

From: [Rummel, Marsha](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: ledell.zellers@gmail.com; [Field, Derek](#); [Angie Scott](#)
Subject: Alder comments on Agenda item 8. 77018 506-518 E Wilson Street and 134-148 S Blair Street
Date: Monday, May 22, 2023 1:51:50 PM

RE: 8. 77018 506-518 E Wilson Street and 134-148 S Blair Street; 6th Ald. Dist.: Consideration of an alteration to an approved Planned Development District-Specific Implementation Plan (PD-SIP) to allow outdoor recreation, weekly outdoor events, and special seasonal events in the parking lot for the adjacent restaurant-taverns

Dear Plan Commission members-

Last Thursday I held a neighborhood meeting on zoom about the Essen Haus, Come Back In and Up North proposal to allow three weekly outdoor live music events from March 15- November 1 in addition to clarifying previously approved uses. Unfortunately, I was unable to send a postcard notification to the surrounding neighborhood. Notice was given through my weekly blog and the neighborhood listserve.

Opinions at the meeting ranged from support for live music at the Essen Haus complex as one of the reasons to live in the neighborhood to concern about the number of proposed weekly events and the remnant feelings of frustration with the applicant from the previous two years of zoning noncompliance.

During the meeting, Bob Worm offered to change the requested weekly live music events to May 15 – September 15. Kevin Burow, the project architect, explained that the outdoor capacity would be about 112 based on 28 4-top tables.

Also at the meeting, staff explained that the Plan Commission will approve the alteration to the PD-SIP zoning and the site plan [maps](#) for the previously approved six special events and sand volleyball seasonal uses, as well as consider the new request for weekly live music events. But staff also noted there will be a separate process where the Alcohol License Review Committee (and Common Council) will address outdoor capacity and modify the various establishment's liquor and entertainment licenses.

I support the staff recommendation for a one-year trial and changing the hours of the sand volleyball to end at 9p. I understand from the applicant that ending volleyball at 9p creates a hardship since games have been scheduled but in general I support consistent end time rules for outdoor uses for all licensed premises. I appreciate the offer the applicant made at the neighborhood meeting to reduce the outdoor live music events to May 15 – September 15 (from March 15 - November 1) a reduction of roughly 50 events. I urge the Plan Commission to accept this calendar change as a condition of approval.

At the neighborhood meeting, a few neighbors suggested that there could be events with acoustic music. I also got feedback from other neighbors who support live music events that Sunday and Monday are nights when many live music venues are closed.

I hope Plan Commissioners can clarify the intent for providing two locations for stages for seasonal events and to try to determine from the applicant and public testimony if there is a difference in noise impacts between the two stage locations identified. One stage is next to the parking lot that abuts the Germania condo drive aisle and faces Come Back In, the other is between the Up North and Essen Haus buildings and faces the parking lot or perhaps it will be set up the face the outdoor seating, it is not clear from the rendering.

The benefit of a one-year trial for the requested three live music events a week and all outdoor uses ending at 9p is that it would provide a complete picture for the applicant and neighbors to see how it worked with the understanding that the outdoor impacts would end at 9p. At the meeting, I asked the applicant to consider two live music events a week, Mr. Worm declined.

Whether the Plan Commission approves three days a week with live music or fewer days, this request along with the future ALRC process means that the applicant will have outdoor uses in the parking lot every day until 9p in the summer season assuming the staff recommendation is adopted to end volleyball by 9p. I agree with the following staff comment and will work with the applicant if requested to assist: *“In addition to allowing the expanded outdoor uses under conditions for one year on a trial basis to see if the additional programming of the parking lot can occur harmoniously with surrounding property owners and residents, the limited term of the approval might discourage the applicant from perpetuating the use and maintenance of the rare large surface parking lot present in the central/ downtown area in favor of a redevelopment of that portion of the subject site in a manner consistent with adopted plans.”*

Relying on these outdoor uses as part of the applicant’s business model is not consistent with adopted plans for the site.

Thanks for your service-

Marsha Rummel
District 6 Alder

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