

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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THE EXPLOSION OF APARTMENT
BUILDING 8701 OF FLOWER BRANCH
APARTMENTS IN SILVER SPRING,
MARYLAND ON AUGUST 10, 2016

Accident No.: DCA16FP003

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Interview of: ADRAINE BOYE

National Transportation Safety
Board Headquarters
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, S.W.
Washington, D.C.

Tuesday,
November 15, 2016

APPEARANCES:

RAVI CHHATRE, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

KALU KELLY EMEABA, Pipeline Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

LT. WILLIAM OLIN, Fire Explosive Investigator
Montgomery County, Maryland

JOSEPH CAMMARATA, Esq.
Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata, and Siegel, P.C.
(Attorney on behalf of Mr. Boye)

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. CHHATRE: On the record.

3 Good afternoon. Today is Tuesday, November 15, 2016. We are
4 currently in the NTSB headquarters, located at 490 L'Enfant Plaza
5 East, S.W., Washington, D.C. We are meeting regarding the
6 investigation of explosion of Building 8701, Flower Branch
7 Apartments, Silver Spring, Maryland, that occurred August 10,
8 2016.

9 My name is Ravi Chhatre. I'm with National Transportation
10 Safety Board located in Washington, D.C., and I'm Investigator in
11 Charge of this accident. The NTSB investigation for this accident
12 is DCA16FP003.

13 I would like to start by notifying everyone present in this
14 room that we are recording this interview and we may transcribe it
15 at a later date. The transcript will be provided directly to the
16 interviewee for review and identifying any typographical errors.
17 The transcript may be posted in NTSB's public docket.

18 Also, I'd like to inform Mr. Adraine Boye that you are
19 permitted to have one other person to be with you during the
20 interview. This is a person of your choice: your supervisor,
21 friend, family member or, if you choose, no one at all.

22 Please state for the record your full name, spelling of your
23 name, organization you work for and your title, business contact
24 information such as mailing address, and whom you have chosen to
25 be present with you during your interview.

1 MR. BOYE: I've chosen to be Mr. -- with Mr. Cammarata,
2 Mr. Joseph Cammarata.

3 MR. EMEABA: If you can just speak up?

4 MR. BOYE: Okay.

5 MR. CHHATRE: And your mailing address?

6 MR. BOYE: [REDACTED]

7 MR. CHHATRE: Spell it please --

8 MR. BOYE: Yeah. [REDACTED]

9 Spring, Maryland, zip code [REDACTED].

10 MR. CHHATRE: [REDACTED]?

11 MR. BOYE: Yes.

12 MR. CHHATRE: It's North -- what is the name of the street?

13 MR. BOYE: North Hampton.

14 MR. CHHATRE: Hampton. Okay.

15 MR. BOYE: North Hampton.

16 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Thank you. Thank you for that.

17 Now I would like to go around the room and ask for everyone
18 to introduce themselves. Please state your name, spelling of your
19 name, your title, and the organization that you represent, and
20 your business contact information, starting to my left.

21 MR. EMEABA: My name is Kalu Kelly Emeaba, K-a-l-u, K-e-l-l-
22 y, E-m-e-a-b-a. I'm an NTSB investigator.

23 MR. CAMMARATA: My name's Joseph Cammarata, and I am
24 Mr. Boye's attorney. I am employed by the law firm Chaikin,
25 Sherman, Cammarata, and Siegel. Address is 1232 17th Street,

1 N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

2 LT. OLIN: Lieutenant William Olin, fire explosive
3 investigator for Montgomery County. Telephone number: [REDACTED]-
4 [REDACTED]. Email: William, [REDACTED], o-l-i-n,
5 [REDACTED].

6 INTERVIEW OF ADRAINE BOYE

7 BY MR. CHHATRE:

8 Q. Mr. Boye, for the record, give us some background, how long
9 you have been living in the apartment complex building that
10 exploded. And maybe starting on that particular day, starting in
11 the morning, how did your day go, what did you do?

12 A. I've been living there for, I would say, a year and a half, 2
13 years. Just like any other regular day, just went to work at
14 1:00, started at 1:00 at Starbucks. Came back home, I would say,
15 around 11-ish, 11:30-ish. Got home and grabbed the trash,
16 recycling and took it outside.

17 And that's -- on my way back, that's when I started smelling
18 gas and just went downstairs to the basement to kind of locate
19 like where that smell was coming from because it was not the first
20 time. And left the building, and as soon as I left, everything
21 exploded.

22 Q. Okay. Let me make sure I understand. So from your
23 apartment, which was -- what apartment is number there at that
24 time?

25 A. 304.

1 Q. 304.

2 A. Which is on the third floor. Yeah.

3 Q. And that is the topmost floor?

4 A. Yes. Yes, last floor.

5 Q. Okay. So around -- you came home, you said, around 7 --
6 11:00?

7 A. 11:00, 11:30, I would say.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Because I took the bus.

10 Q. Okay. So your shift is like 1:00 to 11:00, something like
11 that?

12 A. No, 1:00 to 9:00. But since I work on Connecticut Avenue, I
13 have to take like two buses.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. So it take me sometimes forever to get home. And at night,
16 it's not that, you know --

17 Q. Sometime around 11:30 you came to the apartment?

18 A. I would say, uh-huh.

19 Q. And then you went up and pick up the trash/recycling, and --

20 A. Yeah. Because I (indiscernible) a little bit with the
21 family, grabbed the --

22 Q. Right.

23 A. Yeah, yeah.

24 Q. And came down.

25 A. Came down.

1 Q. Do you remember roughly what time that was?

2 A. I would --

3 Q. If you don't remember, you don't, but --

4 A. 11:50, around that time, I would say.

5 Q. So you are coming down the staircase. Then what happened?
6 Go in all the details. No detail is less important.

7 A. Okay. So I got a phone call from one of my friend and we're
8 just like talking on the phone about different things. And then
9 soon as I left -- like, I mean, when I got to the second floor, I
10 smell like a strong -- I smelled the gas.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And I even like noticed to my -- I even told my friend like,
13 wow, it's smelling gas again. It's smelling gas again. And as I
14 was talking, then when I got to the building -- I mean, to the
15 main entrance and the smell was like stronger, and I was even
16 telling my friend, like, wow, this is way too strong and I can
17 even hear something.

18 So I had like recycling in my one -- in one hand and I had
19 the trash in the other hand and, and I was like, okay, you know
20 what, I don't care. Because I called 911 before to report that
21 stink, that smell. And I was like, I don't care; I'm just going
22 to get that trash and recycling and when I come back, I'm going to
23 call again. I don't mind being annoying, whatever.

24 So I left the trash at the front door. Just curious, I went
25 to the basement to try and -- I don't know, curious, try to locate

1 where that smell was coming from. Because that was not my first
2 time calling 911, so just to be more helpful, like, okay, I'm
3 smelling that thing from here.

4 So when I got to the basement, the smell was stronger and I
5 was able to hear like a noise, like, you know, like a psss. And
6 then I went back upstairs. I was like, wow, this time I'm even
7 able to hear something.

8 So as soon as I left the building, literally everything
9 exploded.

10 Q. So you listened to the odor -- I mean, listened to the noise.
11 You went up --

12 A. Um-hum.

13 Q. -- where you left your bags?

14 A. Bags.

15 Q. And then, then what happened?

16 A. And then I just opened the door and make a right turn where
17 the dump is and the recycling. And as soon as I made that turn,
18 it was that big blast.

19 Q. So you did not make it to the dumpster?

20 A. Never. I never made it to the dumpster.

21 Q. Okay. Do you definitely know how far away from that front
22 door you were?

23 A. I did not get to the next building, which is the 8703.

24 Q. Oh, you did not make it there?

25 A. I didn't make it, I didn't make it there. If -- oh, worst

1 case scenario, I would say I was at that level.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. At the 8703 level.

4 Q. Okay. And you heard noise? You -- what happened?

5 A. And it was a big blast and, of course, left everything there.
6 Everything was in flame. I almost like got crazy because like my
7 family was there, my mom and sisters. So -- and then I just got
8 inside through the flames. On the first level there was no more
9 stairs, so I just escalated those stuff. And my family was almost
10 like halfway --

11 Q. Coming down?

12 A. Yeah, coming down. And my sister with her two kids, they
13 were just like panicking. So I grabbed the kids, took them out.
14 Went back inside, when the police -- and the police came at that
15 time and just trying to guide them to get them out of there.

16 Q. You are not hurt? You got close, but nothing hit you? No
17 debris hit you?

18 A. No, no.

19 Q. You're not injured?

20 A. No. I was not injured, no.

21 Q. Okay. Any of your family was injured?

22 A. My sister, but -- because like they were walking on the
23 stairs, they were not wearing any shoes --

24 Q. Oh, okay.

25 A. -- when that happened. So it was just like some cuts from

1 the debris.

2 Q. Then what happened?

3 A. And as soon as I left, I mean, everybody got out and -- I
4 know there was like some families still like inside, but the
5 police was around there, didn't want like anybody to get inside
6 anymore because it was getting really hot and very -- extremely
7 dangerous. So I just like grabbed my phone and just like took a
8 couple of pictures and stuff. And then a little bit later the
9 firefighters came and people were just like running around and --
10 we were just like trying to do our best to just like help others,
11 but we could not because the police was just like, you know -- you
12 know, it was secured. We couldn't do anything.

13 So we walked around -- I walked around. I helped my family
14 cross, you know, cross the street. They were at the bus stop.
15 And then I came back because there was a neighbor, like an Asian
16 family, scared so -- she was holding a baby. And then I was there
17 with another guy. Everything was burning, so she threw the baby
18 -- she just threw the baby. Somebody else, you know, caught the
19 baby. But I was there just in case trying to help. And then the
20 firefighters came, just like put the ladders up. People started
21 coming down and -- yeah.

22 Q. Now you said you had called 911 before, gas odor, you said?

23 A. Yes. I called 911 to report --

24 Q. Do you remember roughly when, how long ago? Anything at all
25 on that?

1 A. I'd say probably like on the 25th, around that date.

2 Q. 25th of?

3 A. The month previous. Yeah. So in August --

4 Q. I mean, August 10th is the accident. So 20th of July is what
5 you're saying, or --

6 A. July. I would say July.

7 Q. July?

8 A. July, because -- yeah.

9 Q. Okay. And you do recall calling 911? And do you remember
10 what you told 911?

11 A. Yeah, I called. I was like -- because that was not the
12 first. I called this time -- we used to report it to the
13 management, sisters and others. But this time, like, okay, it's
14 nighttime, nobody's there, so I'm just going to go ahead and call
15 911 because it was a strong smell of gas again. And I even like
16 double-checked with others. I was like, do you guys smell
17 something? They were like yeah. I mean, it's like they were
18 getting used to it. I don't know.

19 So I called 911 and I told them I just wanted to report a
20 strong smell of gas. They were like, do you smell gas -- I mean,
21 asked a couple of questions, do you smell gas in the apartment?
22 I'm like, no, it's just like something -- I was coming from work
23 again -- I can smell the gas like when you open the door and
24 something. They were like, okay, we're going to send people,
25 we're going to send help.

1 Q. And do you remember if they did send help?

2 A. They send -- on the 25th?

3 Q. So you called 25th of July and did they send somebody?

4 A. Yeah, they send the firefighters.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And they came. And I went downstairs to open the door just
7 to identify myself, like let them know that I called, I'm the guy
8 who called and, yeah, I'm the one who was smelling that gas.

9 Q. Do you remember what they did, the firefighters did? Since
10 you are there.

11 A. Roughly. It was like three guys. I opened the door; they
12 got in. And then they were asking me if I was smelling gas. Two
13 of the firefighters were just like, we don't smell anything. So
14 the third guy was like, yeah, I mean, it smells like gas. He was
15 like, okay, are you sure that -- they were asking to their
16 colleague, like, do you really smell gas? The guy was like, yeah.
17 They were like, okay, since you smell gas, then we're going to --
18 I think they have like something -- I don't know how is it called
19 -- like a meter or whatever. And they just like went up.

20 Q. Went upstairs?

21 A. Yeah, we went upstairs, knocked on doors, just to check where
22 the gas -- trying to locate where the smell was coming from.
23 Knocked on doors. And some neighbors, like from the second floor,
24 also got out and was like, yeah, it smells like gas. And they
25 knocked doors, like get into the apartments, used their meter.

1 They couldn't like locate it, and then they left.

2 Q. Do you remember if they went in the basement?

3 A. I don't recall it. Because I was there with them and they
4 said, like if you smell gas, can you tell everybody to just get
5 out? So I went back to my apartment and I told them, okay, they
6 told us to just leave. But we did not leave.

7 They went and knocked on doors. As soon I say that, of
8 course, they went up.

9 Q. Right. But when you called 911, did you tell them that --
10 where you smelled the gas, like near the main door, and they still
11 didn't go to the basement, you're saying?

12 A. I don't remember.

13 Q. Okay. That's fine.

14 And then you said you had called previously. So that was
15 25th of July-ish, sometime you call.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And that was, you said, evening then, meaning at night?

18 A. Evening, evening, evening. At night.

19 Q. Like at 11:00 or -- roughly?

20 A. I don't know. Because I know I worked that day. I don't
21 know. I had a -- I got a ride from a friend, so I probably got
22 home like earlier than 11:00, but I don't know exactly what time.

23 Q. No, no, I don't need exact time, but just a window. Like
24 between -- around 8:00, 7:00 to 9:00, something -- if you
25 remember.

1 A. Between 10:00 and 11:00.

2 Q. Between -- okay, that's good. That's close enough.

3 Okay. What other previous times you call 911?

4 A. I did not call before at all.

5 Q. Okay. Before that did you call the apartment manager for a
6 gas odor?

7 A. My family did, like my sisters. Because I'm not on the
8 lease. I was just moving back from Richmond.

9 Q. Sure.

10 A. So, yeah, I think my sisters like complained like a couple --
11 not complained, but just --

12 Q. Reported.

13 A. Reported it to like the management.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And from what he told them, they said like, okay, it's not a
16 big deal because sometime when people move and they do some
17 painting or flooring, it smells like gas but it's not gas.

18 Q. That's what management told you?

19 A. Told -- yeah, my sisters. Um-hum.

20 Q. Now after the accident, did you guys talk -- I mean, did you
21 talk to your sisters that did she smell gas in the apartment? I
22 mean, you smelled gas and you called.

23 A. Right. What, that day?

24 Q. Yeah. On the day of the accident, did anybody say --

25 A. No. No.

1 Q. Let me back up. After the explosion --

2 A. Okay.

3 Q. -- did you ask your sister or anybody in your family that,
4 hey, did you guys smell any gas?

5 A. Honestly, no. I didn't ask. They was --

6 Q. That's fine. That's fine.

7 A. They was shocked, you know. Everybody was -- yeah.

8 Q. Since you're that close the building, were you facing the
9 building or your back was to the building, or what was your
10 position, physical position?

11 A. We were facing the gas station. I don't know if --

12 Q. Yeah, I know where the gas station is.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. So your back is to the building then?

15 A. Yes. Oh, the back is -- what do you mean?

16 Q. Well, when --

17 MR. EMEABA: Were you're backing --

18 BY MR. CHHATRE:

19 Q. So here is the building -- I'm going to roughly draw.

20 A. When that explosion happened, you mean?

21 Q. Yeah. 8701 is the building that exploded.

22 A. Right.

23 Q. 8703 --

24 A. Is right here.

25 Q. -- the next one.

1 A. Okay.

2 Q. You got to be someplace --

3 A. Right. Yeah.

4 Q. And you're -- roughly you are here, is what I'm trying to

5 find out.

6 A. I was roughly, yeah, I would say here.

7 Q. Yeah, okay.

8 A. Okay.

9 Q. Yeah, if you want to draw that?

10 A. You've got it perfectly.

11 Q. Okay. So now which way you are facing? Facing the street

12 here on Arliss or you're --

13 A. Yes. I'm facing --

14 Q. You're here?

15 A. Um-hum.

16 Q. So your face is this way, to me? Building is on your back

17 side?

18 A. Yeah. But I was going this way, so I was facing --

19 Q. So you're on the side then? You're on the side?

20 A. Yeah, I'm on the side. Yeah. Because I was going to that

21 dumpster.

22 Q. So you turn around with the explosion. What do you see?

23 A. Some flames, kind of like greenish first, and then red, but

24 -- yeah, like a big fire. It was on fire.

25 Q. Okay. But you did hear an explosion? You did hear a noise?

1 A. Oh, yeah. It was --

2 Q. Did you feel any pressure wave? Did you feel a big wind or
3 something pushing you?

4 A. Yes. No, not pushing me. But I felt something.

5 Q. You felt something?

6 A. Because even like the front door, like later I noticed that
7 was like across the street. So it was a big blast.

8 Q. Okay. Did you hear any other explosions?

9 A. I don't --

10 Q. I know you heard the first. You said you heard the first
11 explosion.

12 A. Right.

13 Q. Was there any other explosion after that?

14 A. After the fact, maybe like when the firefighters came and
15 stuff, like, yeah, it was an explosion.

16 Q. So there was a second explosion?

17 A. Yeah, but not like the same one, not like the first one. The
18 first one was louder than the others. I think like the other was
19 just like, I'm guessing, from the apartments, I don't know -- but,
20 yeah.

21 Q. Let me clarify. I'm asking about hearing the noise. I'm
22 saying did you hear the explosion?

23 A. Did I hear -- okay. No. I'm sorry. I'm just -- yeah, I'm
24 just going to say like the one that I called -- I mean, the one
25 heard, I can confirm that I heard that noise.

1 Q. Explosion.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. But after that, you didn't hear any explosion?

4 A. I wasn't, I wasn't really paying attention.

5 Q. No, I understand. I understand. I guess, you know, I'm just
6 trying to see what you remember and what you saw.

7 A. Right.

8 Q. So if you don't -- if you didn't hear any other explosion,
9 that's perfectly fine.

10 A. I don't, I don't remember like hearing other explosions,
11 yeah.

12 Q. Okay. So now after your family came down and you helped
13 them, I guess you went back, you tried to help everybody out.
14 Then what happened? Walk me through that evening then after that.

15 A. After the fact?

16 Q. After the explosion, what -- you know, you went to get your
17 family, your sister, her children, mom or whoever.

18 A. Um-hum.

19 Q. Then what happened? What did you guys do? Did you call 911
20 again or did you do anything?

21 A. No, because the police was there and like firefighters. So I
22 did not call anybody else. I mean, we -- I called like my cell
23 friend, the one that I was with on the phone.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Because like she tried to call me back and then, I don't know

1 if she didn't -- she didn't have any signal, you know. And then I
2 call her back. I was like, "Guess what? There's an explosion in
3 my building." She thought it was a joke. And then, you know, I
4 was mad, just hang up the phone. And then she called back and
5 then just like came over to just, I guess, help.

6 Q. So were you on the phone when the explosion happened, or you
7 were walking?

8 A. I was walking and I was on the phone.

9 Q. Still? I mean --

10 A. Still.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. I lost signal when that explosion happened.

13 Q. Okay. No, what I'm asking is you smelled the gas odor, you
14 walked -- came close to the building.

15 A. Right.

16 Q. In this process, were you on the phone talking to somebody or
17 you were just carrying the trash?

18 A. Both. I was holding the trash and I was still on the phone.

19 Q. Still talking on the phone?

20 A. Um-hum.

21 Q. Same friend?

22 A. Right.

23 Q. Did she say she heard a noise, or she did not?

24 A. That's a weird -- not weird, but I never asked.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. That is fine. That is fine.

3 And do you recall roughly what time was that, that explosion
4 occurred? Because you're on the phone, do you remember roughly
5 what time? I got a time frame that I know 11:30 is when you came
6 home. Some time you spend in the apartment and then you took the
7 trash out. Do you remember roughly when the explosion happened?
8 Do you look at a watch after the explosion, or --

9 A. I didn't have a watch. You know, the only time that I
10 remember, kind of remember is like after that happened, I took
11 pictures. And when I took pictures and checked with the police
12 and stuff, they told me it was like 4 minutes prior to that, and
13 my pictures were at 11:54.

14 Q. Okay. So next question, what did you do with the pictures?
15 Did you give it to ATF? Did you give those to the police?

16 A. Yeah, I showed them the -- oh, yeah, I gave it to the police
17 and -- yeah.

18 Q. So they have the pictures? They have --

19 A. Yeah, they have pictures. And -- yeah. Just, yeah, I showed
20 that to them like the same day when that happened. I told them
21 like I was the guy who called like 2 weeks before. I took
22 pictures, and all that helped to kind of locate what time that
23 happened.

24 Q. And do you remember what time was on the picture?

25 A. 11:54.

1 Q. Okay. 11:54 was the time on the picture. Okay.

2 Do you have your phone with you right now?

3 A. Yes. But I have a new phone because that phone --

4 Q. Okay. I just wanted to compare your time with my time.

5 A. I can check.

6 Q. But if you -- no, but that phone is different now, right?

7 The phone you had --

8 A. Yeah, but we have iCloud.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. I can probably recover those pictures just --

11 Q. Okay. So let me just -- I'm showing 3:30 now. It's 2:30,
12 but it would have been 3:30 right now, because we are on standard
13 time now; it was daylight when the accident happened.

14 A. It was nighttime. Like what do you mean?

15 Q. Right, right. It was daylight savings time, so we are -- we
16 went back 1 hour now.

17 A. Okay. Right, right, right. I see.

18 Q. I'm just trying to find out what your time shows --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- right now.

21 A. All right. So --

22 Yeah.

23 Q. 2:31? Okay.

24 A. On the top, do you see it?

25 Q. Yeah, I see it.

1 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

2 Q. I see 2:31. I'm seeing 2:31 also.

3 A. Okay.

4 Q. Now you said you heard noise the first time you came down in
5 the basement to explore the smell?

6 A. Right.

7 Q. And now do you know what natural gas smells like?

8 A. I would say yes.

9 Q. Okay. And how do you -- I guess I'm asking how do you know
10 it's natural -- describe me how the natural gas will smell like.

11 A. What a gas smell like, smells like? I mean, there's nothing
12 that I can compare it with, honestly.

13 Q. Can you describe it like a (indiscernible)? I can understand
14 -- I mean, I'm not doubting that, you know, you smelled natural
15 gas.

16 A. I understand.

17 Q. I'm just trying to find out how do you know that it's natural
18 gas and not kerosene or petroleum? Gas station is nearby.

19 A. Right. Yeah. It's -- I don't know, that's -- I've been
20 smelling gas and like just compare it to, you know, when you open
21 like sometimes like your gas and you don't get any --

22 Q. Like your range?

23 A. Yeah, your range and you don't get anything, so --

24 Q. That's how you know. Okay.

25 A. I would compare it to that type of -- yeah.

1 Q. Okay. You have smelled it before, so you can identify?

2 A. Absolutely, yeah. Um-hum.

3 Q. So tell me, when you came down the staircase where the odor
4 was strong or it was strong all over in that small area of the
5 basement?

6 A. It was like three doors, like I was saying, when I go to the
7 basement --

8 Q. Draw a sketch, if you would, where the --

9 A. So these are the stairs.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. They go to the basement. It's kind of like this. There's
12 doors here, doors here, and doors here. After the --

13 Q. Okay. Can you tell me -- do you know what these different
14 doors lead to?

15 A. Not this one. But after the accident, that's when I found
16 out that the gas room was here. These are offices. I don't know
17 what's in here.

18 Q. Okay. But -- so you -- when you went down, at that time you
19 didn't know where the different things are?

20 A. No, I didn't know.

21 Q. Okay. So you've never been to the basement before?

22 A. To the basement, but not in.

23 Q. Not in. Okay.

24 A. Yeah, yeah. When you want to go -- like these are -- this is
25 like the leasing office. When you want to go, you just go all the

1 way around.

2 Q. Okay. So the leasing office.

3 A. Yeah. This is the like gas stuff and I don't know what's in
4 here. Maybe it's an apartment or something.

5 Q. All right. Now do you see if the doors are open, locked?

6 A. No, I --

7 Q. When you went down.

8 A. I did -- it was closed.

9 Q. All the doors are closed. But you didn't try to open to warn
10 people that, hey, you know, I smell gas; do you smell gas?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Okay. So you do not know if that door is locked or unlocked
13 at that time? Any of those.

14 A. Any of those.

15 Q. Okay. So where did you smell -- where did you hear the noise
16 in here? Here, here or here?

17 A. I was able to locate it -- the noise was strong over here.

18 Q. Okay. And how did it sound like? Like ssss, is that what --
19 tell -- describe as good you can imitate.

20 A. Yeah. It sounds like most like a, like psss.

21 Q. Okay. And you could hear it through the closed doors?

22 A. Through the closed door. And I was even like telling my
23 friend that I was on the phone with that, wow, this time I'm able
24 to hear something. And I don't know, most people just don't want
25 to keep calling like 911. So I'm like, you know, I don't care.

1 I'm just going to get the trash and I'm going to come back. If I
2 keep hearing the same noise and smell gas, I'm going to call 911
3 again.

4 Q. Now why it came to you to call 911? Who told you to call
5 911? How did you know to call 911?

6 A. When?

7 Q. When you smell that odor or hear the noise.

8 A. I'm just like thinking that gas is serious. And since
9 there's nothing I can do about it, and like it's nighttime and the
10 management is closed, my best --

11 Q. Did the gas company or management told you to call 911?

12 A. No.

13 Q. No. Okay.

14 A. No. It was just like my own initiative.

15 Q. Sure. Do you smell gas any time before this July 25th when
16 you called? Any time before that, did you smell any gas?

17 A. Yes, I did smell gas before.

18 Q. Okay. And in the same building or any other building?

19 A. In the same building.

20 Q. Okay. Same building.

21 A. But sometimes -- I mean, just different times, like
22 daytime --

23 Q. Sure.

24 A. -- sometimes, or when I was going to work, you know. I'm
25 like, okay, I'm running late. You know, I would just like come

1 back at night, okay. Which is crazy. I should have never done
2 that, but whatever. But like asked sometimes like did you smell
3 gas or sometime like do you smell gas? They're like, oh, they're
4 just painting. Because that's the answer that we usually --
5 Q. That's what management --
6 A. -- that's we used to get. Yeah.
7 Q. Management just told you that to -- okay.
8 A. And sometime it's just like, you know, it happens that
9 they're doing some stuff, like they're painting or something.
10 Q. Now will the smell go away or the smell just continued there?
11 The natural gas smell that you smell, will it stay continuously or
12 it will kind of -- there are days that you smell nothing?
13 A. There's days like no -- that you don't smell anything.
14 Q. So there are days like that?
15 A. Yes. Yes, there are a lot of days like that.
16 Q. Okay.
17 A. And there are days like, you know, the smell is like -- comes
18 back.
19 Q. Now there are a lot of air conditioning units that I noticed.
20 A. Um-hum.
21 Q. Now when you came out to throw trash, what kind of traffic
22 was on the road? Was there any traffic at all, people, vehicles?
23 When you were taking the trash out.
24 A. There is like a couple because -- well, I say a couple, but
25 they're young. They live on the third floor. I recognize like a

1 guy and another guy. I mean, a girl and another guy from our
2 floor -- I would say Hispanic -- sitting right here. You know,
3 there's a gas unit over here.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. In our building. So they were just like sitting against -- I
6 don't know, somewhere in between here and here. I don't know.

7 Q. Near that air conditioning unit?

8 A. Yeah, they're near that air conditioning unit.

9 Q. Anybody else? There's an air conditioning unit here also.
10 Anybody else sitting anywhere?

11 A. I didn't notice on that side.

12 Q. Okay. And nobody walking on the street either?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay. So the only two people you saw was like this young
15 couple?

16 A. Young couple. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Two people.

17 Q. Two people are sitting there.

18 Now when you smelled gas, did you talk to them and say, hey,
19 I'm smelling gas; do you smell gas, or something? Any
20 conversation at all?

21 A. No. It happened so fast. You know, like you just got here.
22 So just as soon as I left -- remember, I was still on the phone.

23 Q. Right, right.

24 A. And I had like two -- yeah. So I was holding the phone like
25 this.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. You know, my two trash, so -- yeah. No, I did not.

3 Q. But they're still sitting there. Now what happens with the
4 explosion, were they still sitting there or by that time -- or
5 they were gone? Do you remember?

6 A. When that blast happened, they just -- I saw like the girl
7 like screaming like, oh, my god, you know. And that was it.

8 Q. And the door that you said went flying, was that door here,
9 the main door or this door? This is the road here. This is
10 Arliss.

11 A. I know. Yeah. I'm not sure which doors. I didn't, yeah,
12 check the number.

13 Q. But they were -- to your recollection, they were definitely
14 sitting on this air conditioning unit?

15 A. They were --

16 Q. The two people, the couple --

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. -- they were sitting or standing near the air conditioning
19 unit?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. But they used to sit there. They just -- right there.

23 Q. And they are also on the -- like on your floor, there are
24 only two apartments, right, on the third floor?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. So they were apartment behind you? Which way? There are
2 four apartments on each floor.

3 A. I'm guessing, yeah, I think.

4 Q. Are there -- so you know them, though?

5 A. Like these people?

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay. And have you been in contact with them after the
9 accident?

10 A. No. I've just seen him at some meetings.

11 Q. Okay. And do you recall their names?

12 A. No. I don't know their names.

13 Q. Okay.

14 LT. OLIN: But they live on the third floor, do you think?

15 MR. BOYE: One -- I know one lives on the third floor. Like
16 the youngest lady lives on the third floor.

17 LT. OLIN: Okay.

18 MR. BOYE: The guy -- I don't think the guy lives there.

19 BY MR. CHHATRE:

20 Q. And to your knowledge, they both survived and nobody injured?

21 A. Yeah, yeah, because I've seen him after the meeting.

22 Q. Oh, you have?

23 A. Yes, I have.

24 Q. So they are -- they survived?

25 A. Yeah, they're okay. Yeah. Pretty lucky to --

1 Q. Okay.

2 LT. OLIN: So behind you is the -- you're in 304. 303 is the
3 Asian couple, so that's only -- there's 301 or 302 they live in.

4 MR. BOYE: Was it 303, the Asian guys?

5 LT. OLIN: 303 is Asian.

6 MR. BOYE: Yeah. We are 304. Oh, yeah, I know -- I see.

7 LT. OLIN: So they're in 301 or 302.

8 MR. BOYE: So the one -- like these guys, I would say 302.

9 LT. OLIN: 302. Okay.

10 BY MR. CHHATRE:

11 Q. Okay. Great. Okay, that's all I have so far. But before I
12 let you go -- we'll come back again, you know, depending on what
13 we hear. But anything else you want to add that I may not have
14 asked but you think might help?

15 There is no information which is less important. So if we
16 haven't asked you something, even if you remotely think that it's
17 useful or you are not sure it's useful, go ahead and tell me.
18 Anything that comes to your mind that's, again, unusual you saw,
19 other people you saw, anything that comes to your mind?

20 A. I mean, just other things, but I don't think it's a fact. I
21 mean, I didn't see anybody inside. The police like even asked me,
22 like did you see anybody when you were opening the door? I did
23 not meet any -- I mean --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. And I did not let anybody in.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. And the day that I just -- I don't know -- like call 911 and
3 like the firefighters came when I was smelling gas, I don't know,
4 when -- and when the other guys were saying, okay, this doesn't
5 smell like gas; it smell like incense. I don't know if it
6 matters, but --

7 Q. Right.

8 A. Yeah. And only one guy was able to just like say, okay, it
9 really smells like gas, so --

10 Q. And did -- with these meters in their hand, did they see any
11 gas in any other apartments that went upstairs? Do you remember?

12 A. I don't know. I don't know.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Because I, you know, I didn't -- like myself, like I called
15 and stuff.

16 Q. Right.

17 A. And they were like, okay, do you smell gas? No, I don't
18 smell gas. Okay. I mean, they were talking between them. When
19 the other guy was like, okay, I do smell gas, that's when they
20 told me, okay, why don't you go to apartment and just like tell
21 your whole family to leave?

22 But it happened so many times. I mean, not me calling them,
23 but I've seen them like so many times. So I'm like, okay. In my
24 mind I'm like, we're not leaving. We're just too busy. We're not
25 leaving until like they really --

1 Q. Right.

2 A. -- something is really going on. Which was wrong, but yeah.

3 Q. Now when you call on July 25th, did the management complain
4 to you that why did you call fire department or 911, or whoever?

5 A. I didn't see anybody. Nobody came. Nobody --

6 Q. The management did not -- I mean, they did not complain to
7 you that you should contact them first or something, or why did
8 you bother to call them or something like that?

9 A. No. They didn't say anything. There are sometimes like when
10 there is like an alarm at night. I don't know. At night
11 sometimes there is like an alarm. We have to call 911; there is
12 nobody -- there is no contact to even call management to stop that
13 alarm. You know, when that --

14 LT. OLIN: The fire alarm? The fire alarm?

15 MR. BOYE: That fire -- yeah, that fire alarm.

16 LT. OLIN: In the hallway?

17 MR. BOYE: Yeah.

18 LT. OLIN: The stairwell?

19 MR. BOYE: Yeah.

20 LT. OLIN: Okay.

21 MR. BOYE: So you have to call sometime 911 for them to come
22 over, I mean --

23 BY MR. CHHATRE:

24 Q. To turn it off.

25 A. For like the firefighters to come and stop that noise and go

1 back.

2 Q. Okay. Okay.

3 A. So at night, when it turns dark, you cannot reach the --

4 Q. Contact them.

5 A. Yeah, you cannot contact the --

6 MR. CHHATRE: Thanks.

7 Kelly?

8 MR. EMEABA: Wow, that's interesting. I just have a quick
9 question.

10 BY MR. EMEABA:

11 Q. I just want to go back a little bit. My name is Kalu Kelly
12 Emeaba --

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. -- with NTSB. You did mention the fact that your sisters and
15 including you, you once in a while smell, you know, gas within the
16 vicinity even prior to July 25th, that you actually called the
17 911, correct?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. Now if you can relate, based on your discussion with
20 your sisters, the smell of gas that day they perceived in the
21 apartment, is it upstairs at the top floor or where did they smell
22 this gas?

23 A. When it's daytime, that will locate -- I mean, we start
24 smelling gas, it start from the second floor going down. So you
25 have to leave the apartment and just going somewhere or do

1 something, but you cannot -- we were not able to smell it from our
2 apartment.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Like when you get to the second floor, you can start smelling
5 gas and sometimes it starts -- most of the time it starts there,
6 from the second floor going down.

7 Q. Okay. When you say going down, going down to what level?

8 A. To the first floor.

9 Q. To the first floor?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Until like you leave the building. But it start from the --
13 I would say like from the second to the first.

14 Q. Okay. And do you remember from discussions have any of your
15 sister had the opportunity of reporting it to the management
16 company or actually calling 911, as you did on July 25th?

17 A. I would say they did not call 911. The only reason is
18 because when it happens like daytime, it's like I'm on my way to
19 work. So when I leave, it's like daytime, so at that time there
20 is room -- there is enough room to go downstairs and call the
21 management. And the only reason I was sending sometimes my mom or
22 my sister is just because they're on the lease so, you know, they
23 can -- that can be like seriously. I don't know.

24 Q. Okay. So from what you just mentioned, so you are the one
25 that smell it and you inform them about the smell?

1 A. They did smell it before. Because I've been living there for
2 just like a year and a half, 2 years. They were living there
3 before that. They was -- they smell gas before and they went to
4 the management. But it was daytime, so offices like were open.

5 Q. Okay. So when you told them about your smell of the gas and
6 that you guys -- you people discuss, was it them that repeated to
7 you that they normally smell it or something like that?

8 A. It happened once when I told them that I was smelling gas, if
9 they could go to the management and complain because I was on my
10 way to work. And the other one, it was just like by themselves,
11 just like, okay, noticing that smell strong of gas and just go to
12 the management and tell them, okay, can you guys just like check
13 what is going on because we smell gas?

14 Q. Okay. Then let me come down closer -- as you mentioned, July
15 25th, which you say you smelled gas and that you did call the 911.
16 Where were you exactly when you smell, you specifically smell?

17 A. I was coming from work. So I was getting in the building and
18 I started smelling that gas until like the second floor again.
19 But when you reach -- when you get to the third floor, the --
20 personally, I don't -- you can like barely notice the smell from
21 the third floor where we live at. So when I got inside, I was
22 like, do you -- I ask questions, like do you guys smell something?
23 Do you guys smell like gas or anything? They're like no. I'm
24 like why don't you just like go like check -- go outside and just
25 like -- just to double-check if it's just not me. It's always

1 good have like a second opinion. So they've been just going to
2 the second level, and be like, yeah, it do smell like gas.

3 Q. Okay. Just in a -- you know, to learn more from you --

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. -- how was the smell you perceive on the 25th different from
6 the one you have smelled before that date? The strength, the
7 magnitude, what was different that prompted you to call 911?

8 A. I would say on a scale of 1 to 10, it was a good 8, and it
9 was like the same one. But the only difference is just like this
10 time I was able to hear something.

11 Q. On the 25th?

12 A. Oh, no, not on the -- on the 10th. But on the 25th, it was
13 about the same strength.

14 Q. That you've been smelling before?

15 A. Before the 25th?

16 Q. Before the 25th.

17 A. On the 25th, it was like stronger. It was like gradual, I
18 would say. You know, the smell would go like on and on. Sometime
19 you smell it; sometime it goes away. You know, different levels.

20 Q. So the one you perceived before the 25th, are you saying it
21 was a lower strength?

22 A. Lower strength, yes.

23 Q. Okay. And you didn't think of calling 911 at those times?

24 A. I thought about it.

25 Q. So why did you not do it?

1 A. Because I was on my way to work and I was not -- I mean, it
2 happened so many time and that's what like the management keep
3 telling us. And to make our case, I called my sister to tell her,
4 which is on the lease, to go to the management and complain, or my
5 mom, because those are the people like on the lease. Because so
6 they can call 911. I don't know. I don't know the procedure, you
7 know. But if the smell was like that strong, I think I would call
8 911 myself.

9 Q. Okay. Just a quick question. I know you mention some of the
10 people you -- the couple you saw sitting by the air condition
11 outside and that you were able recognize them. Do you know -- do
12 you have any knowledge of those that live on the second floor and
13 the first floor of this, this here building?

14 A. If I happen to knowledge?

15 Q. Yes. Do you know them?

16 A. No, just -- not by name. But it's a small building. You
17 know, it's 12 apartment -- 12 apartments like total. So, yeah,
18 I've seen kids. I have seen like, you know, a couple of
19 Ethiopians and -- you see them, but not by name. I recognize
20 them.

21 Q. Just by interaction, you know, have there been any
22 opportunity of you asking the people in the second floor or first
23 floor if they smell gas?

24 A. I would say second floor.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Because even that, on the 25th. The other days, no. But
2 they have like interaction with like my other family or mom, be
3 like, okay -- because I know sometimes they've been talking like,
4 okay, I do smell gas. But I was not there.

5 But like on the 25th, like when I call 911 and they came, I
6 know like people on the second floor got out. Like a -- there's
7 an Ethiopian guy even like got out. He got out and he was even
8 like holding his nose. I'm like, do you smell gas? He say, yeah,
9 man; what is it? It didn't know it was gas. So -- and I just
10 double-check, you know.

11 I just feel it's something -- you don't want to just like --
12 I mean, personally I just don't want to call 911 just to because
13 it's just me. Maybe I should. But I always like double-check,
14 make sure that it's just not me, you know.

15 Q. Okay. This individual, you might not remember the name that
16 you mentioned that had his nose and said the smell
17 (indiscernible). Did that action happen while the fire department
18 were there or before they came? Do you have an idea?

19 A. Nobody was there. I didn't see anybody that day. So it's
20 like when they knocked on the door and they got out. Not leave
21 the building, but got out to see who was knocking, because it was
22 -- you know, how loud they are, like boom, boom, boom.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. And they opened the door -- it's like when they got that
25 smell. So he opened the door. So the firefighters like -- didn't

1 even ask like what it was. He was just like, what is it? I'm
2 like, okay, do you smell gas? Like, yeah, man.

3 Q. Okay. That's my question. So he holding his nose happened
4 when the fire department --

5 A. When he opened his door when the firefighter, firemen had
6 came, yeah.

7 Q. That was on the second floor, he was?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. I really thank you for that.

10 I know earlier on while the questions came, you clarified
11 some things, you know, which I wrote down. Because initially this
12 was my understanding until you reiterated, and you can correct me
13 if I'm wrong, initially was that you went out to go and drop trash
14 and when you were coming back, you smell the gas. That was what I
15 had initially from your statement. But you reiterated -- you
16 restated that. You said when you were going out you smelled the
17 gas, but then you left your recycle and your trash in front of the
18 building and you walked down the basement to know where the smell
19 was coming from.

20 So my question will be this: When did you actually try to --
21 when did you actually make the effort to know where the gas was
22 coming from? Was it after you dropped the recycle and the trash
23 coming back, or while you were just coming out of the stairway the
24 first time?

25 A. What I'm saying is just -- that day, the day like the

1 incident happened?

2 Q. Yes, sir.

3 A. When I got off from work, I did not smell any gas. So when I
4 got home and grabbed the trash and the recycling, and coming back
5 down to trash and recycle everything, then I started smelling the
6 gas, you know, on the second floor.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. And I was on the phone. So when I got to the first level, I
9 dropped the bags because the smell was so strong. And I was even
10 telling my friend that I was on the phone with, that I smell gas
11 again. I was going to leave like the building when I heard
12 something weird. I didn't know what it was. So that's when I
13 dropped the bags, still on the front, went to the basement --

14 Q. You headed from the first floor?

15 A. From the first floor.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. It was like very, very, very -- very low. So I dropped the
18 bags, went to the basement. That's when the smell of gas was
19 stronger and the noise. And I went back up, still on the phone,
20 grabbed the bags, left the building around like 903 -- I mean,
21 8703, and as soon as I left, that everything exploded. Like I
22 never went and came back. I mean -- no.

23 Q. Okay. Okay. And correct me if -- your building is 8701,
24 correct?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. And after the incident, the explosion occur, you were
2 still able to then help your mother and your sisters?

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. Okay. So there was not an incident of the moment the
5 explosion occur, the whole house came down the same time?

6 A. On one side, I don't know. But I can't really recall because
7 at that time, you know, you just want to -- you want to just like
8 save your family first. You know, they were just there and I was
9 there. Like you get out and you see like everything is dark,
10 flames. I know that was crazy for me to go back in, but I did not
11 care. So when I went, like I met them halfway. I'm glad that I
12 went back in because there was no stairs anymore and they were not
13 even wearing shoes. That's what I was saying, just like help them
14 to just like get out of the building.

15 Q. So how were you able to reach where their location?

16 A. How I was able to?

17 Q. How were you able to get to their location where they were
18 trapped?

19 A. Because I was wearing shoes, and since there were no like
20 stairs, I was able to walk on that mess. And I reach. Yeah.

21 Q. So it already collapse and you walked --

22 A. Yes. Like the stair already collapsed.

23 Q. Okay. So you walked -- that's my question, how were you able
24 to reach them? So you were saying you walked over the debris to
25 reach them?

1 A. Yes.

2 MR. EMEABA: Okay. That's my question. I just -- yeah.

3 LT. OLIN: Bill Olin, Montgomery County.

4 BY LT. OLIN:

5 Q. So Adraine, so I understand that your -- you know, the
6 explosion occurs and you're sort of -- you know, you're surprised.
7 Do you recall -- and you say it was on fire. Do you recall where
8 you -- I mean, could you pinpoint that fire? I mean, was it --
9 the size of it, how big was it; do you recall?

10 A. I know it was a big fire. And then at that time I took
11 pictures, so I can only --

12 Q. Right.

13 A. -- refer to the pictures.

14 Q. But even before that, or were you still like in shock -- I
15 mean, do you have any recollection before you started taking
16 pictures, as you were coming back like -- I guess I would be
17 interested in if you have any recollections as you're walking back
18 up through basically that debris field in front of your building,
19 and you see all the trash and everything and the building parts
20 out in front, do you remember the fire early at that point, like
21 as you're walking back up?

22 A. I don't remember. But I would say like not under, of course,
23 like where the stairs like were, you know. But so I would say on
24 the other side. So if the building is -- if this is -- yeah, if
25 this is our building --

1 Q. Um-hum.

2 A. -- it would be, first, mostly on that side.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Then you've got the stairs here and we were living here.

5 Q. Yep.

6 A. You know, like these are the levels.

7 MR. CHHATRE: So you are on the back side of the building?

8 LT. OLIN: No, he's on the front.

9 MR. BOYE: Front.

10 MR. CHHATRE: He is on the front, okay.

11 LT. OLIN: He's on the front corner, front right corner.

12 MR. BOYE: Yes.

13 BY LT. OLIN:

14 Q. So when you're making your way back in the building, do you
15 recall if you're going -- are you going through the main doorway?
16 I know the doorway was -- or are you making your -- you're going
17 through the apartment? Or do you know? Are you --

18 A. Not the -- I don't know. I don't know. It was a big blank
19 over here, so there was no doors or anything anymore. It was like
20 a big opening. So I just got in here. My plan was going back to
21 the apartment, but I never made it through there because I met
22 them halfway.

23 Q. Um-hum. So you're walking from the -- you have to basically
24 walk from that front door back towards the back of the building
25 and then turn around to get to the stairs to go up to the second

1 floor, right?

2 A. No, this is the front, right?

3 Q. Right.

4 A. Right.

5 Q. But your stairs don't go right -- do the stairs go right
6 straight in and then go up, or do you --

7 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

8 Q. You don't have to go back and then come up?

9 A. The stairs are like, come kind of like -- it's like a spiral,
10 right? So if it's --

11 Q. So like if this is the front door --

12 A. Um-hum.

13 Q. -- and this is like the common -- the hallway, when you walk
14 in this front door, did you have to walk down here and then turn
15 around and then come up the stairs to a landing?

16 A. Right.

17 Q. And then you -- so this -- so what I'm saying is, when you
18 come through here and walking along here --

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. -- right, to get to the stairs? And then you start walking,
21 and then you come around a landing and you go up to the third
22 floor again; is that correct?

23 A. No, I never made it to the third floor.

24 Q. No, no. But I'm saying that's the way --

25 A. Right, right, right, right. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

1 Q. -- that's the way the staircase is oriented.

2 A. Right, right, right.

3 Q. All right. So as you're coming in here, do you recall if
4 this wall is here? This would be apartment 1- --

5 A. 01?

6 Q. -- this would be apartment 101. Do you recall if that wall
7 was there?

8 A. I don't know.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. But it was like bigger than -- because like that thing was
11 like very -- it's very tiny. But I don't know, like that day it
12 was like pretty wide. It was wider. So -- yeah.

13 Q. Okay. You were present -- they had you present for the
14 testing of the gas meter in the other building, when they brought
15 the -- were you present? That was my understanding, that you --
16 they had you listen to a meter in another building?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. I wasn't there, so -- was any of that testing that was done,
21 the sound -- did anything they do create a sound that was similar
22 to what you experienced the day of the explosion? Does that make
23 sense?

24 A. Yeah. It was like several --

25 Q. They did different things.

1 A. Yeah, but one was --

2 Q. And they did different things --

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. Were any of those items that they went through, create a
5 noise that was similar to --

6 A. Yes. One was pretty close to --

7 Q. What you could --

8 A. -- the sound, like the sounds that they made it to --

9 Q. The hissing?

10 A. Yeah, to --

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. Yeah, they did.

13 Q. Oh, when you -- when the firemen -- on the 25th, when the
14 firemen were making their way around, did you by chance hear any
15 types of an alarm when they were walking through with their meter?
16 Did you hear any -- like a beep, beep, beep, or anything like
17 that?

18 A. I don't know. Like I was saying, I assume that they --

19 Q. It would be loud. It would be loud.

20 A. It would be -- yeah, because --

21 Q. It would be --

22 A. I don't know. Because I went to my apartment; I remember I
23 went to my apartment.

24 Q. Yeah. Right.

25 A. And I don't know -- and they were knocking on the doors

1 trying to locate it.

2 Q. Okay. Because the meter will alarm if they --

3 A. Oh, it would?

4 Q. So you would hear a noise as opposed to -- you would get a
5 reading and then a -- so I was just curious if you heard a --

6 A. But you have to be close that meter, right?

7 Q. No, you would hear it.

8 A. Yeah?

9 Q. Yeah, you would hear it.

10 A. From the first --

11 Q. It would sound like a smoke detector. I mean, if you were in
12 the stairwell, you would hear a beep, beep, beep.

13 A. Okay.

14 Q. No? All right.

15 LT. OLIN: All right. I think that's --

16 MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

17 LT. OLIN: I'm --

18 MR. CHHATRE: Let me do a couple of -- this is Ravi, NTSB.

19 BY MR. CHHATRE:

20 Q. A couple of just quick follow-ups in here. When you came out
21 of the building to throw the bags and you are close to this
22 corner --

23 A. Um-hum.

24 Q. -- in this, whatever, 50, 100 feet, 200 feet, whatever the
25 distance may be, did you smell gas outside?

1 A. No, I did not.

2 Q. Okay.

3 LT. OLIN: Bill Olin, Montgomery County.

4 BY LT. OLIN:

5 Q. Have you ever smelled gas outside the building since --

6 A. No.

7 Q. -- or in the --

8 A. Area?

9 Q. -- in your area around your building or surrounding apartment
10 buildings?

11 A. No.

12 Q. This is prior to.

13 A. Any time that I smell gas I was inside.

14 Q. Okay.

15 BY MR. CHHATRE:

16 Q. Now on that day when you came back from work, did you notice
17 anything unusual, any unusual activity outside the building that
18 you thought is not normal, or --

19 A. No. It was pretty empty. I didn't see anybody. In and out.

20 Q. Now, I remember -- I recall seeing you. Do you recall
21 participating in ATF in the simulation building, going down and
22 telling ATF the smell or odor -- ATF had a test done after the
23 accident.

24 A. Yeah. Yes.

25 Q. Okay. What you've told them and between now, do you remember

1 anything else that you should have told them or should have told
2 us, anything that is -- I guess what I'm saying, do you recall
3 anything more than what you told ATF? At the time of the --

4 A. It was just like mostly questions. I just answered
5 questions. So --

6 Q. Okay. So it's like a question and answer type exchange
7 there, pretty much. Okay.

8 A. Right.

9 Q. You have -- bear with me. I'm just trying to go through the
10 notes and make sure I don't keep asking the same questions again
11 and again, so --

12 Do you know if anybody else was living in the basement in
13 that building, 7301, where you live? Remember you told me that
14 three doors? Do you know if anybody --

15 A. Oh, in the basement?

16 Q. Do you know if anybody was staying there or renting an
17 apartment in that basement?

18 A. I don't know. I thought they were apartments, honestly.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. I didn't even know like this was the gas -- it's after the
21 fact that I know that this was --

22 Q. Oh, so you thought all these three doors were three
23 apartments?

24 A. I thought they were apartments. That's why I didn't want to
25 like try to open the door or anything. I know this door was

1 leading to the leasing office, but I didn't know what like these
2 two doors were.

3 Q. Okay. So -- so the fact that they were (indiscernible) you
4 learned after the fact, after the explosion?

5 A. After the explosion.

6 Q. You never had an occasion to go to that particular room where
7 the gas heater or gas meters were?

8 A. No, I didn't even know it was there.

9 Q. One of those doors.

10 A. This one, yeah. I didn't even know that was there.

11 Q. Okay. Now do you recall the building outside, do you recall
12 if there are windows near the ground level where these people were
13 sitting on the air conditioning?

14 A. They were really at like that corner, at the corner.

15 Q. I mean, anywhere on the front, that corner or anywhere on the
16 front, do you remember seeing any windows kind of -- you know,
17 like a basement without windows, small windows?

18 A. No, no.

19 Q. You don't recall?

20 A. Because to see the windows, like you have to see them from
21 the back because that's where the leasing office is.

22 Q. Okay. But not -- you didn't see anything here in the front?

23 A. No.

24 Q. I mean, you don't recall?

25 A. No, I don't recall it.

1 Q. Okay. Now after the explosion, you went to help your family,
2 do you see any people coming down in addition to your family
3 members?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Anybody that you know or do you hear screaming that
6 somebody's missing at that time, or --

7 A. It was like people screaming and -- and my sister was trying
8 to help like, you know, people on the second floor, like those two
9 kids. But, you know, but she didn't have access. She couldn't.

10 Q. Couldn't help them.

11 A. That's why it was hard for her to leave, you know. So I had
12 to scream at her, like grab your kids, take care of them, let's
13 get out of here. And then she shout about it's hard to see like
14 (indiscernible) kids burning, you know.

15 Q. Now do you remember if -- or do you know anybody in that
16 apartment complex the last 2 years you are staying there, did
17 anybody -- any other building people complain about a gas odor in
18 that area?

19 A. I don't know. I don't know.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Not that I heard about.

22 Q. And again, you are probably the closest person I know who are
23 at that time really so close to the accident scene. So tell me is
24 there anything else I did not ask or anything I should know.

25 Forget about what I asked. Is there anything else you think that

1 I should know to find out, you know, what might have caused this?
2 And again, keep in mind there is no such thing as less important
3 or -- everything that you remember is important.

4 A. I don't know. I can just like tell you facts, you know. I
5 just --

6 Q. No, that's what I want.

7 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I just --

8 Q. That's all I want. Anything that you recall as -- you know,
9 nothing came up during our exchange that you remember or that you
10 think, oh, my god, I forgot to mention this, or --

11 A. Not at this time.

12 Q. Okay. But if anything does come to your mind that, my god,
13 you know -- it's not like our exchange stops here. And if we have
14 questions, we'll come ask you. But if you remember that maybe I
15 should have mentioned this, please feel free to contact us.

16 A. Sure.

17 Q. Again, you know, the communication doesn't stop after this
18 exchange.

19 A. Yeah, I understand. Um-hum.

20 MR. CHHATRE: So you have any last questions, Kelly?

21 MR. EMEABA: Just one.

22 BY MR. EMEABA:

23 Q. While you lived in this apartment, do you require or do you
24 have a possession or do you require any key to access the door?
25 And then when you're going up the stairway, do you have to open it

1 by any means or the door is always open?

2 A. You need a key -- to get into the building?

3 Q. Yes.

4 A. Yeah, you need a key to, like to open the door.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. But sometime -- I mean, it wasn't -- it's not working all the
7 time. Some days it's like very -- it's like defective, you know,
8 so -- or some people just like lock it at night. Because I think
9 they allow two keys per apartment.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. So and the fact that you mention you are not a leaseholder,
13 but your sister and your mom are, their name is on the lease.

14 A. Yes, yes.

15 Q. So how do you have the key to --

16 A. Because at that time my sister was pregnant and she wasn't
17 working, so I had her key.

18 Q. Okay. So, okay, if you are going out, what happens with the
19 key?

20 A. If I go out?

21 Q. Yeah, if you are going out. If you have a key and you have
22 to go somewhere, she never will be leaving at all herself?

23 A. No, not at night.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Like she would just like --

1 Q. Oh, you go to work at night only or in the --

2 A. Most of the time. Most of the time. Occasionally it's
3 random, but most of the time, I, yeah, close. Like 1:00 to 9:00,
4 1:00 to 9:00.

5 Q. Okay. But from your understanding, sometime the keys are not
6 working; means it's defective?

7 A. Yeah. That means it's not locked.

8 Q. Somebody can open it and go in and --

9 A. Yeah. Yeah, in and out.

10 Q. Okay. And do you have an idea -- even though you didn't
11 touch -- according to you, you didn't open the door, the three
12 doors in the basement, do also know if they have -- they are
13 controlled by any kind of access key to -- or they are just normal
14 lock?

15 A. What do you mean?

16 Q. The three doors at the basement --

17 A. Right.

18 Q. -- even -- I mean, you mention you didn't touch them. Do you
19 know if those doors are also controlled by access key?

20 A. Oh, I don't know. Like I'm saying, honestly, I thought like
21 those -- these two door were apartments. So -- yeah. Yeah. So I
22 guess they, yeah, they come -- yeah, I always thought they were
23 apartments until like that happen. I know like this was the
24 leasing office, but these two, I always thought they were
25 apartments.

1 Q. Okay. Thank you.

2 And do you think of -- is there any security camera in that
3 area?

4 A. Not that I know about or ever seen.

5 Q. Thank you.

6 A. You're welcome.

7 LT. OLIN: I'm good. Thank you.

8 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. If not, thank you so much for spending
9 time with us.

10 MR. BOYE: Thank you.

11 MR. CHHATRE: We appreciate it. It's inconvenience for you,
12 but I appreciate your help.

13 MR. BOYE: Thank you.

14 MR. CHHATRE: Again, if anything comes to your mind, please
15 contact us.

16 MR. BOYE: I will.

17 MR. CHHATRE: Thanks again.

18 Off the record.

19 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: THE EXPLOSION OF APARTMENT
BUILDING 8701 OF FLOWER BRANCH
APARTMENTS IN SILVER SPRING,
MARYLAND ON AUGUST 10, 2016
Telephone Interview of Adraine Boye

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA16FP003

PLACE: Washington, D.C.

DATE: November 15, 2016

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.

Kay Maurer
Transcriber