAWY: Okay, Mr. Hankins, do, do you see Exhibit, I believe this is 15, Investigator Fuentes' report.

Can you see that, sir?
MR. HANKINS: Absolutely.
BY MR. BADAWY:
Q Okay.
Mr. Hankins, you oversaw the construction of the El Techo roof deck, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q Okay, and that's primarily a polycarbonate construction, correct?

A Tri wall polycarbonate, per the settlement agreement to --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
Q Polycarbonate's plastic, correct?
A Yes, sir.

Q Okay.
And, the investigator talked about panels on the area of the roof deck facing Florida Avenue.

Is that correct?
A Yes, sir.
Q All right.
And this, this picture here, this exhibit shows those panels, correct?

A It shows them open, sir.
Q Right, open. But shows some that are closed, correct?

A Those are stable, sir. Those are un, those don't move.

Q Panels, but the panels that are polycarbonate plastic, they come on and off, correct?

A Yes. The settlement agreement required for certain points to be fixed panels, and certain places could be operable.

Q And those panels are relatively light, correct?

A We use two people to move them.
Q Okay, so it takes two people, and two people can take them off, correct, and two people
can put them back on, correct?
A Correct.
Q And on a nice day, they're off quite a bit, correct?

A Yes, sir.
I mean you have the windows and open to your house right? So, yes, sir, yes, we have our windows and doors open for sure.

Q Okay.
And the ceiling, that opens and closes, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q And that's also translucent, correct?
A That's correct.
Q That's also plastic material, correct?
A Tri wall polycarbonate, yes, sir.
Q Again, polycarbonate is plastic, correct?

A Tri wall polycarbonate, yes, sir.
Q Okay.
Now you talked a little bit about the decimal reader that has been, that you're now using at your establishment El Techo, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q All right, and you testified that you
now have, have a decibel reader, correct?
A Yes, sir.
Q Do you remember when you got that decibel reader?

A After our violation in December of 2021.

Q Okay, so before that you didn't have one, correct?

A Correct. Like I said, self-admittedly we were doing things outside of the lines, and we weren't thinking clearly.

And now we've over the last year, have adjusted our thinking and are, plan to do everything the correct way, sir.

Q And I believe you testified that with the decibel reading, when you, when music is playing, you or one of your employees takes it downstairs and stands on the sidewalk, correct?

A No, I did not testify to that, sir.
I testified that when ABRA and DCRA show up with their meters, their meters which are the official meters, let me know that we're at 60 decibels, is what $I$ testified to, sir.

Q And those readings are taken down on the sidewalk, correct?

A That's correct, sir.
Q And I believe you also said that when they begin to walk upstairs to the entrance to the roof deck, the readings get higher, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q Okay. I think 60, 70, 80, you said, correct, as they're walking --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
A I did not --
Q -- in the door?
A -- I didn't say 80, sir.
Q 70?
A Yes.
Q And --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
A I think the most recent one was measured at 73.

Q Okay. And that is again, that's as it gets closer to where the music is emanating from, correct?

A Correct.
Q Mr. Hankins, you testified that in 2021 you had a relationship with a I believe you described it as a, as a you know, a sound, a sound producer, correct?

A I don't know what a sound producer is. You might be referencing a promoter.

Q Okay, a promoter, right. And do you remember the name of that promoter?

A I know that the name of the events is Elysium.

Q And how long was your contract with Elysium for?

A I mean it was verbal, but it was to do events last year after the pandemic. I think we reopened June 11th. I think that was Pride weekend.

I remember the atmosphere of the city was super joyous, and we definitely had a party. And you know, I think everybody was happy to be free from their apartments and yes, we weren't, we weren't really thinking about the rules at that time, sir.

Q And last year, you, so you had Elysium and you know, they you know, had DJs correct, that performed all summer long.

Is that correct?
A It wasn't all summer long, sir. They had, I think they had four or five parties. I don't recall exactly.

Q June, July?
A Through November-December, yes, sir.
Q So --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
A Because you do one, one or two a month.

Q So from the summer into the fall, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q All right.
And I believe you initially testified that when you opened El Techo, you had this vision, correct?

A Got to have a vision, sir.
Q So that's a yes, sir?
A Yes.
Q And you said I think you talked about the investigative reports. There were tables, right, there were chairs. You never saw anyone dancing, correct?

A I didn't ever say nobody was dancing. I would never promote no dancing. That's what music's all about.

Q But in the pictures I think you emphasized that there was no, no dancing in the
pictures, correct?
A I didn't say anything about no dancing in the pictures, sir. I said there was tables.

Q Okay.
A You're trying to, you're trying to propose that I'm a night club like Flash. What I'm saying is there's no tables in the middle of Flash.

I would never think to sit down in the middle of the dance floor at a table and try to eat dinner at Flash, which is a night club.

I am not a night club because I have tables and it's for dinner service, sir.

MR. BADAWY: Chairman, if possible could you please direct the witness that the presenter is asking the questions and I, please not to put words in my mouth.

MR. KLINE: So Mr. Chairman, it seems like the attorney put words in the witness's mouth, not the other way around.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Hi gentlemen.
The question was asked. I'll just ask the parties that ask the question, answer the question. I believe that his, I'm sorry, the answer was responsive to the question.

But I, I just want to remind the parties no matter what decision is made by the Board today, at least until the Board makes a decision on these two establishments, Mr. Badawy, you're going to live there. This establishment is going to remain there.

When I said, at least until the Board makes a determination. So I would just ask the parties to, to be civil.

But anyway, I'm not saying that either side has not been civil, I was just reminding both parties to it.

Go ahead, Mr. Badawy.
MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Mr. Hankins, there is music played at El Techo, correct?

MR. HANKINS: Certainly.
BY MR. BADAWY:
Q Okay.
And, there was music played at El
Techo after the settlement agreement that you entered into, correct?

A Yes, I have a entertainment endorsement, sir. That's.

Q All right, and that includes disc
jockeys, correct?
A Only disc jockeys, sir.
Q Okay.
And those disc jockeys play electronic dance music, correct?

A We play what's called house music, sir, so I mean, yes.

Q Okay.
They play house music, correct?
A Yes, sir.
Q Okay.
And I think you said currently the DJs play on Friday and Saturday night, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q Okay.
And the music starts in the evening and goes throughout the night, correct?

A Yes. It spins, starts at 8 p.m. and ends at 1:30.

Q And there is dancing at that time, correct?

A We have a small area in front of our DJ booth that can have tables removed if people show up for that nature, or if people from dinner want to.

Our restaurant acts like a Tetris board. We can move stuff all around. So typically, tables would be removed 10:30, 11:00 o'clock.

Q So the tables come out, correct?
A In about 20 percent of the space.
Q Okay, and that's where they can dance, correct? Your establishment patrons?

A Correct.
Q And the music is playing at that time, correct?

A Correct.
And to make a very big distinction, when we were working with Elysium, all the tables were removed and the entire space was, was you know.

So it's a very, very different atmosphere now.

Q And that was in 2021, correct, after you had entered into a settle agreement with the members of the community, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q I believe you admitted that mistakes were made during that time period, correct?

A Yes, sir, I'm not here to not admit my
mistakes.
Q Music was played loudly, correct?
A You might say loudly, I might say at the perfect tune, so I don't, you know, I.

Q Well, you're aware that there have been complaints since your establishment opened, correct, by community members that music from El Techo can be heard inside their residences, correct?

A I know that people call and talk about that, yes. But $I$ have a office that shares the same walls and I mean I'm in my office all the time if I'm not in El Techo, and I, I don't hear it.

So I mean I don't know. I've never been in Mr. Kujawa's place. I've never been in your backyard. I've never been in you know, other people's residences.

So I wouldn't be able to attest to that, what they are actually hearing or not hearing.

Q My question I guess, Mr. Hankins, is you are aware that noise complaints have been made by surrounding community members, correct?

A Sure, but I don't know if that's from,

I mean coming from El Techo or Flash, or the lot across from Howard Theater.

I mean how do I know it's me?
Q Okay, and you're aware that those complaints from some of the community members, are that the music comes from El Techo, correct?

A Yes, I think people like to call on El Techo. I think people like to call on Flash. I think people like to call on you know, many of the establishments on this street, including the Go Go Store.

I mean what was that whole campaign, don't mute D.C.?

Q And you have also heard from various ANC commissioners, correct, that the community members complain about music, loud music coming from El Techo, correct?

A I've heard from this current administration's, yes.

Q And you're aware that two separate ANCs voted to protest the renewal of your liquor license?

A I'm aware, sir.
Q Is that correct?
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry, who's
screen, who's screen is open? Is there not realizing that, can we close that, please?

MR. BADAWY: I'm sorry. I'll remove that. I apologize, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Hankins, I want to talk to you a little bit about the issue of litter from El Techo, is that okay?

MR. HANKINS: Sure, yes, absolutely. BY MR. BADAWY:

Q Okay.
Currently you store El, El Techo's trash bins in the, in an alleyway between 600T and the Shaw, is that correct?

A Yes, but let's clarify that. That's not just Rito Loco El Techo's trash cans. That's trash cans for Quattro Osteria, 600T, and three residences.

So it's the entire block's trash can, sir.

Q So Quattro Osteria is one of your establishments, correct?

A It is.
Q Okay, and just to clarify --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
A I don't know how --

Q -- you currently El Techo's trash bins are stored in that alleyway, correct?

A Correct.
Q Okay, and that's where the litter and trash from El Techo goes, correct?

A That's where everybody's trash goes, sir, yes, including El Techo's.

Q And you're not aware of any government permit that allows you to store your trash bins there, correct?

MR. KLINE: Objection, relevance. Objection, relevance.

MR. BADAWY: The relevance is that again, whether or not he's complying with local ordinances.

Whether or not he's complying with government orders. Whether or not he's adhering to them demonstrates whether or not he intends in the future to comply with orders from this Board, and from other agencies.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm going to overrule the objection. I mean I'm not quite sure where you're going, but if you're asking about trash, so let's, go ahead, let's all right.

MR. BADAWY: And Mr. Hankins, so you're
not aware of any municipal order that allows you to store your trash there, correct?

MR. HANKINS: I was given a BZA approval to store my trash in between 600T and 606 Florida Avenue.

However, when COVID happened, 600T was granted per the mayor's COVID orders, was granted the ability to use their rear patio for patrons.

That eliminated the ability for our trash to come in and out of that backyard. So the trash cans had to go outside, sir.

There is a motion or filing for us to gain that approval, that is in process.

BY MR. BADAWY:
Q You were in fact, you're authorized by the, by the owner of 600T, your landlord, to store your trash bins back there, correct?

A Originally, yes.
Q Okay.
A But I think the mayor's COVID orders kind of superseded that. And for him to keep his business alive and open, necessitated a different change.

Q And you on of your own made that change, correct?

A We, as the entire block made that change, sir.

Q Okay.
A I mean --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
Q Mr. Hankins --
A -- where would you like, where would you like me to put the trash, sir?

Q Okay.
A Have you got a better place for me to put it? I'm happy to put it there, you know.

Q So Mr. Hankins, this is not your responsibility, is that correct?

A I'm not saying it's not my responsibility, sir.

Q Mr. Hankins, I'd like to talk to you a little bit about the noise mitigation efforts that you've claimed you've made.

Can we talk about that?
A Absolutely.
Q Okay.
So I'm, admittedly you said mistakes were made during the summer and fall of 2021, correct?

A Yes, sir.

Q All right.
And you've indicated that you have retained Martin Beam, that's an acoustical, acoustics consulting service, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q Okay, and you've retained him to help you mitigate noise coming from El Techo, is that correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q And this isn't the first time that you've hired sound engineers, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q Okay.
In fact, in October of '21 you hired sound engineers, is that correct?

A Correct, sir.
Q And before October of '21 you also hired a different set of sound engineers, correct?

A We've hired different sound engineers. I think that this one is the, the most certified.

I wasn't involved in the hiring process. My CFO and business partner Daniel Hatem was. So he could better speak to all of that.

Q Do you know since you opened the establishment in 2017 how many sound engineers you've been, you have employed to mitigate the noise coming from El Techo?

A The most recent one was a guy named Ivan, and that's who recommended the new sound system.

But without the cooperation from all the residents, then people can't do their proper testing. We can't figure out where the sound is going, where the sound is coming from.

So you know, we do need cooperation of the neighborhood in order to be you know, to make the best improvements possible.

Q And in fact, the sound engineers that you hired did go into the abutting property condominium, the Matinee, in October '21, correct?

A Ivan did go in there, yes, sir.
Q That's --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
A I wasn't --
Q -- the lack of cooperation that you were talking about?

A I'm talking about the --

MR. KLINE: Objection, argumentative. CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Just rephrase the question. Ask, rephrase the question, sir. MR. BADAWY: Okay.

Would you agree with me that allowing a sound engineer to go into your home, is cooperation?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir.
BY MR. BADAWY:
Q And that resident cooperated, correct?
A On one occasion, yes, sir.
Q And after that, there was, were still two substantiated noise complaints in November of 2021, and December of 2021, correct?

A For the Elysium parties, yes, sir.
Q I think you also said that during the summer of 2021, you modified the sound system inside the establishment.

Is that correct?
A I don't know the exact date, sir. Daniel Hatem could tell you, he writes the checks.

Q But would you agree with me that modifications were made?

A Modifications have been made, sir.

Q Okay.
And you still received noise complaints after that, correct?

A After I ended my relationship with Elysium, sir, I have not been served any violations.

Q But you're aware that the neighborhood still makes noise complaints about music coming from El Techo, correct?

A Sure. I believe there was recorded 45, right? Is that what Mr. Fuentes report said? Forty-five calls and no violations, I think.

Q So Mr. Hankins, I have to ask you. You have your, your business in the community, correct?

A I'm sorry, can you repeat the question, sir?

Q Let me ask the question. You've testified repeatedly that you're aware of noise complaints from the neighborhood coming from El Techo, about music coming from El Techo, correct?

A I'm aware that people call on El Techo, but I'm also aware that when the investigators get here, sometimes I get this like I didn't even know why I'm here.

So you know, I don't know if the noise complaint is coming from, the noise is actually coming from Techo, or Flash, or I don't know Uproar. The lot that's across from Howard Theater.

I don't know where the noise is coming from, sir. I'm not a sound engineer.

Q Do you believe those neighbors' complaints?

MR. KLINE: Objection. What does that mean believe their complaints? Complaints aren't to be believed or not. They're to be investigated.

MR. BADAWY: Let me rephrase the question. Let me rephrase the question.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, sir.
MR. BADAWY: Do you believe, do you believe that neighbors from the surrounding community can hear music coming from El Techo, inside their homes?

MR. HANKINS: I've never been in their homes, sir, so I don't know. You've never invited me to your house so I wouldn't be able to tell you.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, I have no
further questions.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, thank you.

Any questions by any Board members? Go ahead, Mr. Short.

MEMBER SHORT: I guess we would say good afternoon still, Mr. Hankins, how are you this evening?

MR. HANKINS: Good, good, do I say Board Member Short? Mr. Short? I'm not sure.

MEMBER SHORT: No problem.
Mr. Hankins, again you say when you were in Europe and you had your first idea about opening a business here in Washington, how was the noise over there in Europe?

Do they make a lot of noise where a lot of noise complaints, or are the people a little more hospitable with businesses?

Be honest.
MR. HANKINS: I think people in Europe have a little bit of a different mind set than people in America.

But I don't know what they call annoying noise complaints or not, sir. I don't know.

MEMBER SHORT: I understand.
MR. HANKINS: I think it's just a very free and life loving, embracing culture in Europe.

MEMBER SHORT: Like yourself, I've traveled around some and I've been to Europe several different times.

I'll just say this. Do they have, would you hear the same kind of noise there, that you hear coming from your establishment?

MR. HANKINS: I've been in places way louder in Europe than in my establishment, sir.

MEMBER SHORT: Next door to residences?
MR. HANKINS: Yes. Way, way louder. I mean Barcelona's my favorite city and yes, I mean I don't know if you've traveled there but there's, there's noise.

MEMBER SHORT: We're familiar. But let's go back to the United States of America.

MR. HANKINS: Okay.
MEMBER SHORT: In your neighborhood you're in now.

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir.
MEMBER SHORT: When you testified that you got a loan from the city to open a business,
and the city gave you that money with the mind set that you were going to be an asset to the community, is that correct?

MR. HANKINS: It was a grant, sir, but yes, sir.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay, a grant. So the grant group was intended for you to open up a business to reinvigorate the community?

Is that correct?
MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir. I chose this actual block strictly to do that, sir. I looked all around D.C. I looked at downtown D.C., Georgetown, Dupont Circle, H Street.

But I really chose this block here because of the history, the birthplace of jazz, basically being the Howard Theater.

The Metro PCS store with the Go Go music playing that I loved listening to growing up. Flash night club, et cetera, et cetera.

And it being the arts and entertainment district area, I thought that my vision would fit in perfectly here providing the D.C. residents with something special and unique.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay, great. That's a great answer.

But let me ask the question of you regarding 45 noise complaints. Do you know of any other businesses, you mentioned Flash and you mentioned some of the others.

Do you know of any other businesses that have had, received 45 noise complaints?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, for sure. I mean the, I think all of the establishments in Mid-town D.C. have probably received that amount, but I'm speculating. I have friends that are owners of some of those venues.

I think there's --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MEMBER SHORT: But would it surprise, would it surprise you if I told you I've been on this board, this is my third term.

In all of my time, I've never heard of any business having 45 noise complaints but yours.

MR. HANKINS: Okay.
MEMBER SHORT: Do you think it's --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MR. HANKINS: That would surprise me.
MEMBER SHORT: -- do you think, well, is that a good model for a business like yours?

MR. KLINE: I'm sorry, I hate to object to a Board member's questions, but complaints. Mr. Short, you're suggesting, you're encouraging a community to file complaints to build a record as if complaints are the be all and end all.

There were two violations
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MEMBER SHORT: I would say, Counselor, you are wrong. That is not the intent of my question.

MR. KLINE: All right.
MEMBER SHORT: If you would allow me to finish, if you would allow me to finish my question without cutting me off, I think you would get to where I'm going.

I'm trying to be helpful if I possibly can.

MR. KLINE: I'll withdraw. Thank you, Mr. Short.

MEMBER SHORT: All right, okay, thank you.

Mr. Hankins, again, what would be your ideal if someone moved next door to you right now in your business, what would be your ideal of a good neighbor?

MR. HANKINS: I have plenty of good neighbors that come in, and really enjoy what we do here, sir.

MEMBER SHORT: So are most of your customers live on your block, is that what you're saying?

MR. HANKINS: Yes. We have a lot of customers that live on our block, sir, yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Hankins, hold on a minute, please. Why don't you just mute your line for a minute until the city disturbance stops?

Is it quiet now, sir?
MR. HANKINS: Yes, it's passed. I mean we're a block away from Howard Hospital, so.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I, Mr. Hankins, what did I say?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I said the city disturbance, sir.

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir, that's fine.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay, go ahead, sir.

MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Hankins, I always like to know in your opinion, what is a good
business man in the line of business that you are in?

What would be the perfect business man in the line that you are in? Line of business that you are in?

MR. HANKINS: To provide a great value to the D.C. residents. And, an establishment that D.C. residents can be proud of, and something that is talked about and brings people into the community to spend money and, and raise tax dollars.

MEMBER SHORT: Great answer. Can't argue with that. That's a great thing. And again, would you want someone to be there that fit into the community, and worked with the community to make it a better community?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir. And we do, we do try to do that continually. Like I said, reinvesting money into the business to try to make the business more viable in the neighborhood.

We do community outreach stuff. We take our food truck to feed the homeless. I mean we try to be, we try to be pretty involved.

MEMBER SHORT: Thank you, that's great,
too, and I'm glad to hear that you're that kind of a person that's making our city a better place.

Now when you have your restaurant tables on your upper deck, on your roof deck. MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir.

MEMBER SHORT: How many customers can you have up there at one time?

MR. HANKINS: 79, sir.
MEMBER SHORT: At tables and, with tables and chairs?

MR. HANKINS: Sir, we only have a capacity for seated only. We do not have a standing number for our CFO.

Obviously if it was no tables and chairs, that number would be increased.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I can no longer hear you, Mr. Short. MR. HANKINS: Yes. CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I can no longer hear you, Mr. Short. (Pause.)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Our IT person's speaking, is speaking to Mr. Short to find out what's going on, so we'll continue as soon as I
hear from our IT person.
MR. HANKINS: No problem.
(Pause.)
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: He will log on shortly using a different equipment.
(Pause.)
MEMBER SHORT: -- now?
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I can't see you, but I can hear Mr. Short. Continue with your questions, please.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay, thank you. I appreciate that, and I am sorry about the technical difficulties I am having.

I have had some sessions with our technician at the office, and I'm going to be trying to get that done during the holiday so we can get it back up and running again.

But at any rate, thank you very much for allowing me to continue my questioning.

Mr. Hankins?
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr. Short, we can hear you. Go ahead.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay, well I was just trying to get Mr. Hankins acknowledgment.

Mr. Hankins?

Can he hear me?
MR. HANKINS: Sorry, sorry, I was on mute. Sorry about that. We're both having technical difficulties, sorry.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. Well, I can certainly understand that, sir. I'll just tell you, you know, I'm quite familiar with your neighborhood, and I'm quite familiar with your business location. And I would simply say this. Is there anything -- this question I'm asking you as a business person.

MR. HANKINS: Sure.
MEMBER SHORT: Is there anything you can do to get along with your neighbors a little better, especially the ANC Commissioners? Is there anything you think that you can do?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir. I'm happy to take all part in Beam's recommendations to heart and put those into effect as soon as we get those. I'm happy to sit down and share some tacos and margaritas with these ANC Commissioners. Welcome to come to my establishment anytime.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay.
MR. HANKINS: I'd rather not be
meeting people on Zoom calls. I'd rather meet face-to-face and --

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. Well, if you would allow me -- if you allow me, I would like to just go back to where I was before we got -before my technical difficulties caused me not --

MR. HANKINS: Sure.
MEMBER SHORT: -- to be able to communicate. You are a restaurant and you can have 79 people seated on your deck --

MR. HANKINS: That's --
MEMBER SHORT: -- your roof deck? Now when you take all the tables and chairs out, how many people do you get in there at that time?

MR. HANKINS: Like I said, sir, we don't have that number on our occupancy, so that's not something that we angle towards.

MEMBER SHORT: I understand that. I'm still saying to you do you have the same number of people with the tables in chairs in as when you do when you take all the tables and chairs out?

MR. HANKINS: For those Elysium parties, it was definitely more than 79. For the last year, though, we stay with our counters and
stay at 79, sir.
MEMBER SHORT: Okay. I'm glad to hear you're using counters. That's encouraging. Now also, since I've been on the Board -- as again, I mentioned this is my third term -- we've had restaurants in town, in certain parts of town that morph into nightclubs. I hope that that's not what your business model is, is it?

MR. HANKINS: I don't think we're a nightclub, sir, no.

MEMBER SHORT: So when you take all the tables and chairs off for dancing, as you've said you've done on occasion, what is your business model then?

MR. HANKINS: Those Elysium parties definitely would be classified as more of a club atmosphere because the tables and chairs were removed, but that's not what we've been doing the last year, sir.

MEMBER SHORT: So when is the last time you did that?

MR. HANKINS: December 2021, sir.
MEMBER SHORT: Okay. So you're not doing that any longer?

MR. HANKINS: No, sir.

MEMBER SHORT: I'm glad, good to hear that. But again, I would just simply like to say to you -- and you have the problems now because you can't put your trash where you have been putting it, you brought in sound engineers, and you've done -- can you list for the record, can you -- all the -- out of all of the things you've done to be a good neighbor consisting of acoustics person to your trash, all the complaints that you have -- are you okay, you're good?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, I'm good.
MEMBER SHORT: All right. Well, I just -- I was asking. There have been several complaints lodged in this hearing from the ANC Commissioners. Can you go down that list starting with the trash and tell me how you're going to work this year coming in 2023 to be a better neighbor with the trash? How are you going to do that, or do you have a plan?

MR. HANKINS: Sure.
MEMBER SHORT: Do you have a plan for that?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, absolutely. Thank you for the question. That gives me a great
opportunity to explain that --
MEMBER SHORT: Thank you.
MR. HANKINS: -- conundrum. The trash was an extreme problem last summer. We were using a company called Tenleytown Trash. It's a small local company. They were purchased by a large scale operation called Republic Services. Republic Services coming into the District of Columbia didn't have employees of their own. They instituted a drug test policy for all of Tenleytown Trash employees, and they lost 85 percent of the workforce. When that happened, nobody knew the routes or pickup locations of any of the Tenleytown Trash customers. We were using Tenleytown Trash because they picked up seven days a week, and we wanted to ensure that we were good neighbors.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. I don't mean to cut you off, but I'm not trying to hold all of the time, cause the other Board members might have questions.

MR. HANKINS: Sure.
MEMBER SHORT: I wanted to ask you have you ever heard of trash compactors?

MR. HANKINS: I have heard of a trash
compactor. I would love one.
MEMBER SHORT: Well, have you worked with the ANCs and the Commissioners, because just like you got a grant for your business, I do know that there are other $A B C$ establishments who've had the same situation that you are having. Once they got their trash compactors, the trash problems went away. Would you consider that?

MR. HANKINS: I would love that, sir.
MEMBER SHORT: Okay.
MR. HANKINS: I would love my ANC Commissioner to want to work with me to solve the problems. I know that, you know, my friends that own things down in midtown, that is what has happened. They had problems with trash and ANC Commissioner hooked up a trash compactor for them. So yes, we would love a trash compactor. MEMBER SHORT: Okay. Great. Sir, how many other businesses besides you right there at 6th and Florida Avenue have problems with trash? Are there other restaurants or other business or other ABC establishments or other businesses that store trash similar to you where you are?

MR. HANKINS: Yes. You said you're very familiar with that location, so you've got

6th Street, you've got Florida, and then you have our alley that's between the Shay. Everything that's on our block between that alley and 6th Street uses these trash cans in that alley, both three businesses, four businesses and two residences and --

MEMBER SHORT: Which leads me to my first -- leads me to this. Normally what I've seen when trash compactors come in, businesses get together and that lowers the cost for them. And yes, I do know your area well. I was a fireman in Washington, D.C. for 33 years, and the station I worked at was like right around the corner from you okay. So $I$ know it quite well. That's the --

MR. HANKINS: Okay.
MEMBER SHORT: -- the reason why I'm trying to mention to you -- yes, if you're smiling, I am, too -- I'm trying to mention to you, yes, I know the situation and I know how other ABC establishments have become greater and better neighbors by getting the trash compactors. Will you consider that?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir. And I hope that your pointing that out would spark a
conversation of working together with ANC Commissioner Lopez.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. That's all I have. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. That's all I have for this witness. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you. Any other questions for the witness? Any other Board members have questions for the witness?

MEMBER GRANDIS: Mr. Chairman?
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr. Grandis.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Sir, I would just like to get a timeline. When did you start your food truck business?

MR. HANKINS: August 2012, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: And then you were able to move into a brick and mortar location what year?

MR. HANKINS: We signed our lease within our first 12 months of operating, sir.

MEMBER GRANDIS: In 2012?
MR. HANKINS: We signed our lease in 2013 as --

MEMBER GRANDIS: That's what I thought.
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MEMBER GRANDIS: Yes.
MR. HANKINS: Yes.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Okay.
MR. HANKINS: Then it took is 1-1/2
years to get it open.
MEMBER GRANDIS: I think you're a fine example that Marion Barry would salute. You really firmly believed in food trucks as a gateway for business, for people to get into business. And I think it's very admirable that you were successful to be able to be part of that model.

When you took that lease, was there -had there been another ABC licensed establishment at that location?

MR. HANKINS: This was a barbershop called Resis. A gentleman owned it for about 35 years, and he was a staple in the community. We were kind of proud and happy to take over kind of a iconic spot and revitalize it.

MEMBER GRANDIS: And when it was a barbershop, were they using the roof as a summer garden or in any capacity?

MR. HANKINS: No, sir. It was just
one level.
MEMBER GRANDIS: So the building that's adjoining your building, was that there when you signed your lease?

MR. HANKINS: Every brick and block building was here, yes, sir.

MEMBER GRANDIS: So you changed the use from a barbershop that probably closed at least before 11 o'clock at night to a CR restaurant that then got a permit to be able to use the roof deck, and ABRA was able to have you meet the requirements for a summer garden. So that's a significant change of use to people who live in that building that is contiguous to yours.

MR. HANKINS: I would agree with that statement.

MEMBER GRANDIS: In your settlement agreement dated June -- no -- I think it's January of 2020, you participated in that, correct?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: I think you signed it.

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir.

MEMBER GRANDIS: And you are familiar with paragraph 4 that talks about by June 1, 2020, you would deal with sound mitigation?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: The investigator gave us photographs in his testimony regarding the roof deck and other parts of your building. Could you -- he was not able to answer what kind of materials that would be that, what, ceiling that opens and closes on the roof deck?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir. It's all drywall polycarbonate.

MEMBER GRANDIS: And what is that? I mean I'm sorry. It's a hunk of plastic? It sounds like a plastic but what is it?

MR. HANKINS: It is a plastic but it's not just like a sheet of plastic that would be, you know, razor thin. This is when I say "drywall," drywall means that it's built out and it's thicker. So this is -- I believe this is 5/8 of an inch thick and it has air gaps in between three different pieces of plastic. So you have a piece of plastic, an air gap; a piece of plastic, an air gap; and another piece of plastic. I know that you used to work with Sound
of Mike, and we've had conversations so obviously, I'm sure you're aware that air gaps help with sound mitigation. So that's why we chose that and not a sheet of plastic.

MEMBER GRANDIS: When was that installed, roughly?

MR. HANKINS: I'm sorry, sir. I don't recall. I mean the last three years have been pretty chaotic --

MEMBER GRANDIS: Well --
MR. HANKINS: -- and to pinpoint a date would -- to pinpoint a date, I would be totally misspeaking.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Would it be after June 2020?

MR. HANKINS: I think that we had them installed beforehand, but I don't think that we were -- I don't think that there was a time restriction or limit on what time that we should put them up. I think that they were obviously installed beforehand because I think what we discovered is that when they were closed, there wasn't complaints from across the street. So the settlement agreement was signed in good faith by both parties to mitigate that sound, 10:30
weekdays, midnight on weekends, and 9:00 p.m. on Sundays.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Okay. I understand that you, from time-to-time and maybe now, you have used a sound expert?

MR. HANKINS: We have in the past. I don't think either one of them got to the end of their project per se or their process but yes, we have hired two in the past and have now hired a third. And I'm very hopeful that he can bring us all the resolutions to be a good neighbor.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Would you be -- this is just a question. I'm not saying you need to do this. Would you be having this sound engineer meet some of the people who have had concerns about noise, meet with them in your building?

MR. HANKINS: Absolutely, sir. I think that's the only way to actually successfully do it.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Thank you. Would you be -- no, let me -- I'll rephrase it. When you have the -- that roof open, is that when it's just good weather; is that to a certain time of night? How do you use opening and closing it?

MR. HANKINS: Yes. I mean obviously,
it's for good weather for sure, but we usually close those in accordance with whatever the -when the walls get closed so 10:30, midnight, 9:00 p.m.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Well, would you consider having a more regular schedule when the weather is good that they would be closed, let's say, before midnight? And I'm assuming it has sound mitigation? I'm sure that helps with sound mitigation.

MR. HANKINS: I'm open to any discussions that are productive.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Now I also saw pictures and the investigator talked about something that he thought was like Styrofoam and wood. Do you remember that part of the testimony that's on that wall is contiguous to, I think, one of the protestant's apartment?

MR. HANKINS: Yes. There is a cinder block wall that Mr. Kadwalla's building is made out of. Our wall is built freestanding away from their wall. There is an air gap. There is a, I don't know, it's probably 3-inches -- 3, 4-inches deep those air gaps, and there's insulation and soundproofing kind of stuffed into that. I'm
sure somebody that Martin Beam recommends for the construction and materials will do a much better job than what we did on our kind of mom and pop DIY, you know.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Are there any speakers on that wall?

MR. HANKINS: No, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Where are --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MR. HATEM: -- sorry.
MEMBER GRANDIS: -- the speaker -- If I understand the testimony, the DJ is on that floor, correct?

MR. HANKINS: The DJ is on the rooftop, yes, sir.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Okay.
MR. HANKINS: And it is --
MEMBER GRANDIS: So where --
MR. HANKINS: -- in the --
MEMBER GRANDIS: -- are the speakers?
MR. HANKINS: Okay. So kind of just draw it for you here. This is Florida Avenue. This is rectangular. And this is Mr. Kadwalla's building.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Yes.

MR. HANKINS: Our speakers are in this and facing more towards the inner part of the restaurant.

MEMBER GRANDIS: The restaurant being on the roof deck, is that what --

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: But the speakers face each other?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir. They face in towards the middle of the space.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Is that something you'd be willing to move if your sound expert suggests that that could be another way of limiting --

MR. HANKINS: Yes. However --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MR. HANKINS: Yes. However Martin Beam says is the best way to move forward, we're committed to taking all of his suggestions.

MEMBER GRANDIS: I notice on the license, it says "entertainment," and I think you testified to that. What -- are you -- is there a limit to the types of entertainment you may have with your license?

MR. HANKINS: Yes. Unfortunately,
we're obviously not allowed to have bands, you know. We're just strictly DJs.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Okay. And does your license have an endorsement for dancing?

MR. HANKINS: Yes. I would think so. I don't -- I didn't know that there was a separate endorsement for dancing. I have never heard of that so.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Well, I think you're a CR, correct?

MR. HANKINS: I am --
MEMBER GRANDIS: CR.
MR. HANKINS: Yes, not CC.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Okay. Well, you may want to look at the restrictions and compliance for dancing if it's a CR.

MR. HANKINS: Okay.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Mr. Chairman, that's all I have. Thank you.

MR. HANKINS: Thank you, sir.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any other questions by any other Board members? Mr. Hankins, just one -- I think I have just two questions for you.

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Are you normally using promoters?

MR. HANKINS: I stopped in December of last year, sir.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You're not going to use promoters anymore, is that correct?

MR. HANKINS: It's gotten me here, sir. No, not a chance.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now tell me about why did you install this noise meter?

MR. HANKINS: Because I wanted to try to figure out how to be a good neighbor and to mitigate our noise that was emanating out into the general ether out this crazy intersection that we're at.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: How long -when did you install these noise -- this noise meter?

MR. HANKINS: December 2021, sir.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Oh, so you just did this?

MR. HANKINS: December 2021, a year ago.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry, '21. MR. HANKINS: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So since December of 2021 to this date, are you aware of -- could everyone, please -- I need everyone to mute their line with the exception of Mr. Hankins -- are you aware of how many noise complaints you have received on your establishment since you have installed the noise meter; are you aware? I'm just asking if you're aware.

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: About how many? I'm just asking, I'm curious.

MR. HANKINS: Forty-five stated in this here testimony.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So you're saying that since you have installed the noise meter, you have received 45 complaints, since -I'm sorry -- since you have installed that -- the meter?

MR. HANKINS: Yes, sir.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. I don't have any other questions. So Mr. Badawy, short redirect, please, on the questions that were asked by the Board?

MR. KLINE: Mr. Chairman, thank you.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kline,
short redirect based on the questions that were asked by the Board?

REDIRECT EXAMINATION
INSPECTOR KLINE: Yes. Very, very simple. Mr. Hankins, just to confirm, you're committed, and you said it previously, to following the recommendations that Mr. Beam may develop in terms of mitigating noise, correct?

MR. HANKINS: Absolutely.
INSPECTOR KLINE: All right. And in terms of there's, you know, 45 complaints, to your knowledge, in the last year, were any complaints sustained?

MR. HANKINS: No. No violations have been given and typically, the ABRA investigator and DCRA will say to us, you know, kind of "we're here again, we got called, you guys are fine, it looks like a restaurant," and they leave so.

INSPECTOR KLINE: So aside from complaints, since you installed this noise meter, since December of ' 21 when you discontinued the use of promoters, are you aware of any noise violations committed by your establishment? MR. HANKINS: No violations, sir. INSPECTOR KLINE: Nothing further. CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Thank you. All right. It's my understanding that we have probably another 10 more witnesses. This witness == and yes, he's the owner, and this witness started testifying about 4:43 since we came back from break. I just want to remind the parties that we are going to listen to this entire case tonight no matter how long it takes. So we're going to complete this case tonight. I just want to, however, remind all parties when asking questions, make sure that you're asking questions that are short, concise, and it will assist the Board in making a decision. I'm not saying that that has not been done so far, but $I$ just want to remind the -- both sides that it's my understanding that we have at least 10 more witnesses. It's 6:09 and but -- and we are going to -- no matter how long this hearing takes, we are going to conclude this hearing within this session. Okay. All right. Do you have another witness, Mr. Kline?

INSPECTOR KLINE: Yes. I call Steve Lawrence. Mr. Lawrence, are you on?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm not sure if he is but Mr. Orellana, can you, if Mr. Lawrence
is there, can you elevate his rights, please?
MR. ORELLANO: Mr. Lawrence.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry. Mr. Kline, can you -- is -- can you locate Mr. Lawrence and if he's online -- someone tell me if we can elevate his rights.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Mr. Chairman, I just spoke to Mr. Lawrence. He -- I guess he's muted or maybe not elevated. He said he is on and that he --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: It's -- all right. Mr. Orellana, can you please look for Mr. Lawrence -- it's his name, Mr. Lawrence -- and elevate his rights, please.

MR. KLINE: I was talking and
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MR. KLINE: -- I'm sorry.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry. What's going on?

INSPECTOR KLINE: I was going to say if h e's listed by telephone number, it's 757-646 --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Don't give the whole number, Mr. Kline.

MR. ORELLANO: He has been elevated.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Is he -- I'm sorry. Mr. Lawrence -- Mr. Lawrence, can you mute your line? I see there's a caller. Mr. Lawrence. Mr. Orellana, did you unmute him? I see that there's a caller there but it appears that the person is muted. I'm not sure if he needs to unmute himself or we need to mute him -unmute him.

MR. ORELLANO: Yes. I sent a request for unmute but it's on his behalf to unmute.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay. Mr. --
MR. ORELLANO: I don't know if he hit it.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Mr. Lawrence -- yes, Mr. Lawrence. All right. Can you --

MR. LAWRENCE: All right. Tell me if that works.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- can you raise your right hand, sir?

MR. LAWRENCE: Sure.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth and nothing but the truth?

MR. LAWRENCE: I do.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Your witness, Mr. Kline. Go ahead.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr., state your name for the record, please?

MR. LAWRENCE: Steven Lawrence.
INSPECTOR KLINE: And where do you reside, Mr. Lawrence?

MR. LAWRENCE: 600 T Street NW. I'm directly adjacent to the premises in question today. DIRECT EXAMINATION

INSPECTOR KLINE: All right. And are you also the landlord of the establishment?

MR. LAWRENCE: Yes, sir, I am.
MR. KLINE: But you would reside there, correct?

MR. LAWRENCE: I do, yes. I am part of the neighborhood.

INSPECTOR KLINE: And who do you reside there with?

MR. LAWRENCE: My wife and my two children age 5 and 3.

MR. KLINE: And you're directly next door to the establishment?

MR. LAWRENCE: Yes, sir.
INSPECTOR KLINE: And have you -what's been your experience with noise of the establishment?

MR. LAWRENCE: There was a time where the noise was a little elevated, and I would address that with Louie and obviously, this community meeting is doing the same. But he has very much turned that around, and I have not had an issue with the noise at all, cause I mean first and foremost, not only as a parent that needs to have their kids sleep, I'm also the owner of the property and don't want anything to reflect negatively on me as somebody who wants to live in the community. But I believe they always address my concerns very professionally and over the last almost, I would say, over eight months almost now, I've noticed a complete reduction in noise, much different than it used to be. But if I'm being frank with you, there was a time where it was a touch too loud, and I feel like that's been addressed and obviously, we're doing this now tonight. But my issues have been nothing. There's been no problem at all --

INSPECTOR KLINE: How long have you
lived --
MR. LAWRENCE: that I've seen.
INSPECTOR KLINE: -- how long have you lived at that location?

MR. LAWRENCE: Since 2007.
INSPECTOR KLINE: So a long time?
MR. LAWRENCE: Yes, sir.
INSPECTOR KLINE: And has there ever been a time that it's been intolerable for you and your children living next door to this establishment?

MR. LAWRENCE: No. It's never -- not intolerable. That's too strong of a word, but it was noticeable.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Okay. And to what do you attribute the improvement, if you know, if you have any idea?

MR. LAWRENCE: I mean I do have an idea. I've been right up there with Louie trying to make sure he's doing this right or he tells me his doing, and I follow it up personally myself to see the sound engineers that have been by. I've actually had private conversations with the sound engineer crew he's had. I've seen him purchase insulation and do different things with
moving around a DJ and trying to get his speakers right. I think he installed a meter to measure the amount of noise that was coming out. So I've kind of -- I've been watching the progress for quite some time now with everything he's tried to do to implement the concerns of the neighborhood and to make less, you know, hindrance on the neighbors.

MR. KLINE: You also -- you own the apartment building next store as well?

MR. LAWRENCE: I do, yes.
MR. KLINE: So it's obviously in your interest to see that residents are not disturbed by these -- this establishment because they are your tenants, correct?

MR. LAWRENCE: Actually --
MR. BADAWY: Objection.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry.
MR. BADAWY: Object to the leading question there. This is direct examination.

MR. KLINE: I'll rephrase it. You testified you own the building next door, correct?

MR. LAWRENCE: I do, yes.
INSPECTOR KLINE: And do you have a
particular interest?
MR. LAWRENCE: And --
MR. KLINE: Does that create a --
MR. LAWRENCE: Yes. I have --
MR. KLINE: -- particular interest --
MR. LAWRENCE: -- sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Lawrence, can you please wait for Mr. Kline to ask the question before -- we have a court reporter, so I need to make sure that you two are not speaking over each other; okay?

MR. LAWRENCE: No problem.
INSPECTOR KLINE: Does that create an interest or an incentive for you to see that noise is mitigated?

MR. LAWRENCE: Repeat the question? I'm sorry.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Does the fact that you own the building have any bearing on what attitude you take to your other tenants at this commercial establishment?

MR. LAWRENCE: Absolutely it does.
INSPECTOR KLINE: Why is that?
MR. LAWRENCE: Because I have tenants
there and tenants are a part of my responsibility to give them a quiet living environment, and that would reflect very negative on me, not only financially but also me as a person of the community that has an obligation to provide good service for my tenants, so I take that into heart.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Thank you. I have no further questions of this witness at this time.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy? CROSS-EXAMINATION

MR. BADAWY: Just a couple of brief questions, please. Good evening, Mr. Lawrence. Thank you for your time here tonight. Mr. Lawrence, you are the landlord for them, correct?

MR. LAWRENCE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And you are also the landlord for Batro, is that correct, Mr. Hankins' other establishment?

MR. LAWRENCE: Yes, sir.
MR. BADAWY: And Mr. Hankins pays you money for the leases for both of those establishments, correct? MR. LAWRENCE: Correct.

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Lawrence, did you give your tenant, Rito Loco-El Techo, the right of access to the rear of your property at 600 T Street NW for the storage and disposal of the trash the entire duration of the lease?

INSPECTOR KLINE: Objection. Goes --
MR. LAWRENCE: I --
INSPECTOR KLINE: -- well beyond the scope of direct.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Sir, go ahead.
MR. BADAWY: Sorry.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Alright. I'm going to allow the question because it's -- I think that this is the only person, I believe, who can talk about that issue, and trash is an issue that has been brought up here as one of the protest issues, and there was direct testimony from the landlord regarding this. And so I just believe that, yes, it goes beyond the scope and again, this -- we have these hearings. We do not necessarily follow the formal rule of evidence with cross-examination and direct. So in this particular case, I would allow it because I need
that answer. So you can answer the question, sir. Answer the question.

MR. LAWRENCE: Sure. Yes. There was an easement -- egress easement, I think, allowed, and there was language of a just storage of trash at the back of the property.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you. No further questions.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any questions by any Board members? Yes, Mr. Short. I can't hear you, Mr. Short.

MEMBER SHORT: Good evening, Mr. Lawrence. How are you?

MR. LAWRENCE: Doing great. How about you?

MEMBER SHORT: Oh, a lot better now, sir. Did you hear the question we had about trash compactors?

MR. LAWRENCE: I did not. I've been busy with the kids. I just hopped on the call about 15-20 minutes ago.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. As a landlord, I know you're familiar with the city term peace, order, and quiet?

MR. LAWRENCE: Yes.

MEMBER SHORT: And you testified earlier that you, at one time, had problems with the tenant's noise yourself, correct?

MR. LAWRENCE: Sure, yes.
MEMBER SHORT: And how long ago was that?

MR. LAWRENCE: It would have been probably about a year ago, I think a little over a y ear ago.

MEMBER SHORT: And I know you're -- as
a landlord, you're happy that the noise has quieted down, cause that makes life a little easier for everybody in the neighborhood?

MR. LAWRENCE: Absolutely.
MEMBER SHORT: Okay. But again, the question I had asked -- and I don't know if you were on the line when we were talking about trash compactors, because there are a lot of other businesses that have similar circumstances that your tenant has with trash and the disposal of trash and the storage of trash until it can be picked up.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay.
MEMBER SHORT: Are you familiar with the trash compactors that a lot of other
landlords and businesses are using in your vicinity?

MR. LAWRENCE: No, sir, I'm not. I mean I'm familiar with what a trash compactor is, but I've never -- I don't have any kind of understanding about what that is in this capacity.

MEMBER SHORT: Well, okay, if you don't have any idea what it is, I'll just say this to you. It saves a lot of grief for a lot of people in the community to have a trash compactor rather than have trash sitting out. It would take care of a lot of your problems with rodents and with the odors and other things that happen in the summertime when you have trash stored close to people's residences and businesses.

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. That is
something I'm not against looking into or understanding more about what it is.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. That's all I wanted to get from you, that you would look into it. Thank you very much. That's all I have, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any other
questions by any other Board members? Mr. Lawrence, a quick question. Where is this tenant, where is it that they're supposed to store their trash?

MR. LAWRENCE: The tenant, Louie Hankins for El Techo --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes.
MR. LAWRENCE: -- Rito Loco?
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes.
MR. LAWRENCE: So the trash is currently being stored right at the alley side of the building.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Is that only area that -- is it -- this is the area that the trash is supposed to be stored? I'm just trying to get confirmation from you, the landlord.

MR. LAWRENCE: Understood. Yes. I mean with the situation that was prior in COVID, we have set up a patio space that was a part of the business that is located at the property, 600 T Street. And trash was, obviously, very much a problem at that point. And they are 100 percent landlocked. So we're all locked in with no real access to put cans any which way. So it looks like public space is really the only option. And
the alley we have is where all the residential trash cans are also located. It's a very wide alley, so there's plenty of room for cars to be moving each way. So that was a way we had to deal with the situation we have being landlocked with no public space. That was the only option. CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you. Mr. Badawy, any brief redirect?

MR. BADAWY: No redirect, Your Honor -- or Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kline?
INSPECTOR KLINE: No questions, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you very much for your testimony, Mr. Lawrence. You're free to go. You have a --

MR. LAWRENCE: Okay. Thank you. Have a nice night, guys. Appreciate it.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you have another witness?

INSPECTOR KLINE: Daniel Hatem. CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Is that person online?

INSPECTOR KLINE: Yes.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Hatem?

MR. ORELLANO: Access has been elevated.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry. Mr. Hatem? Can you please -- can you raise your right -- do you have a -- okay, good. Mr. Hatem, can you raise your right hand, please? Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth and nothing but the truth?

MR. HATEM: Yes, I do.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Your witness, Mr. Kline.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. State you name, please?

MR. HATEM: My name is Daniel Hatem, H-A-T-E-M. DIRECT EXAMINATION

INSPECTOR KLINE: I've been mispronouncing it all these years. That's terrible.

MR. HATEM: Yes.
INSPECTOR KLINE: What's your
connection to this business?
MR. HATEM: I came on board with Louie about three years ago and a couple months. He was, as you mentioned earlier on the calls,
struggling with the permits and the finance, and I have a long history in the business, and I now have a consulting and accounting and finance building -- business that focuses on restaurants in D.C. And so I basically kept him from going under because, as you mentioned, he -- the permitting time it took him and all of the problems initially basically put him in a million dollars' worth of debt. So I had to restructure the company. Louie is afloat today because of the work that I did.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Now the difficulties included difficulties during COVID, correct?

MR. HATEM: Yes. So the plan that I implemented financially included operating agreement, partnerships, contracts, obviously the financing for the business. He mentioned that it was a D.C. grant but that was nowhere near the amount of money that he spent from family and friends and private loans at high interest rates. Once we start --

INSPECTOR KLINE: I'm going to stop you cause I'm not sure it's responsive to my question. My question to you --

MR. HATEM: I'm sorry. I'm going to
tell you right now. By the time we got that plan implemented, COVID hit and we had to shut down on March of 2020, and we stayed closed for about a full three months. We completely got rid of the DJs. We had no DJ expense during that year. We were table seating six feet apart, no more -followed the rules of, you know, obviously, the shut down and the Mayor. And so that's what 2020 was all about. And as you mentioned, we didn't fully recuperate until 2021 when Mr. Badawy was referring to the summer and fall. So at that point, we were just in a holding pattern to make sure that we didn't lose the business in its entirety.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Okay. And what are your -- what's your role, what are your responsibilities in the business?

MR. HATEM: My role is basically a lot of the finance back of the house operations, giving guidance. I do that for about 20 different businesses in the city, built businesses anywhere from, you know, 14th and K up to the Adams Morgan area all the way to Arlington. I've been around a while. Let's just put it that way.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Okay. Do your responsibilities at Rito Loco-El Techo include noise mitigation?

MR. HATEM: Yes.
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MR. HATEM: -- working. So the residents in the back building, the adjacent building, which is the south wall -- that's not Mr. Badawy's side; that's the north, and Mr. Badawy was actually not a resident at the time, but we did have complaints from the north side -but the south wall was the big issue. I was on a group text with the residents there, and I was giving them play-by-play, up to the minute basically every action I took to hire Ivan Burkett, the sound engineer who worked on other projects including Coyote Ugly and their big noise issues that they had in Chinatown. And we gave them, on the text thread, constant updates of what we are doing, what we are buying, how long. There was a big lag time with COVID shipments. It took -- it was impossible to buy equipment and sound, so it took many months for it to arrive. We kept them, you know, in the loop of it was purchased, it's on the way, the
lead time, so on and so forth, the date it was installed. And I did go into the residents with Ivan to speak to Lynn was one of them, Alex was another, and the young lady that I'm not sure if she's still there or not. I don't remember her name.

INSPECTOR KLINE: And were there any community leaders that you were working with at that time?

MR. HATEM: No. I have never met anyone from the ANC in person. I've only seen an email to me from Alex Lopez which I actually responded in full detail, maybe about five paragraphs of everything that we were doing. If you're interested, I can send it to you.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Okay. And in terms of what you were doing, what is it you were doing to address the issues? We've had some discussion about it. You may be the best person to discuss it.

MR. HATEM: So, you know, first and foremost, I've built a lot of places in D.C. that have a huge amount of sound. We're talking about \$150,000, \$200,000 worth of sound equipment. And what Louie was referring to about the size, I
mean you go to any nightclub, and literally, my bass cabinets are probably up to my chest and I'm 6 foot 2. So this -- what I did was even though he had a small cliche system, which is a very high fidelity system that was zoned, we upgraded to a high fidelity sound with short throw and better sound waves. The only real way I can explain it is like if you have a Bose system at home with more small speakers that service just a small part of the area, then the people sitting in front of the speakers can hear it, but it won't carry in a long distance.

Now Mr. Badawy and some others I've given this explanation, $I$ am not the technical sound engineer, but the engineers have explained the concept of soundwaves and how they carry through walls and into longer distances. We've talked about amplified sound. We've talked about the fact that base is non-directional and will go in any direction. But there's a lot of -- there was a lot of recommendations, and you guys mentioned that there was multiple sound engineers. Some engineers will come in and they have this concept that it's carrying through the metal, and that's not it. You know, one of it
was like the placement of the speakers. That was it. And so that was one of the things.

So we took -- the DJ booth is along the south wall of the adjacent building. We removed the one base cabinet that was not of good quality from that area and took it out of service. We took the two mid-size tops, as you call them, which do treble and mid-range, and we took those out of service. Now nothing is on the south wall, and if you just walk into the space and stand in front of the booth, you will actually hear a dead zone. It's a complete dead zone for base, and all you have to do is step in there and listen to it. So now as Louie mentioned, all the speakers, there's six tops and four small subs that are only 10 inches by 20, that is literally like this size. That's not very big. That is not nightclub sound. You do not build a nightclub with this size speaker, that they direct towards the center of the space so that the customers can hear it without it escaping from the venue as much as possible. Now I'm not saying that it's perfect, but since we installed it, they have direct access to my personal cell phone, and I did not get one single
text message complaint from any of the residents after I installed it. They basically just -- you know, just cut off and went silent, and I had to assume that they were content with my progress.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Okay. Now there's been a lot of discussion about whether this establishment is a nightclub, has it morphed into a nightclub. You have a great deal of experience in the industry, you've indicated, correct?

MR. HATEM: Absolutely, yes. I mean I've built some of the largest nightclubs in the city.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Okay. So why isn't this establishment a nightclub? What's different here?

MR. HATEM: Well, what's different is the level of sound and the type of music as well as the hours. A nightclub, as you know -- let's say Flash across the street is a perfect example. No one shows up until midnight. People come to El Techo to eat starting from noon on the weekends and they have drinks while they're seated. There is a small bar area that can host about 20 people standing, but even that disappeared during COVID because we were not
allowed to have standing during COVID. So basically, we shut down including now for the last number of months cause the business has been seriously affected. We don't even have sales hardly after midnight anymore because of the way the neighborhood is frightened Louie to the point that he cannot exercise his right to have music until 1:30 per the agreement. And as you were trying to state, Mr. Kline, per our liquor license, we are allowed to technically, if it wasn't for the agreement, operate until 2:00 a.m., and we don't.

So we do not operate that way. People don't come that late at night. They leave and they go to a full club, Flash being one, Howard Theater another, and all of the U Street corridor which if anyone drives down the U Street-Florida corridor at night, it is jammed pack, you know, especially before COVID.

Anyway, size of sound, cover charge. We never have a cover charge. All sort of symbiotic with the night life. The loud music, the large dance floors, table bottle service, all of that is typical of a nightclub, and this is not what Rito Loco-El Techo is.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Is scale another issue in terms of size of an establishment?

MR. HATEM: For the scale, meaning -INSPECTOR KLINE: Yes. In other words, you -- do we see nightclubs the size of this place?

MR. HATEM: No, absolutely not. If -I mean the smallest clubs that I can think of, Ice just reopened. It used to be Red. It was one of the smallest nightclubs in the city that holds about 150 people.

INSPECTOR KLINE: And your capacity up there is 79, correct?

MR. HATEM: Yes, absolutely. And mostly seated even late -- in the late hours.

INSPECTOR KLINE: All right. If I can get sharing privileges, there are some exhibits that I would like Mr. Hatem to identify?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I believe that you did -- did you have earlier -- Mr. Orellana, can you please, if Mr. --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
You have it, Mr. Kline.
INSPECTOR KLINE: Great. Thank you so much. All right. I'm showing you what's been
marked as Exhibit A. Can you identify what that is?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You're not sharing your screen, Mr. --

MR. KLINE: I'm not? Bear with me. I thought I did.

MR. HATEM: And while you're doing that, if -- after my testimony with you, I'd love to address Mr. Short -- or Chairman Short or --

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And Mr. -- no, Mr. Hankins. You are -- go ahead -- go ahead, Mr. Kline.

INSPECTOR KLINE: You'll respond to my questions, Mr. Hatem. Can you identify -- do you see it now, do you see an Exhibit in front of you?

MR. HATEM: I do.
INSPECTOR KLINE: Good. I've succeeded. What is that?

MR. HATEM: That was the initial consulting fee for Ivan to come out and assess the situation with the sound, do a test, and then recommend a new set of speakers, amplifiers, and mixers. So high fidelity sound is based on all the equipment being of higher quality.

INSPECTOR KLINE: And who -- and Ivan, clarify who's Ivan?

MR. HATEM: Ivan is one of the sound engineers that has done a lot of auditoriums, some nightclubs as well as venues in the city. He did work for me in the past on 14th and K. He did the work to mitigate the noise pollution from Coyote Ugly. He's done churches. He's done stadiums, so on and so forth.

INSPECTOR KLINE: And was this paid?
MR. HATEM: Yes. They're all paid.
I think four invoices total around 27,5, and then we have other invoices to Washington Music Center which is the main purveyor.

INSPECTOR KLINE: And just to clarify, you're responsible for the accounts for the establishment and payment of bills, correct?

MR. HATEM: Absolutely. All bills come through me. Nothing gets paid unless I know about it.

INSPECTOR KLINE: So when you say this is paid, you know this based upon your position with the company that it was paid, correct?

MR. HATEM: Yes. I can provide you check images. I can provide you Quickbooks,
anything you'd like.
INSPECTOR KLINE: All right. Exhibit B, what do we have?

MR. HATEM: This is one of the other invoices that include some of the technical equipment, the amplifier, the processor, and the rack to hold the amplifiers. These are not the speakers. These are -- this is the technical side of it, especially as they keep referring to amplified sound. You need an amplifier to produce music.

INSPECTOR KLINE: All right. And this is -- the invoice is dated June 30, 2021?

MR. HATEM: Yes, sir. That's --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MR. HATEM: -- the process roughly in June.

INSPECTOR KLINE: So it was done over the summer of '21?

MR. HATEM: No. It took a long time for this equipment to arrive. It was -- you know, we couldn't even get the -- most of the equipment was not even available that was the one -- the preferred one, so we went with a Hankis and Rhines, which is another high fidelity sound
equipment company just to speed up the process. So I pick -- we had to pick another brand just so we wouldn't delay until 2022, because I knew the tenants needed this resolved as fast as possible.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Exhibit C is another expenditure related to the upgrade of the sound system?

MR. HATEM: Yes. And this would be the bulk of the speakers, as you can see, and the subwoofers and the amps.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Okay. And this was paid also?

MR. HATEM: Yes, sir.
INSPECTOR KLINE: Okay. Exhibit D?
MR. HATEM: That was basically a service call to tweak what he had installed, I think, and these are --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MR. HATEM: -- some checks, yes.
INSPECTOR KLINE: Do you know what Exhibit E is?

MR. HATEM: That is the check downpayment for Martin Beam dated July 29th, because Ivan did the equipment but we got a recommendation that Martin had solved some of the
sound problems in downtown and other establishments including one of my other partners who completely resolved the ABRA case with and that he could sort of -- he could take care of our establishment. So I went and paid him in advance to make sure that we had him contracted for the future.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Okay. Exhibit F?
MR. HATEM: That is an explanation from Ivan, which is 71Z, LLC. The residents were asking for, you know, a lot of -- an easy to understand explanation of sound and what he was doing. You know, sound engineers can talk a lot about pink noise and soundwaves and no one really understands that. So he just wrote out a document to make it easy to understand.

INSPECTOR KLINE: Okay. Mr. Chair, I would move Exhibits A through F into evidence.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy, any objection?

MR. BADAWY: No objections.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So moved.
(Whereupon, the above-referred to documents were marked as Exhibits A through F for identification and received into evidence.)

INSPECTOR KLINE: If I can -- did I do that right -- stop sharing now? All right. And so Mr. Hatem, just to clarify, you've been involved with this establishment for how long?

MR. HATEM: For about three years and four months.

INSPECTOR KLINE: And is it your intention to continue to be involved?

MR. HATEM: Yes. I'm invested. It would be a failure of a return on my investment if it goes south.

INSPECTOR KLINE: And you heard Mr. Hankins testify. Are you committed as involved in the management of the company to no longer using promoters at the establishment?

MR. HATEM: You want the honest answer? I never --

INSPECTOR KLINE: You're under oath --
MR. HATEM: I never wanted promoters in the first place, so I have -- I've used some of the biggest promoters in the city. I don't agree with promoters always. They do what they want and they don't listen to management and to the ownership and direction so, yes.

INSPECTOR KLINE: And as an owner,
operator, and partner in this establishment, you're committed to addressing the concerns that have been raised about noise?

MR. HATEM: Absolutely. I run only clean businesses as much as possible, so I want to fix this. I want to solve it. I do not like waking up with the stress and the headache of these problems. We need to come up with a solution. It needs to be resolved. I can't -- I mean you have no idea how stressed out Louie is about it and in turn stresses me out about it as well. I mean we can't live this way.

INSPECTOR KLINE: All right. Thank you. I have no further questions at this time. CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy? CROSS-EXAMINATION

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, Mr. Hatem.

MR. HATEM: How are you?
MR. BADAWY: Good, thank you.
Mr. Hatem, you've been -- testified that you have been associated with Mr. Henkins and El Techo for three years, correct?

THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.
BY MR. BADAWY:

Q Okay. And I believe you testified that one of your duties and responsibilities is the, I guess, sound engineering associated with this establishment, correct?

A It was passed on to me when I realized that they were not getting it done. I'm the guy that tries to get things done. So that became my responsibility around July of 2021 when they contracted Ivan Burkitt.

Q Okay. And again, you've testified you're not a sound engineer, but you were -you've overseeing these efforts, correct?

A Yeah, I work with sound engineers to build out many different forms of sound, large spaces, small spaces. But I always rely on the experts, whether's an architect or a sound engineer or a structural engineer. I do not pretend $I$ know something $I$ don't.

Q The exhibits that were just admitted, these are invoices, correct, money that was paid from El Techo?

A Yes, to Ivan -- to $71 Z$ LLC, Ivan Burkitt, yes, sir.

Q Okay, and Ivan Burkitt is a sound engineer, correct?

A Yes.
Q And the range of dates that these bills were paid, right, for your upgrades are, I think it starts on June 9 of 2021, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q June 30, 2021.
A Yes.
Q July 29, 2021.
A Yes.
Q And August 30 of 2021, correct?
A Yes.
Q And despite these upgrades, there were still noise complaints after August 30, 2021, correct?

A Not to me directly, on the group chain. But as you've mentioned, I do not have access to ABRA's list of complaints. I hear from them that there are complaints that are going on, but you guys have pointed out that there was 45 complaints.

Q Right. And in -- are you aware that in September of 2021, after these upgrades, there were complaints made to ABRA about loud music coming from El Techo?

A These -- the sound system was not
completed until October of 2021. The invoices I do not pay in full until the product is delivered. I would never do that. The installation took time, and that was October. And as Louie stated, my -- the sound system that Ivan installed was for high fidelity. The promoters brought in their own sound systems.

Q And you're aware that after October 21, there were noise complaints about El Techo coming from the community, correct?

A I'm sorry, what date?
Q After October of 2021, you're aware that there have continued to be complaints about loud music --

A Yes, actually Sidon made me -- who's, I don't know if she's still on the call, she made me aware of those a few, a couple months. I paid the violation notices of course, so I did see them. And the ones that I had to -- was referring to was November and December 7 I think the last one was.

Q Okay, and those were substantiated noise complaints, correct, on November 13 and December 2 of 2021, correct?

A The truth is, Mr. Badawy, I'm not sure
how the Offer in Compromise works, so I can't attest to that. I just know that I was told to send a check, and I do.

Q All right. Now, Mr. Hatem, you said that Ivan Burkitt is one of the sound engineers that you employed, correct?

A Yes, sir.
Q Okay. And I think you referenced another one before that, or maybe after that, Washington Sound Systems?

A Washington Music Center is Chuck Levin's, it's based on Silver Spring. They're not a sound engineer, they provide the equipment for almost every establishment in the city except for Protec, which is another company. So yeah, I mean, mostly everyone knows Washington Music Center.

Q Okay, and now of course you have contracted with Miller Beam Acoustic Consulting Services, correct?

A Yes.
Q And in October of 2021, did you have Ivan Burkitt or the Washington Sound System go into the homes of the abutting property owners?

A I think it was before October or

September. I don't -- I would have to go through my text messages and whatnot to find the exact date. Yes, it was before the new sound system was installed and we ran a pink noise test.

A pink noise is the gold standard, court-approved that will rate how much noise waves are coming through the wall or through the buildings.

Q Okay.
A Any sound, I mean, I'm not going to attest to that, but it was minimal, it was minimal waves. And we had a tenant present with us the entire time and brought her in to Rito Loco so she could hear how loud we were running the test at. And she was like, oh my God, it's so loud in here but I can't hear this in my space.

Q But you testified that she -- you couldn't hear -- you could in fact hear music in her residence coming from El Techo at that time, correct?

A No, the pink noise is not music, it is actually a buzzing sound. It's like white noise like when your is, you know, making, you know, popcorn static.

Q Which could be heard in her residence,
correct?
A No, only by the -- by the laptop he was using to record it. It was a very low amount. I couldn't hear it with my -- with my own ear, I could not hear it. Sorry, if that's what you're asking.

Q And the resident allowed you to come in with the sound expert for you to do this test, correct?

A I'm sorry?
Q And the resident allowed --
A Yes --
Q To come in to her?
A She is, and I don't believe she's a protester here.

Q And there was -- there was no base test at that time, correct?

A No, that was the base test, because that was before the new sound system.

Q Okay.
A So now with the new sound system, anyone can run a followup test to see how it's changed.

Q And again, you've testified that there -- all of these upgrades have been completed.

And yet there are still complaints of loud music coming from the neighbors about -- excuse me, let me rephrase that.

Despite these upgrades that you've made, you remain aware that there are noise complaints from community members claiming that El Techo's music can be heard inside their homes, correct?

A I've been made aware that there are noise complaints, yes, sir.

Q And I'll ask you this, Mr. Hatem --
A Hello?
Q Do you believe these complaints, when you hear that the neighbors are saying loud music is coming into our homes from El Techo, do you believe those complaints?

A You want my opinion, or?
Q Yeah, I'm asking you what you believe.
A Okay, so as someone who knows about sound, I believe that sound can carry in any way, shape, or form, based on your windows, the thickness of it, based on the street noise.

I actually choose to live in Rosslyn because of the street noise in DC. But I can still hear the planes going over, I can hear the
street signs, I can hear my neighbors, I can hear a lot of things. So yes, sound does carry.

So but by the time -- the time and dates of the complaints, do I believe that Rito Loco El Techo's sound system is large enough to produce the complaints when there's so many establishments, like the Howard Theater and Flash and these other places that have much bigger sound systems that carry for blocks and blocks?

Because I've dealt with Adams Morgan, I've dealt with Dupont Circle. Those sound systems will carry almost all the way to Foggy Bottom, you know. So it is, yes, sound carries. But Rito Loco El Techo's sound system is very tiny, it's very small. Unless you blast it at full capacity, which we do not.

That's another thing we did is we dampened the sound and put governors on it. And a governors limit's the ability to turn the sound past a certain point so that when any DJ comes in with their own ideas and gets drunk or whatever it is that they do, they cannot pass a certain threshold. That's what a limiter and a governors is.

So no, I do not believe, especially to
the north side, that Rito Loco and El Techo is capable of making that kind of sound to, as you've stated in previous meetings, to wake your child when your back plaza area behind your house is butted up against Flash and the -- the other nightclub open deck there.

Those I can -- I definitely imagine are carrying into your space. So where it's coming from, I don't know. But am I willing to resolve it? Absolutely. Are we going to go the extra mile? Sure, $I$ will go the extra mile just to prove that it is not us, you know.

You know, I -- we talked about before there was a recent complaint out on Quattro. Quattro is a small restaurant with a, you know, with a minor patio speakers. I mean, am I to believe that that's carrying into your space as well? I don't know. But I will take whatever tests necessary and the decibel readers and ABRA coming.

You know what, run Mr. Badawy -- the ABRA coming out almost every weekend, as they say, is doing the testing for us. They are providing the proof. So you asked about complaints. Do I believe that the residents have
gotten organized and are filing more complaints on a regular basis? Absolutely.

Because you all know the more complaints you file, the more likelihood we will get our license revoked. So it is a strategy. And the ABRA agents come and consistently say we are not a problem.

So, but even with that, $I$ will take it the next step. I will pay Martin Beam whatever he wants to put sound proofing wherever he can find and solve this issue in its entirety.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Hatem, I have no further questions.

MR. HATEM: Thank you, sir.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any questions by the Board members? Mr. Short.

MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Hatem, how are you, sir?

MR. HATEM: Hello, Mr. Short, I wanted to talk to you.

MEMBER SHORT: Oh, I could tell, and I'm glad you do. But $I$ need to ask this question because there was a time on this board when someone came to testify before this board, especially with the names you've thrown at us,

Mr. Ivan Burkitt?
MR. HATEM: Ivan Burkitt? Yeah.
MEMBER SHORT: Yeah. Do you have any idea, because he's not here to defend him, but what school did he go to or what -- where did he get his papers from making him a certified person dealing with sound?

MR. HATEM: I would have to get you his CV, but he actually is a sound engineer with the White House at times. He does a lot of churches in the area as well as stadiums. So he would have to just give you his CV.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay, I would say this, so then your testimony for him, $I$ can't take it as though you were giving us or producing some type of certificate or something saying that the person that you hired, are bonafide, certified sound engineers.

MR. HATEM: Yes, sir, I don't expect to certify Mr. Burkitt. I do expect to certify Martin Beam.

MEMBER SHORT: Well, the next time you come, maybe -- I don't know, this would be up to our Chairman. But there was a time when anybody came before this board with the kind of testimony
you gave, they would have to bring some credentials to actually get credit for what they are saying to us.

Because I could be a sound engineer if I were talking to the right people, I guess. But any rate --

MR. HATEM: I agree, I understand.
MEMBER SHORT: And there was -- there was a question you wanted to ask me. If I could ask a question of you ask what question did you have for me?

MR. HATEM: I've been working in this city and I was born in this city, and I've been trying to get compactors for a long time. First of all, I love compactors. It provides, you know, multiple establishments to compact their trash and only get picked up once. And believe me, I hate rats. I've physically fought rats in this city from every neighborhood myself.

Now, there is no space in the alley in question next to Rito Loco El Techo for even a dumpster, unfortunately. I would -- that's why Louie and Mr. Kline were trying to say we'll take any recommendation as where you can put the dumpster or compactor.

I'm even trying to get a compactor approved in another location and the World Bank was kind enough and next to their building to give us, you know, approval. But the Golden Triangle is now helping us trying to get it approved.

So easier said than done. It would --
I would make everyone happy. But in this scenario all we have are bins, nothing else.

MEMBER SHORT: I understand. If I could just say this to you. I do know, like yourself I've been in this city for 70-some years. And I once lived in LeDroit Park.

But I'll just simply say this to you:
I do know that we've had other businesses come before this board and through a little persistence and talking to the Environmental Office at the Mayor's Office they were able to get trash compactors.

MR. HATEM: Right.
MEMBER SHORT: And some places that have less space than you have. One being around 18th and Vernon Street. There's a trash compactor in there that kind of solved a lot of their problems. So it's not -- it's not that
we're trying to be burdensome.
But because of peace, order, and quiet we want, when people come before this board, citizens complaining, we want to come with answers and just not a lot of fluff and talk -MR. HATEM: Right, exactly.

MEMBER SHORT: And --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MEMBER SHORT: So the bottom line is can I get you or someone from your establishment to just go to the environmental persons at the Mayor's Office and ask about getting a contractor or a --

MR. HATEM: I will definitely do it for multiple locations. I just don't -- if someone can tell me, I don't know the ANC rep, where we can put it, where's feasible. And then I will propose it. Now, as --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
MEMBER SHORT: That's what the environmental people would do for you, they work with DPW and all. So it's a city effort when we want to solve these types of problems.

And I can almost guarantee you from what I know about the city and the way it
functions, if you were to go to ask someone in the Mayor's line with the environmental folks, you would be able to probably get some great ideas about what do dealing with compactors.

MR. HATEM: I mean, I'll get with the landlord, because as 600 T Steve Lawrence , because as you know, he owns the whole block and needs space. The only reason why we were allowed to have trash was because he put us in the back.

The only other option is to put it on the street on Florida Avenue, like the residents of $1 \mathrm{B01}$ do. They leave their cans in front of the buildings. And I don't believe in that. In New York City, they throw the bags every night on the street, you know.

But out of the ten cans that we have, only about five of them are ours, two for Steve Lawrence and maybe three or so for Quattro. We just got stuck with the bill. Rito Loco El Techo has been paying it for two years for everybody. Now one --

MEMBER SHORT: Okay, now that's enough with the trash. Thank you very much. But now you've admitted yourself with your testimony since you've done some of the sound mitigation,
there still have been complaints. What do you think that's coming from?

MR. HATEM: What I think it's coming from is, again, my opinion, I'm not trying to project and put anything in anyone's mouth. I think it's a lot of frustration. I mean, me growing up in this city, I know the amount of complaints for 30 years Adams Morgan had and tried to shut down all of their establishments, right.

I think being next to the arts and entertainment district, they have nobody else to complain against except us. And they can't say anything about Howard, they can't say anything about Flash, they can't say anything that's going on from 7th and $U$ or 9th and U -- 7th and U over. And all that traffic comes from New York Avenue through Florida Avenue.

Sometimes the cars, the ATVs and their sound systems and larger. We had the Mayor's Office and eight ambulances pass, and we could not hear -- I was yelling, we were yelling at each other because we couldn't hear each other talk.

So ambient noise is absolutely a
problem. I think the, LeDroit Park has a lot of history. Some of the buildings are not up to the most modern specifications of windows of three-paned glass, four-paned glass. And then it's, unfortunately in the city's it's required. You know, you need that level of thickness in a window and a door.

So there's a lot of things that are playing into this, and I'm not here to pass the blame. I can only do my part, but other people have to do their part as well.

MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Hatem, I thank you very much for your testimony.

Mr. Chair, that's all I have for this witness. Thank you very much, Mr. Hatem.

MR. HATEM: Thank you, Board Member Short, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any other questions by any other Board member? Mr. Badawy, any question, any redirect based on the questions that were asked by the Board?

MR. BADAWY: No redirect, Mr. Chair, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Kline, any redirect?

MR. HATEM: Thank you all for hearing my testimony.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, sir, have a great day.

MR. HATEM: You too.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
MR. KLINE: Call to the stand Martin Beam.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, Mr. Beam.

MR. BEAM: Hello, Martin Beam here.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you have a camera, sir?

MR. BEAM: Yeah, let me turn that on. There we go. Oh, sorry about the lights.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I can't see you, I can't see you, Mr. Beam.

MR. BEAM: It says preview only. Am I coming through yet?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Nope.
MR. BEAM: It's saying it's on -- I can only do a preview. It's giving me the red slash on the camera, even though I can see myself, unfortunately but.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, we can't
see you.
All right, I need you to raise your right hand. Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth and nothing but the truth?

MR. BEAM: Yes, I do.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Mr. Kline, you are -- are you presenting Mr. Beam as an expert?

MR. KLINE: Yeah, I'm getting ready to qualify him.

MEMBER SHORT: Chair?
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: We're -- hold on. Hold on -- sorry, hold on.

Mr. Badawy, do you have a problem with Mr. Beam being an expert, or do you need further information regarding his qualification?

MR. BADAWY: I'll just wait for -we'll -- the Protestants will accept Mr. Beam as an expert.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, thank you. All right, Mr. -- okay, Mr., it's your witness, Mr. Kline. And please have Mr. Beam spell his name for the record, please. MR. KLINE: All right.

MR. BEAM: Martin Beam, that's

M-A-R-T-I-N B-E-A-M, as in Martin.
DIRECT EXAMINATION
BY MR. KLINE:
Q And you are an acoustical engineer, is that correct?

A I'm an acoustical consultant. You can't really call yourself an engineer unless you're a professional engineer.

Q Okay. But you do have an engineering degree, correct?

A Yes, I do. I'm a -- I have a degree in mechanical engineering.

Q All right. And how long have you been working with respect to noise issues?

A Thirty-three years.
Q And have you testified as an expert concerning noise issues in the past?

A Numerous times.
Q Any idea how many?
A Dozens. In front of this board, a lot. You know, at least a couple dozen, I would think.

Q All right. And you've testified both on behalf of applicants and on behalf of Protestants, is that correct?

A That's correct.
Q And you -- you've been engaged to assist with noise issues at Rito Loco El Techo?

A That's correct.
Q And what's the scope of your engagement, what is it you're going to do?

A Well, he's rebuilding the rooftop deck, and so he wants to make sure he's doing it to maximize the sound control. And so we're going to help him with that.

Q Have you been out to the site?
A Yes I have.
Q And what do you find in terms of issues related to noise, if any, at this establishment?

A Well, in terms of noise I don't know, you know, I wasn't able to get into the adjacent, so I wasn't able to do a, you know, an objective measurement. But there's certainly room for improvement, and he's indicated that they're on board with making it much tighter.

Q Okay. And do you believe that there are recommendations that you can make that will be effective in mitigating the noise?

A Definitely.

Q Okay, any idea what those might be?
A Well, the partition adjacent to the adjacent building is full -- it's not very solid, it's got a lot of holes. And there's a walkway behind it, and there's just a lot of ways for sound to escape that area.

Just wanted to clarify that we only do the consulting, we don't sell or install anything. So when there was talk about, you know, I would have helped them install it, I don't do any of that stuff.

Q And why is that?
A Because I think it clouds our judgment. We're strictly consultants working to make sure the best, most cost-effective solutions are engaged, not what makes us the most money for installing.

Q Okay. And were you here for Mr. Hatem's testimony when he describes the changes that they've made to the sound system?

A Yes, I was here.
Q Do you have any opinion as to whether that had any effectiveness in terms of mitigating noise from the establishment?

A It should have. I didn't know the
previous, I don't know what was there previously. But the concept of putting smaller speakers closer to the people is that way you don't have to turn it up as much is always better than having two large speakers that you're trying to like build the whole space with.

Q So is it kind of like, this is the example I like, is it kind of like in the diner where they have a juke box and you've got the little speaker at your table when you can put in money and only hear it at your -- at your table?

A That's a good way to put it.
Q So smaller speakers rather than -many smaller speaker rather than a smaller number of large speakers, is that what we're talking about?

A Yeah, that keeps it closer to the people so you don't have to turn it up as much. And it doesn't -- because otherwise if you're like trying to serve people in the back of the space with two speakers, you end up turning it up to reach them, and now you're really blasting everybody.

Q Now, what about -- what about base? That's a constant complaint in these cases, and I
know you've dealt with before. What is done to mitigate the issues with respect to base?

A Well, first it's not putting too many base speakers in because they're really not necessary. One or two, you know, quality base speakers can fill a space like that without a problem.

But you know, some of the sound system guys, you know, they're all about the base. They love the base and they want it to like, they want it to crush you in the chest. And you know, we're not of that opinion.

So that's step one, is just don't overdo the amount and the size of the speakers, as Mr. Hatem was saying. Like they're not putting in these humongous, you know, person-sized base speakers, which you would in a nightclub. So that's step one.

Step two is then properly isolate those base speakers. A lot of times they're just like people don't know, they push them up against the wall or they're sitting on the floor. And that drives -- that low frequency will actually drive the structure and then that whole structure becomes sort of a speaker, as it's all
resonating.
So we'll isolate, we'll have the speakers isolated so that they're not physically driving the structure through vibration.

Q So speaker placement is also very important, is that what we're hearing?

A Yup, sure, you definitely don't want them like right up against the wall where you've having the complaints called for. You'd rather have them farther from that. Even if it's facing that wall, it's better to have it further away and facing.

Another thing Mr. Hatem said which was correct is that the base spreads out in all directions, it's not really a directional thing. So that they can go almost anywhere and still fill the space.

Q I'm going to ask you a similar question I asked you before. Approximately how many establishments have you worked with in the District of Columbia concerning noise issues?

A Hundreds, me and my company. I mean we, you know, we've got ten engineers, ten consultants. And we -- this is a small but steady source of jobs. I mean, it's not -- it's
probably less than five percent of our business, but they're pretty regular.

Q If the owner of the establishment follows your recommendations, or when the owner of the establishment follows your recommendations, have you ever failed?

A We've never been called back as to have an issue, we never missed a noise code.

Q And has this operator committed to you that they're going to follow your recommendations?

A Yes, he has.
MR. KLINE: Great. I have no further questions of this witness. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy. CROSS-EXAMINATION

MR. BADAWY: Just one question, Mr. Chair.

Good evening, Mr. Beam
MR. BEAM: Good evening.
BY MR. BADAWY:
Q Mr. Beam, you do not have any influence or control over whether your client will fully implement your recommendations that you ultimately come up with, correct?

A That's correct. I don't have that on any of the jobs I do. I'm a consultant and I tell the owners of big, you know, the big developments what to do, and if they -- it's their money, they can choose what to do.

MR. BADAWY: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Beam. No further questions.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any questions by any Board members? Good ahead, Mr. Short. Mr. Short. Have you turned your -- have you unmuted your line, sir? I can hear you, Mr. Short.

MEMBER SHORT: Thank you. Mr. Beam.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr. Short, we can hear you.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay, I was asking Mr. Beam, Mr. Beam, are you familiar with the rooftop sound?

MR. BEAM: Yes, I am. We do -- we've done a lot of rooftop establishments ever since DC changed their smoking law. Everybody had to have a rooftop lounge after that, and we did a lot of those.

MEMBER SHORT: Are you familiar with the rooftops that they had problems with on

Connecticut Avenue?
MR. BEAM: Which -- I'd have to -- I'm not sure which ones you're referring to.

MEMBER SHORT: Well, let's say this, when you're on a rooftop, to really properly control noise, you need to have a closed roof, is that correct? Is it better to have a closed roof?

MR. BEAM: It's better, but it's not always necessary. We did one right in the area there. It's a gym and they had a rooftop pool and everything and they had speakers up there. It was like a party -- party kind of room.

It's a big gym in the city, I can't draw it off the top of my head. But they did not have any rooftop, but we were able to solve it with -- with the proper barrier walls.

MEMBER SHORT: So you had four barrier walls on all four sides of the roof, is that what you're saying?

MR. BEAM: Yes.
MEMBER SHORT: So if you have a barrier wall that is not completely all the way up or you have holes in it, then it's not doing its job, correct?

MR. BEAM: Well, no, it really depends on where you're going. Where the sound is. In this case, you'd almost, the sound -- adjacent neighboring building that's generating most of the complaints, you certainly want a full wall there without -- without holes in it.

But the other walls wouldn't matter as much because any sound that goes out those walls isn't coming back. It actually -- it actually acts like it's fully absorbed. So like an outdoor stadium the sound goes out and never returns. Whereas an indoor club it bounces around and actually builds up.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay, well, I guess we're talking about Loco El Techo, correct?

MR. BEAM: Yes.
MEMBER SHORT: And so currently, what is the -- what is the sound control you have for the rooftop of this particular business?

MR. BEAM: Well, they have a wall between them and the neighbor. As I said, it wasn't constructed very well, as Mr. Hankins testified to, that they, you know, they did it themselves.

They did the best they could with the
knowledge they had and the construction abilities they had. And they did it in good faith. But it, you know, it certainly wasn't as good as it could have been.

MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Beam, this is not as good as it could have been. Are they going to continue having noise problems until they get it done the way you've recommended? In your opinion.

MR. BEAM: It sounds to me like there's -- I mean, if they haven't been cited, I mean they certainly, as other people have said, complaints are complaints. People like to complain, but I mean, that's something we can --

MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Beam, apparently you haven't -- apparently you have not been keeping up with this hearing. There have been 45 complaints against this business rooftop. So what I'm saying to you, they've done some work up there and you've seen the work that they've done, correct?

MR. BEAM: I mean, $I$ saw it in its current state.

MEMBER SHORT: In its current state, would you say it is soundproof?

MR. BEAM: No.
MEMBER SHORT: Is it sound mitigating?
MR. BEAM: Compared to where they were in the past, from what $I$ understand, yes, they have certainly made progress, it sounds like.

MEMBER SHORT: Is it sound mitigating or isn't it?

MR. BEAM: I mean, that's a -- if they reduced the sound by one decibel, that's sound mitigating. So I'm saying where it was where -it sounds like where it came from before, which was large speakers, they put in small speakers. It sounds to me not having --

MEMBER SHORT: Thank you Mr. -- thank you, Mr. Beam. You've answered the question that I asked. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chair, that's all I have with this witness. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any other questions by any other Board members?

Mr. Beam, just -- I'm sorry, do you have a question, Mr. Grandis?

Mr. Beam, what's the scope of -what's the scope of the work that you have with this establishment?

MR. BEAM: It's to help them work with the architect that they've hired to design properly sound attenuating walls and structures.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And have you started the work as yet?

MR. BEAM: I've looked at the -- I went out there and made a site survey. I've got some things working up. There's been a bit of miscommunication between us and the architect, but now we're on the same page and we're starting to make progress.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: How long do you believe that this process will take?

MR. BEAM: For the design?
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes.
MR. BEAM: It should be over in a month. I can't imagine it taking more than a month, but permitting and who knows how long. If things get changed during permitting. I mean, my stuff I could do, you know, work with the architect very quickly. But in terms of how it gets implemented through permitting and all that, who knows.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay, thank you, Mr. Beam.

All right, Mr. Badawy, any questions?
MR. BADAWY: Just one brief question. Mr. Beam, you said it takes a month to make the design. How long would it be to build the design, is there any way to say that?

MR. BEAM: There's no way for me to say. I mean, that's dependent on other people that I have no control over.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, sir.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kline?
REDIRECT EXAMINATION
MR. KLINE: Mr. Short was asking you about what's been done to date. In your, based on your knowledge of the situation, do you believe you would have been hired if the establishment were satisfied with the current level of noise attenuation?

MR. BEAM: I think it's clear they -if they were -- if it was going well, they wouldn't have -- I never would have gotten a call.

MR. KLINE: Thank you. That's all I have.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Beam. Thank you for your testimony, have a great
day.
MR. BEAM: Thank you, everybody. Bye bye.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: You have had four witnesses so far, Mr. Kline. Do you have one more witness?

MR. KLINE: With that, we rest. I'm going to spare the Board additional neighborhood witnesses and let's get to the Protestants' case.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Thank you. It is 7:23, we're going to take a ten-minute break. So at 7:33, Mr. Badawy, you can call your first witness. So you can basically have your witnesses available by letting them know that we're going to -- that you're going to start.

So all right, so we're off the record until 7:33. Thank you.
(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter wen off the record at 7:23 p.m. and resumed at 7:35 p.m.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: We're back on the record.

Mr. Badawy, do you have a witness you wish to call?

MR. BADAWY: Yes, Mr. Chair. The Protestants call Craig Kujawa.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kujawa, can you raise your right hand, please. Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth and nothing but the truth?

Your witness, sir.
MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Good evening, Mr. Kujawa.
THE WITNESS: Good evening, Mr.
Badawy.

## DIRECT EXAMINATION

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Kujawa, where do you live?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry, Mr. Badawy, can you ask him to spell his name for the record, please.

MR. BADAWY: Apologize. Mr. Kujawa, if you could spell your first and your full name for the record.

THE WITNESS: Yes. My name is Craig Kujawa, and that is spelled C-R-A-I-G K-U-J-A-W-A.

BY MR. BADAWY:
Q And again, Mr. Kujawa, where do you
live right now?
A I live at 1838 6th Street, NW, in the Matinee Condominium.

Q And which particular unit do you live in?

A It's Unit B. There are only four units in the building.

Q And how long have you lived in that unit for?

A I've lived here since the building was constructed in August, July or August of 2005. But since I'm under oath, I did move out and rent the unit to tenants for about 15 months from January 2020 to May 2021 while I was deployed to the Horn of Africa.

Q Are you familiar with an establishment known as El Techo?

A Yes, very much so.
Q And can you tell the members of the Board where your home is in relation to El Techo?

A From the street, it's around the corner. Because the Matinee, the front of the Matinee Building is on 6th St., and Rito Loco El Techo is around the corner on Florida Avenue. But physically the roof deck is literally on the
other side of the wall you see behind me.
Q Okay, Mr. Kujawa I'm going to show you some exhibits now. I'm showing you what's been previously marked as Protestant's Exhibit A. Do you recognize this exhibit?

A Yes.
Q And can you tell us what we're looking at here?

A This is an aerial view looking south across Florida Avenue from a period of time before the roof deck El Techo was constructed atop the single story Rito Loco establishment.

The area highlighted in gray is the general area of where the roof deck was constructed, and the area highlighted in orange behind that, to the south, which is my building, is a representation of where my particular unit is in the building.

Q Mr. Kujawa, I'm going to show you what's marked as Protestants' Exhibit B. Can you tell us what we're looking at here?

A This is also a south-facing view across Florida Avenue from street level showing the original Rito Loco first floor establishment in the red brick. You can see how the
second-level roof deck extends across onto the -atop the first floor section of 1840 6th St.

Behind you can see the salmon-colored building is the Matinee Condominium, which is where I live. And then on the right side of the image is 600 T St., where the previous witness. Mr. Lawrence, resides.

Q And Mr. Kujawa, I'm going to show you what's marked as Protestants' Exhibit C. Can you tell us what we're looking at here?

A Yes, this is a eastward-looking view along the property line from the north-south alley that you have all been discussing with the trash. On the left you can see the plywood and tri - whatever polycarbonate panels that enclose the roof deck, the abutting wall.

And then on the right side the image is, again, the Matinee Condominium at 1838 6th St. And the highlighted portion is my unit, and the upper left window there is where I'm sitting right now.

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Chair, the
Protestants would move Exhibits A, B, and C in for evidence.
(Whereupon, the above-referred to
documents were marked as Exhibits A-C for identification.)

MR. KLINE: No objection.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Without objection.
(Whereupon, the above-referred to documents were received into evidence as Exhibits A-C.)

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Kujawa, do you know whether or not your home is located in a residential zone?

THE WITNESS: Yes, it is in a residential zone. It's RF 1.

BY MR. BADAWY:
Q Mr. Kujaw, I'm showing you what's marked as Protestants' Exhibit D. Do you recognize or do you -- can you tell us what we're looking at here?

A Yes, and in the -- similar to the investigator's report, it's from the same website. This is the zoning map for the area. The small green rectangle near the center bottom of the image is the lot of Rito Loco, although the rooftop El Techo extends greater than the small rectangle shown.

The mixed-use zone is the orange. The arts zone is in the green. The large square to the -- to the left across the alley is the Shaw Condominium, which is about a seven-story tall building.

And then the image simply shows the abutment to the RF Zone 1 to the south., the distance to the RF Zone 1 across Florida Avenue, and the row homes, including mine, directly to the south of the establishment.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Kujawa. Mr. Chair, Protestants would move Exhibit D into evidence.
(Whereupon, the above-referred to document was marked as Exhibit D for identification.)

MR. KLINE: No objection.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Without objection.
(Whereupon, the above-referred to document was received into evidence as Exhibit D.)

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Kujawa, how much of the licensee's establishment actually abuts your building or your unit, if you know?

THE WITNESS: The lot that they're on, the old barbershop, is only 18 feet across. But at the level of the roof deck, it extends pretty much the entire length of my unit, which is about 27 feet.

Q Mr. Kujawa, I'm showing you what's marked as Exhibit E, Protestant Exhibit E. Can you tell us what we're looking at here?

A This is a map view of the neighborhood with a 400-foot radius around the Rito Loco lot denoted in the red dotted line. As one of the Board members mentioned, the length of Florida Avenue within a, you know, 400-foot radius is almost exclusively residential. It's residential north of Florida Avenue on the 1900 block of 6th Street.

The 500 block of Florida Avenue is all residential, the 500 block of T Street is all residential, and the 1800 block of 6th Street to the south is all residential as well, with the exception of Quattro Osteria on the corner and Shaw's Tavern across the street on the southeast corner of 6th and Florida.

Q And Mr. Kujawa, I'm showing you what's
marked as Protestants' Exhibit F. What are we looking at here?

A This is a closer 200-foot radius view of the same area showing a quantifiable number of residences within that radius.

Q Mr. Kujawa, you've described the, I think the nature of the neighborhood that you live in. Do you know how many private residences exist within a 200-foot radius of El Techo?

A Yes, unfortunately I do, because I've used this map and I've added them all up and listed them. There are about 100 actually, if you count them up, just within 200 feet.

Q And I'm showing you what's been marked as Protestants' Exhibit G. Can you tell us what we're looking at here?

A This is the list of all the private residences numbered 1-100 within the 200-foot radius shown on the prior exhibit.

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Chairperson, the Protestant would move in Exhibits E, F, and G into evidence.
(Whereupon, the above-referred to documents were marked as Exhibits E-G for identification.)

MR. KLINE: I don't have any objection to E and F. G, it seems like a compilation that's not an independent document. It was something created for litigation, so I don't deem that to be evidence and would object to its admission.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: What is -- what is G, Mr. Badawy?

MR. BADAWY: Mr. -- G, as Mr. Kujawa explained, is a list of 200 -- excuse me, a list of 100 residences that are within a 200-foot radius of El Techo. And if you allowed me to, I could ask Mr. Kujawa how he prepared this exhibit.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yeah, you can, let's further explore.

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Kujawa, can you tell us -- well, Mr. Kujawa, did you create this exhibit?

THE WITNESS: I did.
BY MR. BADAWY:
Q And can you tell me how you created this exhibit?

A Yes, if you go back to the prior visit -- sorry, prior exhibit, the map showing 200-foot
radius, I simply went to every door within this map. Printed it out, went to every location reflected within the red circle and identified whether it was a private residence and added it to the list. And then I tabulated them all.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Kujawa.
Mr. Chair, again, the witness, yes, this was created for purposes of litigation, but the witness has stated how it was created and that he has personal knowledge that all of these places listed on Exhibit G are residences within a 200-foot radius. Because he went out and he walked it and checked them himself.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kline?
MR. KLINE: It still was created for the purposes of litigation. We're here to hear his testimony, not what he compiled in the privacy of his own living room.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm going to -I'm going to allow the document in Exhibit G. So we'll -- so Exhibit E and F are -- excuse me, are included without objection. And G is included over the objection of Counsel.
(Whereupon, the above-referred to documents were received into evidence as Exhibits

E-G.)
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay, let's move on.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Kujawa, in the past three years, have you been able to hear music from El Techo inside your residence?

THE WITNESS: Yes, with the exception of the months I was in Africa and I had tenants, both before the pandemic. And since the pandemic I have heard music from El Techo inside my residence.

> BY MR. BADAWY:

Q And can you tell me during that three-year period when you've been in your home, how often have you heard music coming from El Techo inside your residence?

A You mean how many times?
Q Yes, how many times, if you know, approximately?

A It's pretty regular.
Q And can you tell the board what that music sounds like when you can hear it inside your residence?

A It's not exclusively the base,
although the base is a big part of it. The sound is, as have been stated, sort of omni-directional. So I can hear it through walls. I can hear it as it emanates I believe through the roof of the enclosure of the roof deck.

> And at least I perceive it as reflecting to the west off of the large building, the Shaw, that's been referred to on the other side of the alley in the arts district.

It's pretty intrusive most of the time. Certainly makes it very difficult to fall asleep. Sometimes I'm woken up by it as it gets louder and sort throughout the evening (audio interference). And I'm not really able to watch television either without turning it up louder than I would otherwise have it. I don't know if the sound (audio interference).

Q And specifically through your wall I think you described base and you described music. Can you tell us what that music sounds like?

A It's house music. I would call it electronic dance music with a pretty strong base component to it. But it's obvious to me that's coming from El Techo because I actually never
heard anything from Howard Theater and the other places (audio interference) other side of the wall.

Q And how is this music that you hear inside your home from El Techo, how is it different from ambient street noise, sirens, cars, things of that nature?

A As mentioned that the TVs are a problem. The sirens, you sort of get used to living within the range of the hospital. And the traffic on Florida Avenue as people go into and out of the U Street corridor from New York Avenue is certainly audible.

Those things are transitory, but the music from El Techo, particularly when they have DJ entertainment, it goes on for the three, four, five hours that they have -- that they feature that music. It's nonstop so you can't really get away from it.

Q So you talked about DJ entertainment. Do you know how often El Techo had DJs at their establishment?

A They've had well over 100 in the last year and a half based on their, you know, promotional social media advertisements. So
dozens and dozens and dozens of DJs over even an 18-month period.

Q Mr. Kujawa, I'm showing you what's marked as Exhibit, Protestants' Exhibit H. Can you tell us what we're looking at here?

A Can you make it a little bit bigger on your screen, both for me and for the Board? Okay. These are just their own self-promotion social media either profile or postings that they've made identifying themselves and holding themselves out to the public as a, I think as Mr. Hankins said, as a house music scene for the District of Columbia.

That's their Facebook profile representing themselves as a bar. This description, which is another aspect of their Facebook profile, refers to their Miami vibes and their killer beats. On the next one is just sample imagery and text of how they have tried to attract the public.

The Good Vibes Tribe, there's an image of what I believe to be a typical night at El Techo when they have the DJ entertainment featuring their dance floor. I can't count how many people are there in the photo, but.

That's a image of the DJ that has performed there frequently, based on their advertisements. The one you're seeing now just highlights the fact that the, if you can read the text, Expect a different techno vibe that gets progressively deeper throughout the night. I can vouch for that, it often does get deeper and louder throughout the night.

And as far as the dance floor goes, this is just examples from a year ago, where they encouraged people to try to come dance on their rooftop all weekend long. You know where the party is at this weekend, so. And that's from January 27, 2022.

Q Mr. Kujawa, I'm showing you what's been marked as Exhibit I. Can you take a look at this, please.

A Yes. Whenever they feature DJs at the establishment, at least during the period reflected in the exhibit from May 2021 to just October of this year, they would post about it either on their Instagram account or their Facebook account.

And this is simply a collection of promotional professional designed artwork
advertisements for their disc jockeys. Each row of these is a different weekend, and it goes on for about 12 pages featuring both the name of the DJ, the date, and the El Techo logo in various places on all of this artwork.

Q And what is the timeframe of this, of these advertisements in this exhibit, Mr. Kujawa?

A I believe the first one is back in May of 2021, maybe perhaps a little bit earlier. And they go, you know, beyond December of last year. I think like on page 10, you start getting into 2022. And the last five pages are additional advertisements for disc jockeys since the beginning of this year.

Q Mr. Kujawa, I'm showing you what's now marked as Protestants' Exhibit J. Can you take a look at that, please.

A Yes.
Q Do you recognize that?
A Yes, this is an alphabetical listing of all the DJs that have been promoted and featured in those 150 or so artwork advertisements from their social media pages over the period in question, May of 2021 to October 2022, reflecting the name of the DJ, the dates on
which they performed. Some of them performed seven, eight, nine times, others were single, single appearances.

And then just for context, the link to the different styles of music that all these DJs play. These are their own SoundCloud pages where they upload examples of the music that they play or that they have created.

Q And just to be clear, did you create this exhibit, Mr. Kujawa?

A I did. It is a compilation, but it is made strictly from all of the artwork images on the prior exhibit. I think there's about 133 different DJs on this list.

Q Finally, Mr. Kujawa, I'm showing you what's marked as Exhibit K. Can you take a look at this please?

A Yes.
Q And what are we looking at here, Mr. Kujawa?

A Well, it was such a large volume of information that $I$ just created this calendar view to reflect all of the dates on which DJs were featured at the establishment from May 2021 all the way, I think, as I said to October 2022.

It goes on for two pages, but the black squares are just dates on which DJs were featured based on the advertisements from the social media posts on Facebook and Instagram.

July 25 of course is the protest petition deadline after the establishment was placarded.

Q And Mr. Kujawa, just to be clear, you created this exhibit as well, correct?

A I did. But strictly from the artwork that was posted featuring the DJs on the establishment's social media presences.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Kujawa.
The Protestants would offer exhibits H, I, J, and K into evidence.
(Whereupon, the above-referred to documents were marked as Exhibits H-K for identification.)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kline?
MR. KLINE: We don't have any issue with H and I. J and K, same objection I had earlier. These are not -- these are not documents that existed, they were created for purposes of this hearing.

And we would object to them being
considered as original evidence. We have a witness to testify, that's what he's here to do. And we would make the same objection that we made earlier, that it's inappropriate to accept this compilation as evidence.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'll admit it for the record. The witness has testified that it's his own, he created this document and he testified about it. So I will admit the document.
(Whereupon, the above-referred to documents were received into evidence as Exhibits H-K.)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Mr. Kujawa, I believe you testified that based upon the music that you've heard and you know, these exhibits that we have, that you feel as a place, El Techo is operating as a nightclub. Can you tell us more what you mean by that?

MR. KLINE: Mr. Chairman, I'm going to object as to relevance. The hour is late. But I recall that we've had testimony about what it is, what the activity is.

Under the law, we have different classes of licenses. One's a CN, a nightclub license. One's a CR, which this is, a restaurant license. It's just not meaningful to talk about whether this is a nightclub. It's not. It's not licensed as a nightclub. It's the only legal definition we have.

And I would, I would object to this, to this line of inquiry.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy?
MR. BADAWY: Yes. So, I mean, Mr. Chairperson, number one, this is, this is relevant. Okay. The witness has testified about loud trance techno music coming from DJs and that come through his house and affects the peace, it affects, you know, how he can live in his house, number one.

Number two, the topic of whether something is a nightclub that promotes dance music, and dancing, and loud music, is in fact critical to what the Board is going to decide here.

Because the issue is, are they acting as a restaurant, or are they acting as, as a nightclub. And if they're acting as a nightclub,
well, that corroborates not only Mr. Kujawa's testimony but the expected testimony from other individuals in the neighborhood, that they're able to hear loud DJ music coming from the establishment late hours, you know, you know, beginning in the early evening late until night.

MR. KLINE: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Badawy clearly doesn't understand the law. In terms of acting as a restaurant, what one must do to qualify for a restaurant, as we all know, is meet the minimum food service requirements, meet the requirements that the kitchen be open, and the other requirements of being a restaurant. Those are the requirements.

With respect to other activity, the law allows restaurants to have entertainment.

So, it seems to me our time is better spent focusing on the actual activity that's thought to be objectionable, rather than fighting about how to label it.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm going to sustain the objection.

I mean, Mr. Badawy, it's a restaurant. It has a CR license. And so, you can ask questions about noise or what's going on, but it
is not a nightclub, and I don't think there's an allegation that it's a nightclub.

So, you can ask the question but not -- this is not a nightclub. I think that it's they have a restaurant license and I've not heard there's an allegation given this is a nightclub.

MR. BADAWY: That's okay.
BY MR. BADAWY:
Q Mr. Kujawa, how often in the past three years have you been able to hear music from El Techo loud enough so that you can hear it in your home?

You're on mute, Mr. Kujawa.
A I'd say between 50 and 100. I mean, I travel a lot. And as I said, I was deployed for a certain amount of the last three years.

But when, you know, when there are just bar patrons there and diners, you know, it's not audible unless they have a really, really large crowd there and that crowd is loud.

It is audible when they have features and have a DJ performing because they turn the sound up and it operates as a de facto nightclub from a layman's observation in terms of the volume of the music, the nature of the music, the
dancing.
Q Mr. Kujawa, have you ever contacted ABRA about these complaints of loud music from the establishment inside your home?

A I have.
Q Can you tell us approximately how often you contact ABRA investigators about, again, this music?

A I've certainly not contacted them every time I've heard it because that sort of eventually becomes, seems to be not a pointless exercise but just one like one of banging your head against the wall.

But I've probably contacted them at least 15 to 20 times just within the last year-and-a-half. Don't call them when I can't hear it. But I do call them when I, when I'm home and it is an intrusion.

Q And, Mr. Kujawa, have you ever attempted to work with the owners of El Techo to address the loud music in your home?

A Yes. As has already been stated, they have been invited in into our home.

The recommendation of Ivan, I think it was, was to add some sound insulating material
inside of the building, like on the inside walls of our condominium. And we weren't really willing to do that just because the square footage is small enough to, to get walled in with sound insulation on the inside of our home was considered a bridge too far.

Q Okay. Mr. Kujawa, I'm going to go now to a line of questioning about trash.

Have you observed where the establishment El Techo stores its garbage?

A Yes. In the alley, south alley to the west of 600 T Street.

Q Mr. Kujawa, I'm going to show you what's been marked as Protestant's Exhibit N. And can you tell us what we're looking at here. (Whereupon, the above-referred to document was marked as Protestant's Exhibit N for identification.)

A This is a series of photographs taken from that alley reflecting months and months and months of instances where not only that the trash is there in the alley but when it is often overflowing, as pictures I think from May all the way up through just last month.

And I provide these just to indicate
that when the trash is overflowing it's not simply an issue with the vendor, it's pretty much a regular occurrence, especially on Friday nights and Saturday nights.

Q And, Mr. Kujawa, can you tell me how wide is the alley at the point where the trash bins are where the trash is stored?

A Yeah. It's about 15 feet, 15 feet 6 to 8 inches, depending on where you measure.

Q And would you say that's about 20 percent of the width of the alley then?

A If you consider the trash bin being 3 to 4 feet deep, then, yeah, it's about 20 to 25 percent of the width of the alley.

Q To your knowledge, Mr. Kujawa, does the establishment have any public space permit to permanently store its solid waste in that alley?

A No, they do not to the best of my knowledge. I've conducted a search of the Department of Transportation permitting database, and there's nothing reflected that allows them to do that in that area.

And as is mentioned, it's actually
quite the opposite: they are subject to the summary order of the Board of Zoning Adjustment
which requires them to keep the trash at the rear of 600 T Street as a condition of their certificate of occupancy associated with the granting of relief that they required to operate their fast food restaurant there.

Q Okay. Mr. Kujawa, I'm going to show you what's marked as Exhibit 0. Do you recognize this?
(Whereupon, the above-referred to document was marked as Protestant's Exhibit O for identification.)

A Yes. This is the aforementioned summary order from the Board of Zoning Adjustment from 2014. And further down the document I believe it shows specific conditions that they were required.

Yes. The Applicant shall shore -shall store trash cans at the rear of 600 T Street with all refuse collected from the north/south alley located adjacent to and to the west of 600 T Street, N.W.

So, the rear of 600 T Street is not the alley, it is the area behind Mr. Lawrence's home, the landlord.

Q And can you clarify for the Board why
the Board of Zoning Adjustment issued this order?
A Yes. The zoning regulations in effect at the time and, in fact, today, have two particular requirements that they needed relief from, frankly, to get the certificate of occupancy to open the original Rito Loco fast food restaurant at 2000 14th.

Those conditions were, or those requirements were, one, that fast food restaurants are not permitted to be on any lot within 25 feet of a residential district, a resident zone. And Rito Loco is, as has been documented in the record, 0 feet from a resident zone.

And the other condition for fast food restaurants is that their, their refuse or dumpster must be in an enclosure that has walls on three sides, that is at least 6 feet or at least as high as the dumpster.

And so, to grant relief from those requirements of the zoning laws, the Board of Zoning Adjustment included this stipulation in their order that the trash had to be kept behind 600 T Street, which Mr. Lawrence granted permission for Rito Loco to do for the duration
of their lease.
Q Mr. Kujawa, I'm going to show you what's marked as Exhibit P.
(Whereupon, the above-referred to document was marked as Protestant's Exhibit P for identification.)

Can you tell us what this exhibit is, please?

A This is correspondence from --
MR. KLINE: Objection as to relevance.
This is the ABC Board. This is not the Department of Buildings nor the Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection.

This is a notice of a potential violation. There is a time by which to file an appeal. That time has not elapsed. How that appeal will be dealt with, if filed, is certainly an open question.

And it is not for the ABC Board to
litigate issues of coordinate agencies of the District of Columbia. And I would site Top vs. The District of Columbia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, and the proposition that in that case a TFO was issued. And it was deemed that it's not for the ABC Board to go behind the TFO
and determine those issues.
There may be issues there, but they're not the province of this particular board or agency.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy?
MR. BADAWY: The issue of litter goes to the appropriateness standard. And I know we've heard testimony about litter tonight from both sides and, you know, the impact it has. This addresses that issue.

In fact, Mr. Hankins himself said where am I supposed to store it? And it's clear that the City of D.C. has told him he has to store it behind 600 T. And he's not doing that.

Again, the issue of litter goes to appropriate.

Also, this goes to whether or not the Applicant is willing to follow the rules and regulations that he has committed to following.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm going to sustain the objection. I agree with -- I mean, one of the things that we cleared up that we could stay in our lane, but I'm not even sure this is any longer relevant.

I thought Mr. Lawrence testified that
this, this space is no longer, I guess -- I thought his testimony was that since COVID, since the onset of COVID that this space is no longer available for garbage to be stored.

So, I thought, that's what I thought I heard. But at this juncture I'm not going -I'm going to sustain the objection.

I mean, you can testify about -- if you want to testify about the trash as you have done, but I think I'm going to sustain the objection.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Chair
We offer Exhibit $N$ into evidence.
That's the photographs of the solid waste.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kline?
MR. KLINE: I don't have any objection to this coming in.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Without objection.
(Whereupon, the above-referred to document was received in evidence as Government Exhibit $N$ for identification, .)

BY MR. BADAWY:
Q Mr. Kujawa, I'm going to ask you about the waste. Have you, have you noticed an
increase in the number of rodents in the area of your home and El Techo since the establishment began storing its waste in the alley?

A Yes. Certainly in the last year-and-a-half the visible rodent population has increased. There have been vehicle owners who have been in my building whose vehicles have had, you know, things chewed out of their vehicles in the inch department.

It's I see rats in the alley more often in the vicinity of the trash, crawling in and out of it, as well as down the alley right here past my windows outside.

There are multiple new rat burrows that have emerged in the planters of Duke Ellington Plaza, which is to the northwest exit of the end of the alley. And just last week we called rodent control. There's a new rat burrow in the tree box literally in front of Rito Loco's front door within the last two weeks.

Q Mr. Kujawa, I want to go back now, just a few questions about, about the music.

You were present for Investigator Puente's testimony; correct?

A Yes, I was.

Q Okay. I believe you heard him testify about the investigative history of the establishment; correct?

A Yes.
Q Let me ask you, do you recall, I believe you heard him testify that there were 17 charges secondary tier violations of failure to follow settlement agreement. Is that correct?

A I think it was 17 secondary tier viola -- or charges in general. But six of them were for violation of the settlement agreement.

Q Okay. And you've heard, I think, repeated testimony that there were two substantiated complaints of noise, both in November, most from El Techo inside a residence in November and December of 2021; correct?

A I did.
Q And on those dates are those the only, those two dates where there were substantiated complaints, are those the only two days when you've been able to hear El Techo's music in your residence?

A No, not by a long shot. Like I said, we, we call often when we hear it. Usually they say when they're able they will go out to El

Techo.
But there's been a number of occasions where they just don't even go to El Techo because they say they don't have the staff at the time, or it's a, it's a particularly busy night elsewhere in the city.

So, no, I do not believe that the two substantiated violations in the record are an accurate reflection of how often music can be heard in people's residences, even in the last year during which those 45 complaints that Investigator Puente testified to have been lodged.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Kujawa. I have no further questions for you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kline.
MR. KLINE: Just a couple.
CROSS-EXAMINATION
BY MR. KLINE:
Q So, is it your testimony that you offered to allow representatives of the establishment into your apartment to check the noise level?

A Yes.
Q And is it your testimony that they
refused to do so or would not, would not do so?
A No. My testimony was that we invited them in and their recommendation, both to me and another unit owner of the building, was to put sound insulating materials on the inside of our walls inside our property.

Q Wasn't there also an agency
investigator in your, in your apartment, in your home at one point?

A We have had them here, yes.
Q And haven't they told you that they believed the noise was coming from 600 T Street and not from Rico Loco/El Techo?

A I believe on one occasion they may have done so. But it's very clear --

Q They may have done so?
A It's very clear from my residence when the noise I can hear is coming from 600 T, because 600 T doesn't have the loudspeakers. Most of the sound I can hear from 600 T is from the unauthorized rear summer garden with their concrete floor, brick building, metal gate.

Q Well, when you called the investigator out and you voiced the opinion that it was coming from 600 T, it was your impression that it was
coming from Rito Loco-El Techo; correct?
A Yes. At the time we made the call it most certainly was.

Q Okay. So, you can't really say, you don't really know when you hear noise as to whether it's coming from this establishment or from some other source; isn't that true?

A No. I would say that's not true because the sound from El Techo has been coming for five years and I know what it sounds like. And from 600 T, that rear summer garden has not been there anywhere near as long. So, I can easily make the distinction of what I'm hearing, when.

Q Is it your testimony that it's no different today than it was a year ago? Is that what I'm hearing you say?

A I do not believe I said that, no.
Q Okay. Well, let's explore that.
So, there has indeed been improvement in 22, hasn't there?

MR. BADAWY: Object to the form of the question. What improvement is he, is Mr. Kline talking about?

MR. KLINE: Sure enough.

BY MR. KLINE:
Q The issues with respect to noise have been less frequent and less of a problem in 22 than they were prior to 22. Isn't that correct?

A Two thousand twenty -- Yes, it is. Because 2021 had significant higher number of DJ performance, as you can see from the advertisements and from the, from the calendar representation of the dates when DJs perform.

So, from a numerical point of view, yes, it has gotten better because it has been less frequent. But it doesn't have to change the nature of the problem.

Q Have you been here for the whole hearing?

A Yes.
Q And you, you heard the testimony concerning the previous use of promoters; did you hear that testimony?

A Yes.
Q Is it your contention that that wasn't really, that that's not what the issue was, that the use of promoters exacerbated the problems with noise?

A Well, I believe you're conflating the
use of promoters with the actual presence of DJs. And DJs have been there for months after when the -- it was stated that the relationship with the promoters had ceased. You can see from the DJ advertisement they went on well past December, when I believe Mr. Hankins said he severed that relationship.

Q He said he severed the relationship with the promoter. Isn't that what he said?

A It is. And what I'm trying to clarify is that even after that you can see from the advertisements that you can see from the advertisements that DJs were featured for months beyond that, into the summer of 2022.

Q Do you not know the difference between a DJ and a promoter?

MR. BADAWY: Objection; argumentative.
MR. KLINE: Fair question based upon where we are.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay. I'm going to overrule the objection. If he can answer the question, answer it. If not, let's move on.

Are you -- Can you answer the question, sir?

MR. KLINE: I'll withdraw it and
rephrase it.
BY MR. KLINE:
Q Is it your position that the use of a DJ is the same thing as the use of a promoter?

A No. That's not what I'm saying.
I'm saying that just because the use of the promoter ceased at a particular date, the use of DJs did not, at least not in a way that can be in accordance with prior testimony.

I believe I heard, since that's what you're asking about, that they stopped using the promoter on such and such a date. And, yet, there's evidence that they featured or advertised for DJs beyond the date that the promoters, as you say it, were not used anymore.

Q Well, let me go back to my original question.

Isn't it true that since last year, meaning 21, December of 21 , that the issues with noise have, have lessened, even on Friday and Saturday nights? Isn't that a true fact?

A The frequency with which DJs have performed has lessened, yes.

Q That wasn't my question. My question was DJs have been there almost every Friday and

Saturday night in 2022, correct, according to your calendar, with the exception of March?

A I would have to look at it again. It's not in front of me. But there, there has not been DJs every weekend in 2022. They were much more frequent in 2021. So, I'm --

Q Well, you need to look at your calendar to be refreshed about that with respect to this issue that's so intrusive on your life that you need to look at your calendar?

MR. BADAWY: I'm going to object to this. This is an argumentative question. What is, what is counsel's question here?

MR. KLINE: That he needs to look at his calendar to figure out when he was bothered, and is unaware as to what's gone on in the last year. And contends that the issues continue despite ample testimony to the contrary.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm going to overrule the -- I'm going to overrule the objection.

## If the witness can answer the

 question, he may answer the question. Then let's move on.THE WITNESS: Unfortunately, I think I'm just unclear on what you're trying to get at, Mr. Kline.

There have been fewer DJs performing in 2022. That does not mean that when DJs have performed the noise has been any less.

So, if that's what you're trying to clarify, I, I can still hear the DJs perform when they are there. They have been there less frequently, but when they are there it's audible.

BY MR. KLINE:
Q So, your contention is when the DJs are there it's been no different in 22 than it was in 21 when DJs were there?

MR. BADAWY: Object to the form of the question. I think there's several questions in that question.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Rephrase your question, Mr. Kline.

BY MR. KLINE:
Q Is it your contention that when a DJ is present on the premises that it's been no different in 22 than it was in 21?

A Sorry. Could you repeat that? I just want to make sure I answer it clearly.

Q I'm just trying to understand. The prior testimony was that one of the issues, or a major issue was the use of an outside promoter, the use of an outside sound system that was brought in that had larger speakers. It was an issue, you heard Mr. Hankins testify about it. You heard Mr. Adams say I wouldn't even have been involved in that, we're not doing it anymore.

And I just want to understand, is it your contention it doesn't make any difference, that wasn't, that wasn't the issue? Everything's exactly the way it is now in 22 on the nights that they have a DJ as it was in 21?

A I can still hear it.
Q Seems to be dodging my question, but I'll move on.

MR. BADAWY: Objection. Move to strike the last part of that.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: There is no question. Let's go ahead, Mr. -- go ahead, Mr. Kline.

MR. KLINE: All right.
BY MR. KLINE: If I may be given permission to share.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I don't believe it has been taken away Mr. Kujawa. MR. KLINE: Okay. BY MR. KLINE:

Q All right. In front of you is Exhibit E, which you testified about, which you contend is a 400 foot radius around Rito Loco-El Techo; correct?

A Yes.
Q And it's your contention that almost everything within the circle is residential? Was that your testimony?

A I believe I -- No, sir. I believe I was referring to Exhibit F when I made that statement.

Q Oh. So, not Exhibit E.
So, Exhibit E indeed contains a number of licensed establishments, doesn't it?

A It contains a few, yes.
Q And in fact, Flash on the edge of the circle where my cursor is pointed, isn't it?

A I don't know where exactly where Flash is. I know it's in that 600 block of Florida Avenue near 7th Street. So, perhaps.

Q And Shaw's Tavern is over here across

6th Street?
A That is correct.
Q All right. And there's another establishment next door?

A I don't believe so, no. Next door to what? Perhaps I misunderstood the question.

Q A couple doors down from Shaw's Tavern on Florida Avenue.

A No.
Q Now, so, you testified that you've attempted to work with the establishment. Is that your testimony?

A I testified that I had invited them into my home, their sound engineers, yes.

Q Okay. You testified that you contacted ABRA 15 to 20 times in the last year to register complaints about noise; correct?

A I don't believe I said in the last year. I think the question that I answered was in the last three years. But I may be mistaken.

Q I'm looking at my notes. I think what you said was the last year-and-a-half. And I misspoke. I apologize.

Is that, do you think in the last year-and-a-half?

You tell me, how many times did you complain in the last year-and-a-half do you think?

A Using both the online form and phone calls to the hotline, yeah, I'd still say that's a fair estimate in the last year-and-a-half.

Q And how many times did you reach out to your neighbor to discuss issues related to noise?

MR. BADAWY: Objection; relevance.
Which neighbor are you talking about?
MR. KLINE: Talking about Rito Loco, the owners of Rito Loco/El Techo, going up 7th Street.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'll give you a chance to ask the question, sir. Can you rephrase the question. I don't know if there's still an objection, but the question was rephrased.

MR. KLINE: I'll rephrase it.
BY MR. KLINE:
Q So, you reached out to ABRA maybe 15, 20 times. How many times did you reach out to the owners, or managers, or operators of Rito Techo -- I'm sorry, Rito Loco-El Techo concerning
noise issues at the establishment?
A Personally I have not.
Q You have not.
MR. KLINE: No further questions.
THE WITNESS: Simply because I --
MR. KLINE: There's nothing pending.
Thank you. You answered my question.
I have nothing further.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any questions by any board members?

MR. BADAWY: Sure.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I'm sorry, Mr.
Badawy.
Is there, is there any?
MR. BADAWY: I apologize. I'll await for my turn to do redirect, Your Honor. I apologize.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Oh, you're going to get your chance. Now is the Board's opportunity to ask questions.

MR. BADAWY: Apologies.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, Mr. Short.

MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Kujawa, how many years have you lived at your residence?

THE WITNESS: Seventeen, with the exception of a 15 -month period when I was overseas deployed.

MEMBER SHORT: Seventeen years.
So, would it be fair to say you were there long before this rooftop business opened?

THE WITNESS: Yes. I've been here long before even Rito Loco, the original taco, burrito restaurant opened. Before Shaw's Tavern, before Flash, before Right Proper, before the Howard Theater was refurbished. Yes.

MEMBER SHORT: So, the problem we, some board members have is they say people move into your area where these businesses have already been. So, your wall is now adjacent to where your rooftop. Before that time was it -- how was it before this licensee came in two, three years ago?

THE WITNESS: In terms of noise it was just the standard sounds of the city, the sirens that were referred to, and the traffic on Florida Avenue. But other than that it was not objectionable whatsoever.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. So, we've established you were there when this business
opened.
THE WITNESS: Yes.
MEMBER SHORT: So, it comes to, it comes to basically were you a part of the ANC or the neighborhood when this business first opens, when this application for this business was first applied for? Were you a part, were you a part of the community's efforts?

THE WITNESS: When the license was first applied for in 2014, when Mr. Hankins opened the ground floor, there was no objection to it.

When he sought the substantial change and sought the ANC's support in 2017 to add the roof garden on, you know, to build the roof garden and add it up, yes, there was community objection to it at that point.

Weren't as familiar with the AN -sorry, the ABRA rules and processes and procedures at that time. But, yes, to answer your question.

MEMBER SHORT: So, as a part of all of that, if I'm understanding the testimony we've had today, there was a, there was an agreement between the community and the, and the Applicant
for the rooftop regarding hours and other issues. Is that correct?

THE WITNESS: There is an agreement now. But that agreement was reached as a result of the withdrawal of a protest at the time of their last renewal in 2019 because the issues that had been experienced by the neighborhood from the time they opened in 2017 with the roof garden, based on the approval of the significant change to their license, until their regular 3-year renewal period in 2019.

So, we worked with the community -sorry, worked with the establishment three years ago. There, there was -- my point I'm making is there were so many noise issues prior to the last renewal that there was a protest in progress at that time, but the neighborhood, working with the establishment, agreed to withdraw its protest and entered into the settlement agreement, which is the one you saw in the Investigator Puente report.

MEMBER SHORT: So, can you again just refresh me or refresh us, the Board. The settlement agreement, what hours were on it?

THE WITNESS: I don't know the hours on
the settlement agreement by heart. It does refer to the hours in which the polycarbonate panels need to be in place by a particular time of night, based on the day of the week. But $I$ don't recall if it refers to the actual hours that entertainment is allowed, and if that is different from what is in the basic license. MEMBER SHORT: Okay. Now, your residence is in the rear. Are you familiar with Wiltberger Place, or Wiltberger Street?

THE WITNESS: Yes. A block on it, it is about half a block to the west and it goes down along north/south street on the east side of Howard Theater all the way down to S Street from Florida Avenue -- or from T Street, excuse me.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. Now, this goes to the pictures that were just put into evidence regarding the overflowing trash containers. How often does that happen?

THE WITNESS: How often are they overflowing?

MEMBER SHORT: Yes.
THE WITNESS: I walk the dog pretty
much every day and you can -- it's the only reason $I$ would be out at the time stamps you see
on the photos. I would say it's a couple times a week. It's not uncommon. Particularly on Saturday morning and Sunday morning when there's been a lot of business on Friday night and --

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. That's good. That's already on the record.

But now, are you aware that that is a violation of the $A B C$ Board or the ABRA Code Book that if you have trash cans and you're doing that, those trash cans have to be -- lids have to be solidly down, they can't be overflowing? Are you familiar with that?

THE WITNESS: I'm not familiar if it specifically refers to conditions of the lids. But I know that the appropriateness standards includes provisions of litter so that it's not a fire hazard, it's not a nuisance, and it doesn't harbor the breeding or feeding of rodents.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. And, again, the exhibits that you had about DJs and advertisements, in one of those there was they're advertising as a bar. As far as you know, is this establishment a bar?

THE WITNESS: Not in terms of its licensure, no, because it has a CR not a CT
license. They, I mean, you heard the owner testify that there is a bar on the second level, so.

MEMBER SHORT: Okay. You've been very, very candid. And thank you for your, for your testimony today. And thank you for your time.

That's all I have, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much. That's all I have, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any other questions by any of the board members?

I do want to ask, I want to ask you a question, Mr. Kujawa, regarding the trash.

It's my understanding, and maybe I'm confused, that two establishments and some residents store trash in that alley. So, I saw there are pictures. How do you know that the trash belongs to this establishment?

THE WITNESS: The trash barrels in my photos are directly to the west of 600 T Street. And it's been testified to that those 12 bins are five of them belong to El Techo, two of them belong to Mr. Lawrence's residence, and three of them belong to Quattro Osteria. Because of their geography they don't have any other place to, to keep it.

As far as the trash barrels for the rest of the residents along the 1800 block of 6 th Street, their trash bins are only in the alley on the days that it is scheduled to be picked up, picked up by the Department of Public Works. The rest of the time there are rear yards to all the homes on this street, and they have gates that open up to the alley where they take their trash barrels in and out.

It's only the trash barrels at the north end of the alley, the 12 or so that are pictured, that are in the alley on a permanent basis in the public space.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And so you're saying, though, so are all those trash cans do they belong to this establishment?

THE WITNESS: Yes. Well, they belong to this establishment and the other properties on either side for which Mr. Steven Lawrence is the landlord.

Quattro Osteria on the corner, which is also operated by Mr. Hankins. And then Steven Lawrence himself, who lives in the adjacent rowhouse. And his establish -- and his licensed establishment, 600 T.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So, so you're saying then these trash cans could belong to 600 T, Rito Loco, and Osteria -- I'm sorry, the third licensee; is that correct?

MR. KUJAWA: Yes. I believe one of the Applicant's witnesses testified that the 12 trash cans do belong to those three establishments collectively. And that Mr. Hankins is actually paying the trash bill for it.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Mr. Kline.

FURTHER CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. KLINE:

Q Mr. Kujawa, wasn't there also testimony that those trash cans service residences along that row as well?

A That's -- the ones that are -- Are you referring to the ones in my photos that are immediately adjacent?

Q Yes. Aren't those the same ones that were in the investigator's photo?

A Don't remember the investigator's photo. But the trash barrels in -- the only residents that I'm aware of that those trash barrels service is Mr. Lawrence's residence,
which is 600 T Street where he has a licensed establishment in his basement.

MR. KLINE: Nothing further.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy.
REDIRECT EXAMINATION
BY MR. BADAWY:
Q Mr. Kujawa, you were asked on cross-examination if you had reached out to El Techo. And you said no.

Can you tell the Board why you haven't reached out to El Techo about the loud music that you could hear inside your place?

A As has been stated, I've lived here for a long time. It's been a known issue for a long time. And I'm in communication with plenty of other people that have communicated with Mr. Hankins.

Given that I live immediately adjacent to the building and I don't want to sour any relationship that $I$ might have to live with on a permanent basis, $I$ have left the communication with Mr. Hankins to the numerous other people that have complained about this issue and have attempted to work with him as well.

Q And just to be clear, Mr. Kujawa,
since you've heard testimony that there have been numerous changes since 2021 of promoters, sound systems, are you still able to hear music from El Techo inside your residence?

A Yes. We've heard it even just recently.

Q And I think there was some talk about Shaw's Tavern being across the street. Have you ever, you know, heard loud music coming from Shaw's Tavern inside your residence?

A No.
Q Okay. I believe further down the street is The Royal, which is a restaurant. Are you familiar with The Royal?

A Yes. It's at the corner of Florida Avenue and 5th Street.

Q And have you ever heard loud music or noise coming from The Royal inside your residence?

A No.
MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Kujawa. I have no further questions.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Kujawa, for your testimony today. Have a great day.

THE WITNESS: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Thank you, members of the Board.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Call your next witness, Mr. Badawy.

MR. BADAWY: The Protestants called Jonathan Horsford. Mr. Horsford.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: There's Mr. Horsford online.

Mr. Horsford, can you raise your right hand, please.
(Witness sworn.)
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Your witness, sir. Thank you.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you. DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. BADAWY:
Q Mr. Horsford, can you please state and spell your full name?

A Certainly. Jonathan Horsford, J-O-N-A-T-H-A-N H-O-R-S-F-O-R-D.

Q And, Mr. Horsford, where do you live?
A I live at 531 T Street, N.W., Unit 101.
six years.
Q And 531 T Street, N.W., Unit No. 1, do you live in an apartment or a condominium?

A It's a condominium complex. It's one of the old mansions that they renovated and put an extension on. And so there are 11 units over two floors.

Q Okay. And do you know whether or not 531 T Street, your unit in particular, is located in a residential zone?

A It is in a residential zone. I believe it's RF-1.

Q Okay. And can you describe the neighborhood that you live in?

A So, we are north of Florida. It's actually in LeDroit Park. So, it's primarily residential. There are no businesses on 6th Street or T Street nearby me.

Of course, on Florida, as we just discussed, it is multi-use, so there are certainly restaurants and other businesses on Florida. And then, you know, just south of Florida going down 6th Street is mostly residential once you get past Shaw's Tavern and Quattro.

Q And, again, Mr. Horsford, I don't know if I asked you this already, how long have you been in your unit?

A Six years.
Q And where did you live before that?
A I lived in Woodley Park.
Q Mr. Horsford, are you familiar with an establishment by the name of El Techo?

A I am.
Q And can you tell me where your home is in relation to El Techo

A So, I'm basically diagonal from El Techo. So, where 6th, T, and Florida meet there's almost like a little courtyard space. And our building is at the corner of 6th and T, kind of facing Florida and facing El Techo.

I live, actually, in the corner unit that is most close to 6th and T , so most close to El Techo. And I am on the first floor.

Q Mr. Horsford, I'm going to show you what's marked as Protestant's Exhibit E.

A Right.
Q Do you see that right there?
A Yep.
Q On this map can you show where your
residence is in relation to El Techo?
A So, you are, you're going to move the cursor for me?

Q Yes. So, this is --
A Yes, yes.
Q -- El Techo over here.
A Yes. The big, the fairly large square building up, up and to the right, that building right there. Yeah.

So, if you move your cursor just down a little bit to the left and bottom, that corner right there is my unit. So, it basically faces El Techo through that gap where the LeDroit Park arch is.

Q Mr. Horsford, in the past three years have you been able to hear music from El Techo inside your residence?

A Yes.
Q And can you tell the members of the Board, in that period approximately how many times you've been able to hear music from El Techo inside your residence?

A Well, as has been discussed, you know, most weekends we can hear the music, either Friday, Saturday, or Sunday. You know, I, I am
-- I have lived here the whole time, I have not lived anywhere else. So, if you think about three years, and I can hear it almost every weekend at least once or twice, so we're talking between, you know, 100 or 150 times.

Q And can you for the members of the Board can you describe what that music sounds like when you hear it inside your residence?

A So, as has been discussed, I hear not only the music inside with the doors and windows closed, but I also -- it's also the type of music. Because it's a trance type music the beat is very strong. It, it's very low, so it has this feature almost kind of vibratory within my unit.

Q Okay. Let me ask you, how is that music that you hear from El Techo inside the residence different from, say, you know, ambient street noise, sirens, and cars, honking horns, those kind of things?

A Yeah. You know, obviously we live off Florida so there's a lot of ambient street noise. 6th and T and Florida is a very busy intersection, especially with the construction, so there's often a lot of noise.

I want to be clear that the noise I hear is from El Techo, because I can walk out of my unit, walk over across the street to El Techo, and it's the exact same music. So, to be absolutely clear, this music is not coming from any other establishment because I can tell it is the same music.

Q And again, when you hear that music inside your residence, how has that affected your ability to enjoy your home?

A So, the corner that faces El Techo is my bedroom. So, it is very loud in the evening. I am the kind of person that goes to bed early. So, it is very challenging to sleep when the music is on and very loud.

I try and drown it out with some kind of sleep machine, but it still doesn't work.

In addition, you know, since the music starts, can start quite early on a weekend, if I want to have a quiet afternoon reading in my unit, I'm unable to do so unless I turn up some type of music or something to drown it out because otherwise I'm kind of sitting here listening to the music coming from the establishment.

Q And when the music is coming from the establishment are you able -- do you keep your doors and windows open or closed?

A No, they're always closed.
Q Mr. Horsford, when you've heard music from El Techo inside your home have you reached out to ABRA investigators?

A Yes. So, I have actually let everyone know that I was part of the original settlement agreement.

So, you know, in 2020 when we were developing the settlement agreement I went over. I've been to El Techo. I have talked to Mr. Hawkins with another, a number of other residents. We worked to try and come up with that settlement agreement.

So, we did a lot of outreach in 2020 before that happened.

Apart from that, I have also called ABRA a number of times, left voicemail, done the online, talked to people in person. In fact, even about, about a month ago I did a 311 call to, to comment on the noise. So, it's something that I've done a lot of.

Q When you have talked a little bit
about your contact with El Techo, do you recall exactly when that was, or roughly? Let me rephrase that.

A So, the settlement agreement was filed and signed in January of 2020. So, it was the fall of 2019. And a number of residents met with Mr. Hawkins to try to work out ways to work on the noise.

There were other -- there was certainly somebody from, from the nightlife, D.C. nightlife. I know some ANC commissioners, the previous ANC, at least one was involved.

So, there were a number of discussions, a lot of back and forth in negotiation to try and come up with a settlement agreement. And that is where now we have -- as part of the settlement agreement we had those, those plastic panels put up with specific times.

And I have written down the times. So, the settlement agreement says the panels must go up Monday through Thursday at 10:30 p.m. They must go up Friday and Saturday at midnight. And they must go up Sunday at 9:00 p.m.

Q And, Mr. Horsford, have you -- you've heard testimony today about a lot of steps and
changes that have taken place at El Techo; is that correct?

A Yes.
Q Have you -- Let me ask this question: you know, you talked about engagement with ABRA. You talked about engagement with El Techo. Heard testimony about changes. What is role -- what has the result of all that been --

A Right.
Q -- as far as your ability to hear music in your house coming from El Techo?

A I, I have, I have seen a very marginal improvement over the time since the settlement agreement. I cannot comment on the DJs. I cannot comment on the, you know, the promoters. That is not my area of expertise. All I can tell you is what I experience.

And what I experience is a very similar frequency and a very similar level of noise. Regardless of improvement, it is still incredibly disruptive to my life.

Though I don't know what a percent might be of an improvement, I can certainly say that it, it has not been a dramatic improvement, and it has not improved the quality of my
experience.
I have also tried to do other things. So, I have gone and photographed El Techo after the required time that the panels have gone up. And I have filed at least one violation where the panels weren't up in a timely manner on a Sunday evening.

So, I've also tried to do other things, I think, to try and mitigate the issue because I have not found that, I have not found that engagement previous to the settlement agreement was very successful.

Q Okay. And, Mr. Horsford, last question.

Are you still, at this point are you willing to continue working with El Techo about the noise that you hear in your unit?

A I really felt like in, in 2020 when I had been here for a few years that I really wanted to work with them. All of us residents wanted to work with them. That's why we had the ANC.

You know, we, we went to the ABRA Board. We did negotiation. We did the settlement agreement. And then I do not feel
like the settlement agreement really has improved very much.

I cannot comment on all the changes that have been made. I'm not a sound engineer. But I can certainly say from my experience it has not been very productive. So, I don't think that further engagement is a very productive way.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr. Horsford. I have no further questions.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kline.
CROSS-EXAMINATION
BY MR. KLINE:
Q You were here for the testimony of Mr. Beam?

A Yes.
Q And you acknowledge his credentials as a sound engineer?

A Yes.
Q And you don't see any reason to work with the establishment in implementing a program that he might develop to mitigate noise?

A I, I, no, I do not. Because as was said, the consultant can say whatever he would like. He can make recommendations. But Mr. Hawkins would have to invest the money and make
the changes. And I feel that, given my experience with the settlement agreement, I don't feel that necessarily he's going to do that.

Q And you heard Mr. Beam testify that when those with whom he works take his recommendation the issues are resolved? Did you hear that testimony?

A Yes.
Q And it's your position that you don't believe, despite the testimony of Mr. Beam, that owner committed, and despite the testimony of the two owners that they would commit to do what he recommended, you, you don't believe that's going to happen?

A I can only go on past experience. In six years we've had a lot of conversations. We've made a lot of complaints. We've tried to make changes. We've had a settlement agreement. We had a negotiation.

So, if past evidence demonstrates the future, then that is, that is my experience.

Q How many times have you called ABRA with complaints?

A Pardon me?
Q How many times have you called ABRA
with complaints?
A In what time frame?
Q The last year-and-a-half?
A I would say, oh, probably about five to seven times.

MR. KLINE: Thank you. I have no further questions.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any questions from any board members?

MEMBER GRANDIS: May I?
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Grandis.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Thank you.
Mr. Horsford, thank you for your patience today. It's been a long day for all of us.

THE WITNESS: Yes.
MEMBER GRANDIS: I moved here in 1976.
And I moved on Cathedral Avenue.
THE WITNESS: Uh-huh.
MEMBER GRANDIS: A few blocks from Connecticut.

I think I heard you say you were in Cleveland Park? Did I hear that?

MEMBER GRANDIS: Yes, off of what street?

MR. HORSFORD: I was at the corner of 29th and Calvert.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Nice area. I decided that $I$ wanted to move down into, closer to the city, Dupont Circle specifically, but I had already been having some experience down there. You had no experience with Shaw and that area before you purchased where you did? Because this is not accusatory. I'm just trying to --

MR. HORSFORD: Yeah.
MEMBER GRANDIS: -- understand what you thought you were moving into.

MR. HORSFORD: No, as a member of the LGBT community, I'm very familiar with Shaw. I'm very familiar with Dupont. I've been in this neighborhood many, many times. I've been to many bars and restaurants.

And when I moved here, I moved here purposefully because I wanted a vibrant neighborhood. I wanted the streets to be safe at 1:00 in the morning so $I$ could come home from a bar because there were other people around, right?

MEMBER GRANDIS: Yes.
MR. HORSFORD: I go to Uproar. I've
been to Shaw's Tavern. You know, I think these establishments fit, you know, fit within the nature of the area they're in, you know.

They have a restaurant. They have a patio. They might have some music, you know, and I'm very comfortable with kind of the noise level and the engagement of all of those establishments.

I have found that this establishment stands out in terms of the level of noise that really does, is very different than any of the other establishments I've experienced.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Have you ever eaten at this establishment?

MR. HORSFORD: No, I have not.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Have you ever had cocktails or taken friends there and hung out?

MR. HORSFORD: The only time $I$ have been in this establishment is previous to the settlement agreement when $I$ did go up there to talk to Mr. Hankins, and we talked, you know, got a tour and looked at the speakers and things like that. That's the only time I've been there.

MEMBER GRANDIS: So, I have a better idea about where the noise problem is. You know,
we've had exhibits showing different parts of the building.

From your knowledge, and you may not be so specific because, while you live close, you don't live right on it, do you perceive that the noise is related to the deejay, which I understand is on the rooftop in the summer garden, or is the noise general throughout the building when people just go in, stand out in front, whatever? What's your sense?

MR. HORSFORD: Oh, so you mean the noise coming from El Techo?

MEMBER GRANDIS: Yes.
MR. HORSFORD: I mean, I think there's an appropriate, you know, a comfortable level of hubbub, so, you know, people in line, you know, hearing people, you know, leaving.

You know, it's a busy neighborhood. People are out late at night. I hear voices, you know, so that's a very expected part of the neighborhood. It's really the music, and again, it's much more of the type of music, the trance.

You know, I don't know exactly their business model, but I do know sometimes it seems to start early on a Sunday afternoon, perhaps
part of brunch, you know, so then it really can be kind of a long Sunday if it's starting in the afternoon and going until 9:00 or 10:00 at night.

MEMBER GRANDIS: So, as I understand for you, and not speaking for the others, that it's the music, which I understand from the hearing today, because I have not been to this establishment either, it's basically from the roof garden if I understand correctly.

MR. HORSFORD: Yes.
MEMBER GRANDIS: It's not from the entrance when you walk in.

MR. HORSFORD: No.
MEMBER GRANDIS: So, you're asking the Board to be cognizant and concerned about that voluntary agreement or the settlement agreement back in 2020 when it comes to the music side of the equation. That's what you feel has not been lived up to. And I'm not trying to put words in your mouth. I'm just trying to understand --

MR. HORSFORD: Yes.
MEMBER GRANDIS: -- you know, what we need to focus on.

MR. HORSFORD: Yeah, from my experience, it really is the music. And again, I
am not an expert. I have not done the work that others have of looking at the type of music, or the deejays, or who is playing, but I can certainly say from my experience, it is the music. It is usually on the weekends. It goes late, you know, but even sometimes on weekdays, you know, sometimes I'll hear it.

MEMBER GRANDIS: I also looked at the exhibit that you had us look at where your building is located.

MR. HORSFORD: Yeah.
MEMBER GRANDIS: And it seemed to be, compared to some other residents, it seemed to be closer to Uproar and Flash --

MR. HORSFORD: Yeah.
MEMBER GRANDIS: -- if $I$ can say it that way. Okay, they both also have rooftops, and you and I probably have been at Uproar when they've had actually a deejay on their roof.

MR. HORSFORD: Mm-hmm.
MEMBER GRANDIS: So, do you feel that you may be hearing some of that noise, you know, and relating it to this place, or do you really think you can discern the deejay from one building on a roof deck from another? Once
again, I'm not trying to corner you. I'm just trying to understand how --

MR. HORSFORD: Yeah.
MEMBER GRANDIS: -- we can address your concern, the concerns that have been raised.

MR. HORSFORD: So, my experience has been that the geography is, and again, I'm not a sound engineer, but the geography is such that there's a bit of a space and the music comes over from El Techo, and I feel like it kind of actually hits some of the buildings around here and I find it surprisingly loud.

Now, Uproar, even though it might be closer, there's a lot of buildings in between, so I have never heard Uproar music. Whenever I hear music, I can go out on my porch or I can walk across the street. It's very clearly El Techo.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Okay, well, you've been very helpful, and of course, we want the business to thrive, but we also want them to thrive in a way that it's not violating any of the noise provisions and the comfort that you're entitled to enjoy, so thank you.

MR. HORSFORD: Thank you.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Thank you, Mr.

Chairman.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any other questions by any other Board members? I guess one of the questions I want to ask you, Mr. Horsford, you talked about the settlement agreement.

MR. HORSFORD: Yes.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And you talked about that there were some panels. Where did that come from?

MR. HORSFORD: So, in my memory, when we talked with Mr. Hankins about potential mitigation strategies for the noise, we talked about changing the speakers and how they were oriented, and not facing Florida and kind of facing different directions.

And then we knew that -- you know, we had as an example Flash and Uproar, which both have some type of paneling on their rooftop decks.

So, we discussed potentially this as a noise mitigation strategy where the panels might help alleviate the noise, and then we got into the question of when do they go up? And so, that's where the settlement agreement had very
specific times that they go up only later in the evenings.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And so, are you saying that he has not complied with the settlement agreement as far as the panels and putting them up or what are you saying?

MR. HORSFORD: So, I'm saying that first of all, the panel, during the summer, the panels are not up. They only -- there may be some permanent panels, but then the moveable panels are not up in the summer until midnight on Friday and Saturday, so that means that they're not really serving a lot of noise mitigation until midnight on a Friday or Saturday and then they do go up.

And the panels do have a slight improvement in the noise. Again, I am not a sound engineer. I don't know if there would be different ways to do it. I did hear in the testimony that it sounded like a lot of this at the beginning was kind of put together, you know, without sound engineers. Again, I can't comment on any of that.

All I can say is the panels help a little bit when they're up, but the vast majority
of the time, especially, again, when the weather is good and you put a -- you know, the panels aren't up for very long in the winter, so most of the time, the panels are down, so therefore, it's the full noise.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, thank you. Any other questions by any other Board members? Mr. Kline?

MR. KLINE: No, I have no further questions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy?
MR. BADAWY: No questions. Thank you.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Horsford, thank you very much for your testimony.

MR. HORSFORD: Thank you. Have a good night, everybody.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Have a great day. Thank you. Do you have another witness, sir?

MR. BADAWY: The protestants call Paul Baranowski.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Baranowski, all right, there you are. Is that you?

MR. BARANOWSKI: Yes.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Can you raise
your right hand, sir?
MR. BARANOWSKI: Yes.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth and nothing but the truth?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I do.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Your witness, sir.

MR. BADAWY: Good evening, Mr.
Baranowski.
MR. BARANOWSKI: Good evening.
MR. BADAWY: Mr. Baranowski, can you please state and spell your full name for the record?

MR. BARANOWSKI: Yes, it's Paul, last name is $B-A-R-A-N-O-W-S-K-I$.

MR. BADAWY: And Mr. Baranowski, where do you live? Can you hear me, Mr. Baranowski?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I think he's frozen since his -- yeah, yeah, he was frozen, so let's wait for him. Okay, are you there, sir?

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Baranowski, can you hear us?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, he's moving, but --

MR. BARANOWSKI: Yes, I'm back and we're back here. I'm not sure what's happening with the connection. I'm sorry.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay, go ahead.
MR. BADAWY: Okay, Mr. Baranowski, where do you live?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I live at 1911 6th Street, NW.

MR. BADAWY: And what kind of place do you live at? Is it a single family home? Is it a condo? What's it like?

MR. BARANOWSKI: It is a two-unit condo building.

MR. BADAWY: And where do you live in that two-unit condo building?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I live in the upper floors.

MR. BADAWY: And do you know whether or not your residence is located in a residential zone?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I believe it is, yes.
MR. BADAWY: And Mr. Baranowski, how long have you lived there for?

MR. BARANOWSKI: It will be 18 years in February.

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Baranowski, can you describe the neighborhood that you live in?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I would characterize 6th Street as an historic, tree-lined street, relatively quiet, but walkable and accessible to the community for whatever you might like to have, an evening or life in general.

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Baranowski, are you familiar with an establishment known as El Techo?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I am.
MR. BADAWY: And can you tell the members of the Board where your home is in relation to El Techo?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I would estimate that it's approximately a 300-foot radius diagonally to the northeast.

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Baranowski, I'm going to, if you can see on your screen there, I'm showing you what's marked as Protestants' Exhibit E.

MR. BARANOWSKI: Yes.
MR. BADAWY: Looking at this map, can you tell us where your home is in relation to El Techo, El Techo being in blue here?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I am the first home
to the north of where the previous protestant testified, so right where your cursor is here, yes.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr.
Baranowski. Mr. Baranowski, in the past three years, have you been able to hear music from El Techo inside your residence?

MR. BARANOWSKI: Yes.
MR. BADAWY: And are you able to say approximately how many times you've been able to hear music from El Techo inside your residence? Mr. Baranowski, can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: We've lost him.
MR. BADAWY: Mr. Baranowski, can you hear me?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I can now. I'm sorry. I don't know what's happening with the connection. I'm sitting in one spot.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Baranowski, do me a favor. Turn your video off.

MR. BARANOWSKI: Okay.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And maybe that will help. Okay, not that I don't want to see you, but I think it will help.

MR. BARANOWSKI: I can do that.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, I think it will help if your video is off. Okay, go ahead.

MR. BADAWY: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. BARANOWSKI: I'm going to try moving to a different spot.

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Baranowski, in the past three years, have you been able to hear music from El Techo --

MR. BARANOWSKI: Are you able to hear me?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, sir, we can hear you.

MR. BADAWY: Yes. Mr. Baranowski, can you hear me?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I can see you now.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, you know what, Mr. Baranowski? Turn your video back on because I think we're going to have a problem in the sense that at least if I can't see you, then I know that we can't hear you, so please turn your video back on, sir. I was trying to figure out if -- because a lot of times it works better if your video is off, but please turn your video
on so at least we can have a better idea what is going on.

MR. BARANOWSKI: I've restarted.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, all right, okay. Go ahead.

MR. BADAWY: Again, I'll ask this question again. Mr. Baranowski, in the past three years, have you been able to hear music from El Techo inside your residence?

MR. BARANOWSKI: Yes, I have.
MR. BADAWY: All right, and can you say during that time period approximately how many times you've been able to hear music from El Techo inside your residence?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I would say certainly on a weekly basis, maybe once a week, twice a week, so that would be probably 40, 50 times.

MR. BADAWY: And can you tell us, when you hear that music, when does it start and when does it end?

MR. BARANOWSKI: Generally on a Friday or Saturday evening, late evening, but also Sunday afternoons and going late into the evening as well.

MR. BADAWY: And Mr. Baranowski, can
you tell the members of the Board or can you describe for the members of the Board what that music sounds like when you can hear it in your house?

MR. BARANOWSKI: It's a loud thumping noise. It's pretty consistent techno music or trance music as I understand it, and it's definitely penetrating.

MR. BADAWY: And Mr. Baranowski, how has that music affected your ability to enjoy your home?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I generally on weekend nights have resorted to using an additional air conditioner in my bedroom, my bedroom is on the front of the street, or I have to use a large floor fan.

MR. BADAWY: And Mr. Baranowski, can you tell the members of the Board how the music you hear from El Techo differs from, say, ambient street noise that you might hear in the area?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: We have lost him again.

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Baranowski, can you hear us yet?

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: He's back.

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Baranowski?
MR. BARANOWSKI: Like I say, I have no idea what's happening with the connection. I apologize.

MR. BADAWY: No problem, sir. We, again, appreciate your time this evening. My question was can you tell the Board the difference between the music you hear from El Techo and ambient street noise?

MR. BARANOWSKI: There are standard sirens. There are standard cars that pass by. It's a passing thing. It's a temporary thing. I've lived in the neighborhood for 18 years. I'm familiar with those sounds, but the music from El Techo is a consistent thing that bangs through the evening and goes late at night.

MR. BADAWY: Have you ever contacted ABRA about the loud music coming from El Techo?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I have, yes.
MR. BADAWY: Okay, and how have you contacted ABRA?

MR. BARANOWSKI: Primarily through the online form.

MR. BADAWY: Have you ever contacted El Techo about the music you hear?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I have not.
MR. BADAWY: And Mr. Baranowski, are you -- have you been present for the testimony tonight?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I have, yes.
MR. BADAWY: You've heard a lot of testimony about, you know, changes, proposed changes to El Techo, correct?

MR. BARANOWSKI: Yes.
MR. BADAWY: Are you willing to work with the establishment about their loud music that you can hear in your home?

MR. BARANOWSKI: On a neighborly basis, I would like to say yes based on long-term relationships. I've been part of this community for a long time. However, I don't see that would be fruitful.

I know many of the neighbors in the community have worked with them through the settlement agreement and we still have considerable problems, and that's why we're here this evening. Disappointingly, I don't think that would help.

MR. BADAWY: Okay, thank you, Mr. Baranowski. I have no further questions for you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kline?
MR. KLINE: Mr. Baranowski, how many times did you contact ABRA with complaints?

MR. BARANOWSKI: Over what time period, please?

MR. KLINE: Over the last year and a half?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I would say probably approximately a dozen to 15 times.

MR. KLINE: Twelve to 15 times?
MR. BARANOWSKI: Approximately.
MR. KLINE: And just so we're clear, the number of times that you contacted the establishment to address these issues is zero, correct?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I have not engaged with the establishment.

MR. KLINE: Thank you. I have no further questions.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any questions by any Board members? Mr. Baranowski, have you ever been to this establishment?

MR. BARANOWSKI: Not this establishment, but I was a frequent patron of the restaurants for the last 18 years in that
location.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: But you have never been to this establishment?

MR. BARANOWSKI: I have not. I have been to Burrito Loco for burritos, but not to the El Techo upstairs.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay, I'm sorry, isn't it one establishment?

MR. BARANOWSKI: Burrito Loco is the takeout place where I have taken out tacos from before. I have not been to the dine-in portion of the restaurant above, El Techo.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I don't have any other questions. Mr. Kline?

MR. KLINE: Nothing further of the witness. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy?
MR. BADAWY: Nothing further for the witness. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Baranowski, thank you very much for your testimony, sir. Have a great day.

MR. BARANOWSKI: Thank you. Good evening.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you have
another witness, sir?
MR. BADAWY: Yes, the protestants call Margo Badawy.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, Margo Badawy. Ms. Badawy, can you raise your right hand, please? Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth and nothing but the truth?

Your witness, sir.
MR. BADAWY: Good evening, Ms. Badawy. Can you please state and spell your name for the record?

MS. BADAWY: Yes, my name is Margo Badawy. Margo is spelled M-A-R-G-O, Badawy, $B-A-D-A-W-Y$.

MR. BADAWY: Okay, and Ms. Badawy, in the interests of full disclosure, what is our relationship?

MS. BADAWY: We are married.
MR. BADAWY: Ms. Badawy, where do you live currently?

MS. BADAWY: I live at 1904 6th Street, NW.

MR. BADAWY: And who do you live there with?

MS. BADAWY: I live with you, my
husband, and I live with our two young children, little Naville who is five and little Noir who is one.

MR. BADAWY: And how long have you lived in this residence?

MS. BADAWY: We moved here in May of 2021, so approximately 18 months.

MR. BADAWY: And where did you live before that, Ms. Badawy?

MS. BADAWY: Before that, we lived near the intersection of 10th and V really close to the American Ice Company if members of the Board are familiar with that location.

MR. BADAWY: Do you know whether or not your home is located in a residential zone?

MS. BADAWY: It is.
MR. BADAWY: And if --
MS. BADAWY: RF-1, I believe.
MR. BADAWY: And can you describe the neighborhood that you live in?

MS. BADAWY: Yeah, it's a lot of families. It's a lot of single people. You see women, men walking babies with strollers. You see a lot of people out with their dogs. It's a very friendly place.

MR. BADAWY: Ms. Badawy, are you familiar with an establishment by the name of El Techo?

MS. BADAWY: I am.
MR. BADAWY: And can you tell me where your property is in relation to El Techo?

MS. BADAWY: So, we are north across Florida Avenue on the west side of 6th Street.

MR. BADAWY: Ms. Badawy, I'm going to show you what's marked as Protestants' Exhibit E. Can you see this on your screen?

MS. BADAWY: Yes.
MR. BADAWY: With El Techo in blue, can you tell the members of the Board where 1904 6th Street is, your residence?

MS. BADAWY: Yes, so it's north of there. I would say, yeah, keep going. There's 6th Street, so then keep going, keep going, keep going. It's that one right there to the left. That's our residence.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Ms. Badawy. Ms. Badawy, since moving to your home in May of 2021, can you tell me whether or not you've heard music from El Techo inside your home?

MS. BADAWY: I have. I've heard it
inside my home with the windows and doors shut.
MR. BADAWY: Okay, and can you tell the members of the Board in that time frame approximately how many times you've heard music from El Techo inside your home?

MS. BADAWY: I would say dozens, probably around 50 times at least.

MR. BADAWY: And typically, can you tell me when you hear that music, approximately what time does it start and what time does it end?

MS. BADAWY: It starts on Fridays usually around happy hour, sometimes on Thursdays. Sometimes on the weekends, it starts like in the afternoon, I would assume during brunch time, but I don't know. That's what I would think.

MR. BADAWY: And what time does it end?

MS. BADAWY: It ends well after I go to bed. I've called ABRA when I couldn't fall asleep, when my children are up, when my son couldn't fall asleep and asked me mommy, is there a train under our house?

MR. BADAWY: And Ms. Badawy, can you
-- when we talk about you being able to hear music inside your residence, can you describe, you know, what that sounds like?

MS. BADAWY: Sure, it's very
disruptive. It's a multitude of things. It's the beats from the bass. It's the actual music itself. You can hear the undercurrent of the rhythms. A few times, I was able to actually identify some of the songs that were playing.

I can hear it in the back of my house. I can hear it in the courtyard. I can hear it in the front of the house. I can hear it everywhere in the house.

MR. BADAWY: Ms. Badawy, when you've heard music from El Techo inside your residence, have you contacted ABRA investigators?

MS. BADAWY: I have.
MR. BADAWY: And do you know approximately how many times you've contacted ABRA investigators?

MS. BADAWY: Gosh, I would say probably at least a dozen.

MR. BADAWY: And how do you call ABRA investigators? Excuse me, let me rephrase that. How have you contacted ABRA investigators?

MS. BADAWY: I actually have them saved in my phone because I was calling them so frequently regarding El Techo.

MR. BADAWY: Okay, Ms. Badawy, have you ever contacted El Techo about the loud music that you hear in your home?

MS. BADAWY: I have.
MR. BADAWY: And what was the result of that?

MS. BADAWY: So, the very first time I heard it, I didn't know what was happening and I walked outside, and I saw the windows, the panels are up, and I quickly identified that it was El Techo. I looked up the restaurant's website. I saw their number. I called the number. It went straight to voicemail.

So, I didn't leave a message because I was afraid that nothing would take place, no one would answer or no one would get my message, so I actually emailed the establishment on the website, the contact information on the website, and I said hi.

I can't remember the contents of the email, but I said something that I could hear the noise and it was loud and disruptive, and if they
could please get back in touch with me so we could address the issues, and I didn't hear anything back.

MR. BADAWY: And did you notice any change in the music?

MS. BADAWY: Absolutely not. It just got worse after that. That was the very first time I heard it, and then after that, I heard it dozens and dozens of times.

MR. BADAWY: Ms. Badawy, did you take any steps to sort of mitigate the music you hear from El Techo inside your home?

MS. BADAWY: So, I got shush machines for both of my children. I spent about $\$ 1,000$ on soundproofing moondream curtains and I wear earplugs.

MR. BADAWY: Has that helped at all, Ms. Badawy?

MS. BADAWY: No.
MR. BADAWY: Ms. Badawy, you've heard testimony tonight about the -- well, have you heard testimony tonight, Ms. Badawy, from the owners of the establishment?

MS. BADAWY: I have on and off because I was putting the children to bed and cooking
them dinner.
MR. BADAWY: Let me ask you, are you willing to work with the establishment to address the loud music that you can hear in your residence?

MS. BADAWY: You know, I was willing to in the beginning, but now I'm not any longer, I guess because of the attitude of Mr. Hankins. You have emailed him directly and I've been cc'd on that, and he's always very dismissive of our concerns.

Like I said, I emailed the restaurant directly and no one ever got in touch with me, and even I substantiated a complaint with ABRA, I can still hear the music in my house with the windows and doors shut.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Ms. Badawy. I have no further questions for you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kline?
MR. KLINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, Ms. Badawy, you've contacted ABRA at least 12 times concerning the --

MS. BADAWY: Correct.
MR. KLINE: -- establishment?
MS. BADAWY: Correct.

MR. KLINE: And you sent one email to the establishment over the last year and a half to your neighbor?

MS. BADAWY: Yes, the first time, and I never heard a response since then.

MR. KLINE: And what email did you use to send that?

MS. BADAWY: I don't remember, whatever was on their website.

MR. KLINE: And you never went over there to chat with ownership about these issues?

MS. BADAWY: I have not spoken to Mr. Hankins directly, no.

MR. KLINE: So, this attitude that you complain about is not something that you experienced, is it?

MS. BADAWY: I would say that I have in a negative sense. He never got back in touch with me. I mean, I would think that, as a business owner, if someone is complaining about noise, wouldn't you want to follow up with that, at least acknowledge that email?

MR. KLINE: When did you send your email?

MR. KLINE: When did you send your email?

MS. BADAWY: I would say back in May of 2021, May or June.

MR. KLINE: So, your approach is to send one email, and if you don't get a response from your neighbor, to complain 12 times to the government?

MS. BADAWY: Yes.
MR. KLINE: Okay, now you testified that one of the incidents or one of the times that you heard loud music was on Thursday night?

MS. BADAWY: Yes.
MR. KLINE: And when was that?
MS. BADAWY: I don't know.
MR. KLINE: Would you be surprised to learn that this establishment does not normally have a deejay on Thursday night?

MS. BADAWY: Well, maybe it did when I thought it did.

MR. KLINE: Maybe it did.
MS. BADAWY: Are you saying they never had a deejay on Thursday night?

MR. KLINE: Well, I ask the questions here, not you.

MS. BADAWY: Okay.
MR. KLINE: How close are you to Flash?

MS. BADAWY: Are you talking about in a block? Are you talking about a foot radius?

MR. KLINE: However you can characterize it.

MS. BADAWY: How would you like me to characterize it? That's a pretty open-ended question.

MR. KLINE: How far are you from --
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Badawy, Ms. Badawy, you're under cross examination. Cross examination sometimes is not friendly.

MS. BADAWY: I understand. I just don't want to answer --
(Simultaneous speaking.)
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Badawy, Ms. Badawy, please, Mr. Kline asked you a question and you need to answer the question, ma'am, okay?

MS. BADAWY: I --
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Badawy, he will ask you a question. You will answer the question, please. If you are unable to answer the question, just say I cannot answer the
question. I don't have an answer, but he's the only one who asks questions, ma'am.

This is cross examination. Cross examination, unfortunately, it's never friendly, so therefore, I need you to take a deep breath, please, and answer the questions as asked by counsel.

You will have another opportunity, Mr. Badawy. Once we have gone through the process, Mr. Badawy will ask questions if he thinks that he needs to ask questions that he thought were not helpful in cross examination then, okay? All right.

MS. BADAWY: Yes, sir.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr. Kline.

MR. KLINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Ms. Badawy, how far are you from El Techo did you say?

MS. BADAWY: How far from El Techo? I would say approximately 200 to 300 feet based on the exhibit that Mr. Kujawa provided.

MR. KLINE: You don't know. You've only based that upon the exhibit?

MS. BADAWY: Yes.

MR. KLINE: And do you know how far away you are from Flash?

MS. BADAWY: I don't. I know where it is, but I don't know how many feet if that's what you're asking.

MR. KLINE: Is it closer to you than El Techo?

MS. BADAWY: I don't know.
MR. KLINE: You don't know if it's closer to you?

MS. BADAWY: I don't know if it's closer. I think it's farther away, but I'm not entirely sure.

MR. KLINE: How long have you been married?

MR. BADAWY: Objection, relevancy.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Why is that relevant, Mr. Kline?

MR. KLINE: Her husband is the attorney in this case. It's completely relevant. (Simultaneous speaking.)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I don't think -- it's not relevant how long they've been married. I mean, it was disclosed that he is her husband, but how long they're married, it's not
relevant, so let's move on.
MR. KLINE: All right, I'll move onto the next question which is your husband is the attorney for the protestants in this case, correct?

MS. BADAWY: Yes.
MR. KLINE: And your husband likes to win when he tries cases, doesn't he?

MS. BADAWY: I'm also an attorney. I don't know how that's --

MR. BADAWY: Objection, objection, objection, objection to the relevancy.

MR. KLINE: It goes to bias. Mr.
Chair, if I had my wife on the stand, I would certainly expect that opposing counsel would ask her exactly the same questions. Are we serious?

MR. BADAWY: Mr. Chairman, if I could? I apologize.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Yes, Mr. Badawy, go ahead.

MR. BADAWY: I would object on relevancy. I would also object that this is beyond the scope of direct. I've already disclosed that she is my wife. She has stated we live together.

You know, how long we're married, whether or not I like to win when I try cases, again is not relevant to the issues that are at play in this hearing.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, I'm sorry, is there a pending question, Mr. Kline, for me to rule on?

MR. KLINE: There was a pending question, but I'll withdraw it. We can move on. I think the point is made.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay, all right, any other questions?

MR. KLINE: No, I have no further questions.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any questions by any Board members? Yes, Mr. Grandis?

MEMBER GRANDIS: Thank you. Ms. Badawy, I want to thank you for the patience you've had today and everyone else who is here has had today, but I think you have a little additional burden of two little children probably this time of night probably also trying to grab your arms and attention, so thank you for being able to be with us.

I think you said you all were living
at 10th and Vermont, no, 10th and -- I'm sorry. MS. BADAWY: 10th and V.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Very different direction, 10th and V, okay. Over that area, was the nightlife at all similar to the nightlife you live with now?

MS. BADAWY: I mean, there were bars and restaurants nearby, but I never filed a complaint with ABRA while I was there. We lived right by American Ice, so, you know, you would hear the patrons coming and leaving the bar. That wasn't a problem. That's what I understood would happen when I lived in the city.

MEMBER GRANDIS: You also mentioned that since you have moved in that area, you have not gone into the roof deck, I would imagine, because the first floor is, from what we're learning, is sort of a carryout, but you've never been into the roof deck, have you?

MS. BADAWY: No, sir.
MEMBER GRANDIS: I understand that you did not get a reply to your email. We all perceive that when one gets an email, the person should respond, but we really don't know where that email went, right? We don't know. So, you
didn't feel like you needed to go in and say hello and that there's a problem? You just didn't think that was an option or --

I'm sort of puzzled on why you would send the email, and I understand I would expect a response, okay, but if $I$ didn't get one, maybe I want to shake the tree a little bit. So, did you have any thought of going in and saying wait a minute, I haven't heard back from you all or --

MS. BADAWY: So --
MEMBER GRANDIS: -- can you put it -you know, yeah, go ahead. Thank you.

MS. BADAWY: Yeah, no, I'm sorry I
interrupted you. So, I called the business again. I'm not sure how many times. I would say a couple more times after that and it would always just go to voicemail.

And then around that time is when we started learning about the ABRA process and getting a complaint substantiated, so then I think our focus was more about getting ABRA involved, added to the fact that I didn't hear back from the business owner.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Once again, I understand that in our civil society, people
should be responsive. At the same time, you moved into this neighborhood and it's like 200 to 300 feet away.

It just seems like there would be -I don't understand why neighbors don't go in and even order a meal, or the carryout, or something just to get a sense of is it just the music that irritates me.

So, we're not taking away -- I'm not taking away from your concern. I'm just concerned that maybe we all need to be neighborly and talk to each other, but there's more --

MS. BADAWY: I've gone in -- sure.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Excuse me. Go ahead.
MS. BADAWY: I'm sorry. I've gone in before and I've gotten a burrito --

MEMBER GRANDIS: Okay.
MS. BADAWY: -- but I didn't see Mr. Hankins there or any -- I didn't recognize. I just saw the workers there behind the desk or the

MEMBER GRANDIS: And when you went and got that burrito, did you mention that hey, the noise bothers my children and myself? You know, did you mention anything? Oh, I think she went
away.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I think she has -- she didn't go away. She has some -- clearly she's in a different -- I'm sorry, Mr. Badawy, clearly she's in a different location than you are because you have never had any problems all day with your connection.

MR. BADAWY: That is the reason that we are in different locations, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
MEMBER GRANDIS: Well, that was going
to be my last question is just --
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Hold on, Mr. Grandis. Are you back, Ms. Badawy?

MS. BADAWY: I am back, I believe. Sorry, I'm not sure what happened there.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr. Grandis.

MEMBER GRANDIS: Yeah, so, it's just, I'm hearing that today, because of the frustration and the disruption, and it's serious, that there seems to be a lack of trust from the protestants, now I'm putting you in that group, to say let's sit down and talk this out.

And I can understand there's a place
that that happens, but what puzzles me is I haven't heard from one protestant that they actually have ever gone in there, that they've actually tried to have a meal.

It may not be your kind of music, but still it just seems like we are being asked to make a decision when, at the same time, I think there should be an opportunity for the neighborhood, particularly the protestants today, to say okay, we'll sit down with them.

Not that we accept or you accept the noise, but to be neighborly. And I just wish that when this is over, that you all can try to make peace in a way if you all get a result that you feel is fair, so that --

You know, that they are a business in the neighborhood and yes, you know, you all have a right to privacy. You have a right to quiet. So, that's my little speech here. I just would encourage people to go in and try to talk to each other, but --

MS. BADAWY: Can I just clarify something, Mr. Grandis?

MEMBER GRANDIS: Yes.
MS. BADAWY: Also, I guess, the
situation with the business owner not responding to my email, the voicemails not working, and also talking with folks in the neighborhood who informed me of the settlement agreement and how Mr. Hankins wasn't really abiding by it, it just made me feel that he wouldn't take my concerns seriously.

And there were also email exchanges between him and my husband that I was cc'd on where he was very dismissive of us when we informed him that we could hear the music in our house.

MEMBER GRANDIS: I understand and I really do appreciate, we all do appreciate the time and the energy that you've given through this process and particularly today. It's been a very long day and I'm sure your children want attention. So, thank you and we just move forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, thank you. Any other, any questions by any other Board members? Mr. Kline? Mr. Badawy?

MR. BADAWY: Nothing further, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you have
another witness, sir?
MR. BADAWY: We have one more witness, Mr. Chair. The protestants call Lynne Venart.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Venart, can you raise your right hand, please?

MS. VENART: Yes.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth and nothing but the truth?

MS. VENART: I do.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Your witness, sir.

MR. BADAWY: Good evening, Ms. Venart.
MS. VENART: Hi.
MR. BADAWY: Would you please state and spell your full name for the record?

MS. VENART: Yes, it's Lynne Venart, L-Y-N-N-E V-E-N-A-R-T.

MR. BADAWY: And Ms. Venart, where do you live?

MS. VENART: I live at 1838 6th Street, NW in Unit C. I'm in the same building as Craig.

MR. BADAWY: And by Craig, do you mean Mr. Craig Kujawa?

MS. VENART: Yes.
MR. BADAWY: And who do you live there with?

MS. VENART: I live there with my fianc,, Scott.

MR. BADAWY: And how long have you lived in this place?

MS. VENART: Since 2013, so nine years.

MR. BADAWY: And do you know whether or not your home is located in a residential -do you know whether or not your home is located in a residential zone?

MS. VENART: Yes, I believe it is.
MR. BADAWY: And Ms. Venart, can you describe the neighborhood that you live in?

MS. VENART: I would say it's residential. We are on Florida Avenue, so there are businesses, you know, shops across the street and there's a couple of other businesses, but there are lots of residences as well. I would say that the residences outnumber the businesses as far as I can gauge.

MR. BADAWY: Ms. Venart, are you familiar with an establishment by the name of El

Techo?
MS. VENART: Yes.
MR. BADAWY: Okay, and once again, can you tell us where your home is in relationship to El Techo?

MS. VENART: So, as Craig mentioned, our building is four units. My unit is facing 6th Street on the third and fourth floor of the building. So, to my left is the building that El Techo is in, but they are kind of behind me, behind.

MR. BADAWY: Ms. Venart, I'm going to show you what's been entered as Protestants' Exhibit F. Can you tell us where, using this diagram, your residence is in relationship to El Techo?

MS. VENART: Yes, so if you go below El Techo to that building and then to the right, to the front part of it, further, yes, in there, right there.

MR. BADAWY: Okay, thank you, Ms. Venart.

MS. VENART: You're welcome.
MR. BADAWY: Ms. Venart, in the past three years, have you been able to hear music
from El Techo inside your residence?
MS. VENART: Yes.
MR. BADAWY: And can you say during that time period approximately how many times you've heard music from El Techo inside your residence?

MS. VENART: I would many dozens of times, definitely over 50, closer to 100 maybe.

MR. BADAWY: And Ms. Venart, can you tell the members of the Board, when you're able to hear that music, what that music sounds like?

MS. VENART: I hear a lot of bass. It's definitely heavy bass. I mean, it's, you know, I know it was described as house music. You know, I would say that's fairly accurate. I'm not a musician, but, you know, electronic dance music with a lot of beats and a lot of bass.

MR. BADAWY: And can you tell us, you know, typically what time that music starts and what time that music ends?

MS. VENART: I would say it varies. I mean, a lot of times, it's, you know, early evening to the nighttime.

MR. BADAWY: And can you tell the
members of the Board how hearing that music in your home has affected you and your fianc,?

MS. VENART: I would say that it's been fairly maddening. We can hear the bass very clearly when -- you know, it's caused a lot of stress and frustration for us, both of us, over the last few years. It's difficult to relax.

We like to cook to relax, and even though our kitchen is kind of furthest away from our windows and that side of the building where El Techo is, even if we turn up our stereo or TV to drown out the music, we can still feel the bass in the floor in our kitchen, so there's just nowhere we can get away from it.

MR. BADAWY: Ms. Venart, have you contacted ABRA when you can hear loud music from El Techo inside, El Techo, excuse me, inside your residence?

MS. VENART: Yes.
MR. BADAWY: Okay, and can you tell me how many times -- let me ask you, yeah, how often in this three-year period have you contacted ABRA about the music?

MS. VENART: I mean, I would say in the beginning, we were mostly just contacting the
establishment itself, and then we started making noise complaints.

We, you know, didn't realize that we needed to have somebody come establish or come inside the unit, so we were just calling or putting in the web request, the web form.

And so, I forget, did you ask how many times? I would say over the last three years, between calling and the web form and everything, maybe, I don't know, at least 20 times.

MR. BADAWY: Do you contact ABRA every time you hear loud music in your residence?

MS. VENART: No, I mean, it's frustrating to have to do that and I kind of just want to try to ignore the music as much as possible, and like having them come out to the residence, I mean, it like turns it into a whole big thing, so I do not contact them every time.

MR. BADAWY: And Ms. Venart, I believe you testified earlier that you have contacted El Techo about being able to hear their music inside your home, is that correct?

MS. VENART: Yes.
MR. BADAWY: And can you tell the members of the Board about that engagement with

El Techo?
MS. VENART: I mean, I think when they first opened, we called a few times. I'm sure we left messages. I mean, it's been a few years, so I don't totally remember how many times we left messages or whatever.

My fianc, did go over there and get Mr. Hankins' cell phone number, which I appreciated. I also have an email address for Shaw's Tavern's owner that he has been responsive to, so I appreciate having contact information.

So, after we got the cell phone number, we did text him when we had issues and, you know, I admit that it was a lot of texts because we could hear the music loudly and feel the bass, and we were just trying to get them to turn it down and just it, you know, it was very frustrating.

MR. BADAWY: Did they turn the music down when you would contact them, Ms. Venart? MS. VENART: I don't feel like they did.

MR. BADAWY: Did you ever try to engage El Techo in other ways concerning the music that you could hear from their
establishment in your home?
MS. VENART: I mean, they did have -in June of 2021, I started talking to Mr. Hankins' colleague, Daniel, who testified earlier, and he came over with the sound engineers and they came into my unit as well as Craig's unit to --

They said they were going to run tests, but they, at that visit that I was present at, they just talked to us and made the suggestion about, you know, increasing our hallway space to add extra insulation, which we didn't feel like was a reasonable request.

MR. BADAWY: Ms. Venart, there's been testimony that there are many restaurants and businesses, you know, Flash in the area. When you hear music in your residence, how do you know it's coming from El Techo?

MS. VENART: I would say in the beginning, it was very easy to tell because there was a sharp, dramatic increase in sound once El Techo opened.

We had never felt bass in our unit before aside from the occasional motorcycle going by or something that happened to have something,
but that's fleeting.
We had never heard this level of music inside of our establishment, inside our residence, I mean, so the fact that El Techo opens and that all of a sudden, we can hear this music all the time and feel the bass all the time.

We did go outside to like check, so that's how it was very easy to tell in those beginning times when -- but that's where it was coming from because there was a dramatic shift.

MR. BADAWY: And Ms. Venart, I apologize. I don't know if I asked you this question. If I have, forgive me, but when you can hear music in your home from El Techo, can you tell us what time typically it starts and what time it typically ends?

MS. VENART: I think I said earlier that it's, you know, typically evening to, you know, midnight or so, but, you know, I don't -- I can't give you an exact time.

MR. BADAWY: And Ms. Venart, are you still willing to work with El Techo to address the loud music coming from their establishment that you can hear in your residence?

MS. VENART: I mean, I feel very hesitant to want to work with them to be honest because, I mean, the interactions over the years have not been very positive, and here I know over the last year, they have had the --

Louis and Daniel both testified that they have not had as many deejays over the last year, and you saw Craig's chart about the deejays sort of declining over the last year, the frequency of them.

I know that since their license was up for renewal, it just makes me very suspicious that they have been, you know, on their best behavior over the last year because they know that this hearing today is going to happen, and so they want to be able to say that they've been making improvements.

So, it makes me very nervous when I heard Louis testify that, you know, they have lost -- they have cut back some of their business, and in doing so, in the last year, they have lost $\$ 350,000$ in income from the extra alcohol sales that they had been making before. And Daniel also testified that they have been not staying open as long or having
music as long as they are allowed to in their license.

So, if that's the reason why it hasn't been quite as bad the last year, it makes me nervous to go back to that, because then once, if they get the license renewed, they'll go back to the old ways and having live music until 1:30 in the morning and the bigger crowds that they used to have, and then, you know, where are we? Then we're back to, you know, them having free reign for a few years.

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Ms. Venart.
I have no further questions for you.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Kline?
MR. KLINE: Have you been here for the entire hearing?

MS. VENART: Yes.
MR. KLINE: You heard Mr. Beam testify?

MS. VENART: Yes.
MR. KLINE: Do you doubt that he can solve this problem?

> MS. VENART: I trust that, as a professional, he can make the best recommendation to the owners.

MR. KLINE: And you heard Mr. Hankins testify?

MS. VENART: Yes.
MR. KLINE: And you heard Mr. Hatem testify?

MS. VENART: Yes.
MR. KLINE: And you heard them testify under oath that they're committed to following Mr. Beam's recommendations?

MS. VENART: Yes.
MR. KLINE: Is it your contention that they're lying, that they don't intend to do that?

MS. VENART: I'm saying I -- given past experience, when we have asked them to turn music down and things like that, it has not happened. So, based on my experience, I'm not 100 percent confident that this will follow through and have me, you know, be able to live in peace in my home.

MR. KLINE: So, you testified about a time when Mr. Hatem came to your home, correct?

MS. VENART: Yes.
MR. KLINE: And is it your testimony that the only thing he did was tell you to soundproof your own place?

MS. VENART: Well, they walked through the units and just sort of asked us questions, and they were sort of talking amongst themselves about different ideas they had. This was prior to them coming up with a plan, so they were putting out suggestions.

MR. KLINE: Right, and didn't one of the things that they said they would do would be to relocate the speakers in the establishment so as to potentially have less effect on your residence?

MS. VENART: They didn't say that in that conversation. This was after they sent us some text messages a couple of months later that said what they would do. On October 6, they said that new equipment was installed and they had moved the bass away from the common wall.

You know, I will say in that text conversation, they said that it happened the day before was when they installed all of these changes, and the day before, we did happen to hear loud bass in our residence from 9:00 to 11:00 p.m. that same day, so it's, you know --

MR. KLINE: And when was that?
MS. VENART: October 6.

MR. KLINE: Right, and did you hear the testimony that that was during a time when there were promoters and a different sound system was brought in?

MS. VENART: Well, in the text thread, they said that they had implemented all of the changes that they wanted to implement.

MR. KLINE: That's not my question. My question is did you hear the testimony that that was the time during which they had a promoter and brought in an alternate sound system? Did you hear that testimony?

MS. VENART: I heard testimony that there was a promoter. I don't know if that promoter was there on October 6, but if they had indicated to me via text that they had solved the problems, then I'm not sure why they would send a text to me about that if they had a promoter using different equipment that day.

MR. KLINE: And the noise issues improved at least as early as January 1 of this year, correct?

MS. VENART: I would say they have improved, but I would also say that in the last year, Quattro Osteria has been playing a lot of
music right outside my living room window, so it makes it more difficult for me to tell if the music since Quattro Osteria has started playing music outside my living room window is from -where it's coming from.

MR. KLINE: Don't you live on the opposite side of the building from where this establishment is located, the opposite side of your building?

MS. VENART: I live facing 6th Street right next to Quattro Osteria and El Techo is in that same building, but behind it in the back side, yes.

MR. KLINE: Right, but you face the opposite direction, correct?

MS. VENART: I face 6th Street.
MR. KLINE: And that's the complete opposite direction of where El Techo is located, correct?

MS. VENART: I don't know what you mean by opposite. El Techo faces Florida Avenue.

MR. KLINE: All right, I have no further questions for the witness.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any questions by the Board members? I want to ask a question,
and I apologize, Ms. Venart, if you have answered that question. How long have you lived at the location?

MS. VENART: Since 2013.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Have you been into the establishment?

MS. VENART: Yeah, we used to get burritos at Rito Loco, not all the time, but occasionally, and when friends would come visit, they would pick up tacos or burritos at Rito Loco and have them at our place.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, thank you. Any other questions by any other Board members? Mr. Kline?

MR. KLINE: I have none. Thank you.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy?
MR. BADAWY: I have none. Thank you.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Ms. Venart. Thank you very much for your testimony.

MS. VENART: Thank you.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Badawy, do you have any other witnesses?

MR. BADAWY: No, Mr. Chair. We've reached our five witness limit.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Oh, we've done,
and I'm not being facetious, but we've done five witnesses already? I've just -- you know what? Yeah, we've done five witnesses already. Well, I am glad to hear that we have gone through five witnesses without me realizing, but that's good to hear. All right, so do you rest?

MR. BADAWY: Yes, we rest.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, okay, so we'll do closing. I'm going to take a break, but what I want both sides to do is specifically provide instructions to the Board what is it that you're asking the Board to do, okay?

And once we have done closing, I need to make sure that you have moved to introduce all of the records, all of the documents that need to be moved into evidence, so we can have that conversation to make sure that whatever records that you want to be moved into evidence are moved into evidence, okay?

It is 9:59. Let's just say it's
10:00. We're going to take a ten-minute break. At 10:10, we'll do closing and then we'll wrap this matter up, okay? So, ten-minute break. At 10:10, we will come back on the record, okay?

Thank you.
(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 9:59 p.m. and resumed at 10:10 p.m.)

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, now it's time for the parties to do closing. As I've stated before, I need specific guidance and instructions from both, the Applicant and from the Protestant what it is that they are requesting from the Board.

I will give -- you have five minutes to do your closing, and so go ahead, Mr. Kline.

MR. KLINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the Board. What presented tonight -today/tonight, was an unfortunate situation where it seems as if civility in a neighborhood somehow broke down.

There clearly were problems with this establishment, and there were clearly efforts to address those problems. It appears that the efforts to address those problems were not as successful as they might have been, but nonetheless the efforts were there.

For whatever reason, residents in the neighborhood, rather than continuing to try to
work with this establishment, decided that -according to my account -- contacting ABRA in excess of 70 times to build a case -- and you heard that from Ms. Badawy, Counsel's wife -that's, yeah, that's what they thought they would do, that they would build a case rather than working with their neighbor to address the problems.

Now, what you heard, you heard testimony from Martin Beam, who you've heard from many times, who was clearly an expert in his field. And, according to his testimony, if -and, if, and we'll get to in a minute -- if business operators followed his recommendations, he doesn't fail, he solves these problems.

And, I know this Board has seen that in other cases and I expect that it is something, if given the chance, the Board will see again here, that these problems can be and will be solved.

The only way that doesn't happen is if Mr. Hankins who, let's keep in mind, built this business from a food truck into a brick-and-mortar, fast casual place and now to what it is, survived the pandemic somehow and has
lived to tell about it, but needs your help to be able to move further.

But, as I was saying, the only way this doesn't happen is if you conclude that what Mr. Hankins and what Mr. Hatem told you under oath was a lie. And, that lie would be that they will not follow the recommendations of Mr. Beam.

And, frankly, I don't think that there is anything that you've heard during today's, tonight's hearing that would lead you to conclude that those two individuals are lying to you about what their intentions are, and what they will do if this license is approved.

Now, what do we want? Mr. Chairman, you asked us to be explicit in terms of what we want -- here's what we think is reasonable and addresses the issues that have been raised during this hearing.

One is, obviously we want the license renewed and we want it, provided that the other conditions are met, renewed without restriction or reservation. And, those conditions are pretty straightforward and please simple, but they're very important.

Number one is that the establishment
will have produced by a qualified sound engineer, in this case Mr. Beam, recommendations to mitigate the issues that we've heard about from residents tonight concerning noise from the establishment.

Second is that the Licensee will implement those recommendations as they testified to you they would do.

We think it's all very simple, how this got off the track, and why it is the neighbors decided that they couldn't even go into a place to talk to the owners, and in one instance never made any effort to contact the owners but instead contacted an agency 25 times to report them, is beyond me -- I don't know.

I've been doing this a long time and I haven't seen this level of consistent obstinance to working with an establishment, across the board. Every single witness, it was almost as if it was engineered -- let's all take the position that we're not going to work with this establishment, let's all take the position that, when contacted ABRA, that's what we're going to do here.
And, it's not reasonable in a city,
it's not reasonable where businesses and residents needs to coexist and learn to get along,

And, I submit to you that the two witnesses, the two owners of the operator testified honestly of their intentions -- you've already saw, they already spent a whole bunch of money, they didn't do it not to try to solve the problem. But, they're prepared to spend more, they've already retained Mr. Beam, and they testified as to their willingness to follow through on that.

And, we would request that you take them at their word and hold their feet to the fire, frankly. And, put it in an order and say, this is what you're going to do, you will submit a report reflecting the noise mitigation measures to be implemented, and you'll implement them, otherwise we're going to have you back here and we'll talk about it some more.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, members of the Board. Thank you for your diligence in being here until 10:17, until Mr. Badawy finishes. We appreciate your attention to this case, we know it's been a very long day.

Thank you.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Kline. Mr. Badawy?

MR. BADAWY: Thank you, Mr.
Chairperson. And, I want to reiterate what Mr. Kline said, that I want to thank you and thank the Board for what has been a very long day, a very long hearing. And, we appreciate your service. And, I also appreciate Mr. Kline's efforts at representing his client, and I thank him for participating in this hearing, as well.

To begin with, I believe it was something that, I believe Board Member Grandis said that kind of stuck with me. We want businesses to thrive but not in a way that disrupts homeowners from thriving. And, I think that's important here because what we're talking about is balance, right?

We're talking about the ability of businesses to function, to make money, to thrive, but abutting, adjacent surrounding homeowners need to also be able to live and enjoy their homes, and the community, that is very important.

The issue before the Board is not whether or not El Techo at some point in the
future will meet the appropriate fitness standard, at some point in the future it will be soundproofed, everything will get taken care. The issue before the Board is, is it appropriate now?

And, we've heard from the expert, Martin Beam, and he has said that he's supervising the sort of rebuild of the structure, as he described, rebuild of the roof deck. And he, when asked, said that, no, it's not soundproof right now and there are certainly problems with the back wall abutting neighbors, right? He said that very clearly.

He also said that he'll be able to design a month in a month but he has no idea how long it take to actually implement that plan. And, you know, his findings are understandable, right? What we're talking about is basically a plastic roof deck with a translucent ceiling, and these translucent in the middle of Shaw, surrounded by homes.

And, although the owner, you know, has claimed that he has made many upgrade over time, the problems persist. And, the problem is, maybe not necessarily whether or not the owners are
unable or unwilling to change, but because of the way the structure exists right now it is not able to contain music inside.

And, hearing all the testimony and looking at it and looking at the steps that were taken, and the fact the problem hasn't been solved, that is why -- this structure, as it exists, cannot contain music right now.

I will also add that, yes, things have, you know, unfortunately broken down between the business owners and the community. My mother told me a long time ago that it takes two in a situation, two to fight, two to make up.

So, to claim that it's all one side, the people in the neighborhood, and that the owners have no responsibility I think is unfair -- everyone probably deserves responsibility here.

I will say that there is testimony in the record that the members of the community have worked with the establishment, over a period of years. And, if they are reluctant to believe what they're saying now it's because of their experiences.

And, you know, again we can look at
their experiences -- also, if we want to know perhaps why they're struggling to accept why, perhaps the Board should have some pause to accept the owners at their word, it's because of the investigative history that we've seen and we've heard.

I would also say that it's hard to take someone at their word that they're willing to fix a problem, if they don't believe there's a problem. They believe they're being unfairly put upon, they believe that all the neighbors want to do is build a case -- if they in fact don't believe that the music is coming from their establishment, that it's coming from someplace else.

It's a problem, then to take someone at their word, that they say they're going to commit to something, when, you know, that's the testimony that you've heard. And, that's what we heard from Mr. Hatem and that's what we've heard from Mr. Hankins. So, that's something I think the Board should consider when they're looking at whether or not this place is appropriate now and whether it can ever be appropriate in the future.

I want to summarize just briefly, the
evidence, we've shown through the testimony of multiple witnesses that, when this establishment has live music, when it features disc jockeys on dozens and dozens of occasion, the establishment has regularly produced noise that is audible within homes.

Now, both, the abutting condominium building of Mr. Kujawa and Mr. Venart and those that live 200 or more feet away across Florida Avenue, such as Mrs. Badawy and Mr. Baranowski.

The Board, however, need not rely however on the witness testimony alone, since the investigative history documents instances of noise that can be heard in people's homes, that were substantiated by ABRA investigators. These have not been rare occurrences.

We've shown through photographs, we've shown through testimony that, in addition to the loud noise the establishment has stored rubbish and trash in a manner that harbors rodents, violates public space, and violates the ability of people to enjoy the area when they walk by it. And, finally, all of these facts exist within the context of the establishment's record of compliance with Title 25 in the last five
years, which includes six instances of a failure to file a courtly statement, four instances of a failure to comply with the Mayor's order, three instances of increasing occupancy without approval, and six instances of failure to follow a settlement agreement.

And, various other infractions.
Twenty-four primary and secondary tier violations in total, resulting in two show cause hearings, two offers in compromise, and the payment of 11 different fines, totaling $\$ 10,000$.

What the evidentiary record shows, whether on the issue of noise, on garbage, or compliance is an enduring pattern of behavior in which the establishment places a high priority on operating in accordance with the owner's vision of this adult treehouse, Miami vibes, and killer beats than it does in operating in accordance with the requirements of the law, and the respect for its neighbors.

Any one of these issues would be sufficient grounds for non-renewal of this license, but taken together such outcome more than justifies as a conclusion of law, based on the facts in the record.

We congratulate Mr. Hankins on his creation of a successful and popular establishment, but we submit that the success and the popularity cannot come at the expense of the reasonable expectations of the residents to enjoy the peace of their own homes -- for five years now, it has.

We are sympathetic to the monetary investment the Licensee claims to have made in the establishment, and by extension the neighborhood. But, entrepreneurs assume risks associated with not just the regulatory environment, but the limitations of the location and the physical structure they create or choose to operate in.

Business owners don't earn special credits that empower them to ignore or violate the law, once they have invested enough of their own money.

This is not a case of new people in the neighborhood disapproving of or wanting to change the vibrant culture of Shaw they moved into, many of the protestants have lived in their homes affected by Rito Loco El Techo for a long time.

And, for the record, the protestants are not opposed to having licensed taverns and restaurants in the neighborhood -- the opposite is true. It's places like Right Proper Brewing Company, The Royal less than a block away, and even Shaw's Tavern right around the corner are valued neighbors and coexist respectfully in a predominantly residential area of Shaw and LeDroit Park.

Prior to the addition of El Techo rooftop in 2017, Rito Loco the fast food restaurant was in this category, too. And, the culture of Shaw cannot be construed to mean music so loud and uncontained that it cannot be heard in other buildings. Nor is this is a case of residents unwilling to work with the establishment, as I said earlier.

The issue of amplified entertainment emanating from El Techo has existed since this rooftop opened in 2017, and the renewal of the license was protested three years ago for the exact same reason as it is today.

The only reason the protestant did not reach a hearing then was because, the residents were willing to let them attempt measures to
prevent the escape of music from their establishment.

We have previously invited the Licensee's sound engineer into our homes, and his recommendation was to put sound-absorbing material on the inside of our walls.

Unfortunately, all of those measures have failed but it has not been for a lack of trying to afford a new business the opportunity to find its legs.

The Licensee may point to the lack of violations in the last 12 months as an argument that no conditions are necessary, but we strongly argue against that flawed conclusion.

The absence of violations during that period is not due to the resolution of the persistent problem that is intrinsic to the physical characteristics and construction of the establishment, and its location.

The recent drop in violations can just as easily be explained by the fatigue and cynicism of residents who have seen their complaints over the past five years have little, if any, tangible effect.

> Or, by the common practice of
establishments to temporarily change their practices in the few months preceding the predictable protest period for their license renewal.

I would remind the Board that the initial deadline for the Class CR license here was March 31 of 2022.

Now, we're not -- now, we are realistic and do not anticipate that the Board will decide to revoke this license. But, unless the Board can impose conditions that ensure noise cannot be heard in the dozens of nearby homes that have been affected for the last five years, this is what we respectfully recommend the Board should do.

The volume and breadth of complaints that resulted in two different ANCs protesting this renewal, and the willingness of 31 different nearby residents to sign onto the group of five or more protest, to say nothing of the abutting property owner who's building is most affected, show that the opposition to the establishment's manner of operation is genuine, it is wide-spread, and it has persisted well beyond the last violation.

DCMR Section 2701 states that it is the declared public policy of the District that every person is entitled to ambient noise levels that are not detrimental to life, health, and enjoyment of his or her property.

The establishment's entertainment produces ambient noise that is detrimental to all three of those things for dozens of people, and it doesn't become acceptable merely by limiting it to hours before midnight or some other arbitrary time of day.

In view of all that has been presented today, we strongly believe and would recommend that the revocation of the entertainment endorsement is the only condition that can reasonably assure that the establishment will not operate as it has, adversely impacting the neighborhood for another three years.

With his original Rito Loco restaurant license, Mr. Hankins should not -- should have the right to operate an open-air rooftop restaurant. But, we strongly believe that he should not have the right to operate playing music at extreme levels in an elevated, thin plastic and plywood box. And, he especially
should not have the right abutting someone's home in a residential zone that is predominantly a residential area.

And, members of the Board, Mr.
Chairman, and Counsel I thank you for your time today.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Thank you.
Before I close the record, did everyone move all the documents that they need to be moved in evidence -- have all the documents been moved?

MR. KLINE: I'm (audio interference), yeah.

MR. BADAWY: I believe yes, Mr. Chair, I don't know if there's a way to check that now, but I believe the protestants have.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, well I know the documents that you had testimony on, I brought them into -- entered into evidence, so that's fine.

All right, thank you very much. Do the parties wish to file proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law, or waive their right to do so?

MR. KLINE: We're going to waive.
MR. BADAWY: The protestants do wish
to file a proposed findings of fact and law, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right, so since the parties have chose to file proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law, then 90 days from when the Board receives proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law we'll issue a decision.

The transcript will be emailed to the parties within the next three weeks, the proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law are then due to the Board 30 days after they have received the transcript.

If the parties change their mind, they are welcome to advise the Board that they have changed their mind, and providing us with the proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law, okay?

And, okay, so hold one minute, please.
As Chairperson of the Alcoholic
Beverage Control Board for the District of
Columbia and in accordance with D.C. Code Section 2-575 of the Open Meetings Act, I move that the ABC Board hold a closed meeting for the purpose of seeking legal advice from our Counsel on Case

Number 22-PRO-00072 Rito-Loco-El Techo, pursuant to D.C. Official Code Section 2-575(b)(4)(a) of the Open Meetings Act. And, deliberating upon Case Number 22-PRO-00072 Rito-Loco-El Techo for the reasons cited in D.C. Official Code Section 2-575(b)(13) of the Open Meetings Act.

Is there a second?
MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Short, I second.
MEMBER HANSEN: Jeni Hansen will
second.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Short and Ms. Hansen has second the motion, I will now take a roll call vote on the motion.

Mr. Short?
MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Short, I agree.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Cato?
MEMBER CATO: Bobby Cato, I agree.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Hansen?
MEMBER HANSEN: Jeni Hansen, I agree.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Grandis?
And, Mr. Anderson, I agree. As it appears that the motion has passed, I hereby give notice that the ABC Board will recess these proceedings to have a closed meeting.

I'm sorry, I'm trying to do too many
things at one point, give me one minute. We'll recess to have a closed meeting, and so therefore, we will -- as I stated before -- 90 days after we have received a proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law we will issue a decision.

And, I want to thank all the parties for their participation today and their attention today, we thank you for your presentation.

And, if you hold on one more minute, I now need to close the record officially for the day. You can sign -- the parties can sign off if they so desire, all I'm going to do is close the record.

So, you don't have to be here unless you want to hear me read my official closing the record for the day. But, that's all I need to do and we're going to sign out -- but, I just want to thank you again before I do that. But, let me close the record, then, for the day.

As Chairperson of the Alcoholic
Beverage Control Board for the District of
Columbia, in accordance with D.C. Official Code Section 2-575(b) and 2-575(b)(14) of the Open Meetings Act, I move that the ABC Board hold a
closed meeting on December 14, 2022.
For the purpose of discussing and hearing reports concerning on-going or planned investigations of alleged criminal or civil misconduct, or violations of law or regulations, and seeking legal advice from our legal counsel on matters identified on the Board's legal, license, and investigative agenda for December 14, 2022 as published in the D.C. Register on December 9, 2022.

Is there a second?
MEMBER CATO: Bobby Cato seconds.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Cato has second the motion, $I$ will now take a roll call vote on the motion before us now that it has been seconded. Mr. Short?

Mr. Cato?
MEMBER CATO: Bobby Cato, I agree.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Ms. Hansen?
MEMBER HANSEN: Jeni Hansen, I agree.
CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Grandis?
And, Mr. Anderson, I agree. As it appears that the motion has passed, I hereby give notice that the $A B C$ Board will this closed meeting. Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act,
notice will also be posted on the ABC Board hearing room bulletin board, placed on electronic calendar on ABRA's website, and published in the D.C. Register in as timely a manner as practical.

We are now adjourned for the day, I again would like to thank all the parties for participating in our day today. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

We are now adjourned request that all Board members return to executive session for further development.

Have a good night, thank you very much.
(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 10:37 p.m.)

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Neal R. Gross and Co., Inc.

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Rito Loco

Before: DC ABRA

Date: 12-07-22

Place: teleconference
was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate complete record of the proceedings.

> Mae $n$ Gars 1. Court Reporter

