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A Place For All People

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April 23, 2010

Dear Plan Commission Members:

As Executive Director of the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center, I have the opportunity to meet and discuss many issues, concerns and community matters with area business leaders. Some dig their heels in so deep to "protect" their profits that concerns raised by area neighbors are rarely, if ever, heard. Others, like Rico and Corey of Plan B are always listening and accessible to address concerns.

While I have not had time to thoroughly review the matter before you to offer an opinion, I write to offer an endorsement of the community-caring character of the proprietors of Plan B. These fellas will go the extra mile to make accommodations. Yet, it is my hope that the extra "miles" required to find a mutually pleasing solution here will be reasonable to this valued business, while mitigating in the best possible way issues raised by neighbors.

Now, a solution that successfully addresses the concerns of some neighbors while being reasonable to Plan B may not be easily conceived. Trial and error, including the considered enclosure proposed today may be the best option available at this time.

Sincerely,

Gary Kallas
Executive Director
Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center

Partially Funded By

United Way

CDBG Community Development Block Grant Program

Family, Individual and Community Strength
DANE COUNTY
Department of Human Services

City of Madison

Original

PETITION TO MADISON PLAN COMMISSION April 26 Mtg Item 10 -, 924 Williamson

We the undersigned SUPPORT a 4 ft. high enclosure for smokers only at the back parking lot door. Due to difficulties with patrons straying too far we feel this would be a needed improvement. However we OBJECT to any carrying out of any drink or food since this gathering spot has been a continuing source of loud talking and other disruptions which continue long into the wee hours of the morning. Therefore we will OBJECT to any tables, ledges or chairs, or benches which would prolong co-mingling at this area. Any screening should be minimal so as to remind those outside that after **dark** it is time for **soft night voices**. Substantial screening would also prevent attendees from realizing that there are residential units on three sides of Plan B. To attempt to make the enclosure a significant sound barrier would be too great an undertaking at present unless it were designed using Aural Architects (see Blesser and Salter, 2007)*

We also note that similar noise problems occur at the front door and at building emptying times.

Name		Adress	Date
Thomas Schutz	owners	946 Jenifer St.	4-25-10
Amy Schutz	owners	946 Jenifer Street	4/25/10
Emily McFadd	renter	940 Jenifer St Apt. 2	4/25/10
Spence Thiel	renter	940 Jenifer St. Apt. 2	4-25-2011
Lynn Lee	owner	922 Jennifer	4.25.10
[illegible]	owner	924 Jenifer	4.25.10
[illegible]	renter	907 Willy St. #1	4.25.10
[illegible]	renter	911 1/2 Williamson Ave	4.25.10
GAGE MITCHELL	renter	911 1/2 WILLIAMSON AVE	4.25.10
Brandy Tudor	renter	947 Williamson Ave	4.25.10
Richard Guyot	owners	936 Jenifer	4.25.10
Judith Guyot	owners	" "	4.26.10
Tracy Gallo	owner	916 Jenifer St	4.26.10
[illegible]	owner	" "	"

circulated by Richard Guyot 936 Jenifer 4.25 thru 4.26.2010

Please call Dick Guyot 256-8080 for pick up to take to 6pm Monday Plan Comm Mtg.

* Blesser and Salter. Spaces Speak, Are you Listening? Experiencing Aural Architecture. 2007

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Parks, Timothy

From: Jane Smith [toso97@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2010 9:34 AM
To: Parks, Timothy
Subject: Public Hearing comments: Plan B

I am concerned that neighbors have not been adequately notified of the conditional use being sought by Plan B.

First, section 28.12(11)(f) states:

> The applicant also shall post a sign, obtained from the Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development, on the property that is the subject of the application. The sign shall list the times and locations of public hearings before the Plan Commission and Common Council to consider the application. It shall be posted at least seven (7) days prior to the first public hearing and shall be located in a position on the property so that it can be read from the sidewalk or other public right-of-way.

I walked by Plan B the day prior to the scheduled hearing and there was not any notice posted.

Second, the Notice claims that the application includes a conditional use for an outdoor eating area. This is not in accord with the February 22 Plan Commission meeting minutes that describes the use as "an outdoor smoking area." Plan B's application also describes this as "smoking enclosure." In fact, the enclosure cannot be an outdoor eating area since the application states that there "will be no outdoor seating."

There is a significant difference between an outdoor eating area and an outdoor smoking/drinking area: the potential for noise is far greater, and that noise will occur during prime bar hours (which are also sleeping hours for many residents).

Mr. Sabatini's March 29, 2010 letter to the Zoning and Plan Commission states that there "will be no outdoor seating or music within the enclosure." Should the Plan Commission approve the application, these concessions should be made a condition of approval. The Marquette Neighborhood Association also suggested additional screening/muffling to contain the noise. This, too, should be made a condition of any approval. The Plan Commission should also reserve the right to revoke the use of this outdoor smoking/drinking area if Plan B is unable to contain the noise.

Plan B should be required/encouraged to obtain additional parking arrangements (such as it has/had with Gateway). This was a requirement of the original conditional use approval and it should continue to be enforced, particularly when the applicant is seeking additional capacity. A decrease in residential parking will decrease nighttime noise (and vomit) in the residential area.

As a side note, I find it a bit ironic that Madison, at the forefront of the non-smoking bar movement in the county, appears willing to allow construction of smoking areas. With a solid, relatively high, fence (to hopefully contain noise), the adverse health effects may not be any less than what would occur in a well-ventilated bar.

Linda Lehnertz
512 S Paterson

ITEM 10

Parks, Timothy

From: Jennifer Stewart [jenstew55@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 25, 2010 7:23 PM
To: Parks, Timothy
Subject: Plan B Nightclub Plan Commission Meeting

Plan Commission Members,

I will be unable to attend the meeting regarding Plan B's request for an outdoor smoking area and increased capacity, so I wanted to write an email regarding my thoughts. I live at 911 Williamson St, directly across the street from the club, so the activities there have a direct effect on me.

Let me get right to the point and state my opinion and reasons. I believe that a smoking area is a necessity, but I am strictly against food and drink being allowed in the smoking area. The reason for that is that I do not want to encourage any of the club goers at Plan B to spend more time outside than necessary. While the smoking 'coral' would be at the rear of the building I would imagine that the shrieks and shouting of its inhabitants would float over to me on the other side (and make life awful for the residents behind Plan B). Allowing people to drink and eat outside would encourage lingering, and I would prefer they smoke and then get back inside. While I would love smoking to be prohibited from Plan B altogether because I do not like to encourage the spread of lung cancer, I'm sure that the Plan B partiers would just exit and smoke right in front of the club and therefore in front of my home.

I would like to see the capacity increased since there is occasionally a line outside and I am often woken by their shouts. The sooner they can get those people inside, the more I can enjoy uninterrupted sleep (which is rare since Plan B has opened).

While I don't particularly love Plan B being across the street from my home, I would like to state that I do love night clubs. I love dancing, am a former night club employee, and even met my husband in a night club. It is because of my love and knowledge of night clubs that I would never elect to live across from one. I can remember several nights at 2am when I would stream out of a club with my friends, screaming at them because I had practically gone deaf due to the bass speakers. But I can also confirm that there were no houses around as I never visited a night club in a residential area. In fact, I would never imagine such a thing would exist. But here it is, opened up across the street from my house only months after I moved in. I would love to go back in time and ask the planning committee what they were thinking when they approved that one, but all we can really do is deal with the miserable situation now. Fortunately I love my home 95% of the time I am in it, but the pounding bass and screaming inhabitants of Plan B create the 4% that is my misery (1% is for the volleyball whistle at the Wisco).

Please make all efforts necessary not to contribute to the further disruption of those residents on Willy St and the surrounding area. Yes, it is a place for everyone, but it is also a place for the respect of those living there. And also for those sleeping there.

Thank you,
Jennifer Stewart (& seconded by my husband Gage Mitchell)

Parks, Timothy

From: Dick Guyot [yulashoes_@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, April 23, 2010 11:22 AM
To: Parks, Timothy
Subject: April 26 Plan Comm mtg. Item: 924 Williamson

For Plan Commission Members Packet:

Plan B and some of it's Marquette Neighbors

(924 Williamson)

Plan B is a venue which offers a place for gathering, socializing and enjoying a unique music with limited food and drink. During a "probation" period a committee of the Plan B principals and nearby neighbors, organized by the MNA is to work out acceptance of this new kind of business. I am Dick Guyot and have attended the last four " committee" meetings at 4 pm. Being under the auspecises of MNA Scott Thornston, president of MNA, the meetings have exchanged ideas and view points rather loosely. There are no "votes" taken. A review is written up by Scott.

The last meeting , like the others was held at the front of Plan B with 6-10 persons sitting in two columns in a dim unlighted area (4 pm). There was a good output of ideas but often various pairs of attendees were talking to each other, which often happens in informal gatherings. I dismissed this meeting as being significant. I thought I should and would talk to many others about the needs of Plan B and the neighbors...but in the ensuing weeks I never did. In the past 40 years I've been one of the many, perhaps too many plentiful , activists. I left this meeting assuming the applicant would ask for the corral (which is definately needed, and **I Support.** I assumed Plan B would ask for drinks to be allowed which **I do not support**. I assumed the other details would be worked out but basically, I supported the Concept of the corral but I would specify that the screening be as minimal as possible so that patrons would **NOT** loose **awareness** they are outside, It is night, **which means soft night voices only.**

Of course that's too much to dream for. But that's the only way the patrons can be allowed out because half of the disturbing the peace activities by Plan B and its patrons is the braying and squealing of persons "just stepping out for a moment". We are heartened that Rico and Corey, et al are on the right track by specifying that there will be no tables or chairs...just standing only.

I believe the corral should be minimal in size and do not like the idea of reducing parking because that puts more pressure on public street parking which hurts other businesses, their patrons, residents and their visitors and guests. The parking variance is a gift to Plan B from all the citizens of Madison. Does it deserve another one?. My storefront tenant at 911 Williamson Objects to this further variance. I Object also.

Because ongoing disturbing the peace by Plan B wannabee patrons, current smoking patrons and dawdling-to-leave patrons is an issue I Support raising the capacity 50 persons to keep them inside more.

Rico and Corey,etal Have done a superlative job of reducing their preposterous broadcasting of their signature thumping beat to the earth's atmosphere . However, last Sunday morning (12:01 am April 17th.) Plan B started to blast their music outside of their building. They and other people don't understand how loud it can be. Yes, Yes, They have been wonderful about controlling the opening of the front door. That's great. They even built a vestibule inside the side door. One can notice some reduction in"fugitive"sound. Congratulations to them for the time and money to do those

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things. There are two layers of glass replacing the single plate glass. That's good for energy conservation too. However, committee members have asked them repeatedly to hire some real experts in acoustics to determine just what will work to keep sound inside. To date it has just been uninformed pondering. I don't know either.

Some background: Our house is at 936 Jenifer on the 3rd lake ridge due south and in line with 936 Williamson which bookends the east side of the Plan B lot where the fence perpendicular to Williamson will be. We own 933 and 937 Williamson across the street from the Plan B greenspace and wooded glen. We are extremely greatful that Plan B graciously saved this greenspace because there is a vacant lot between our two rental residential buildings. It is a nice vista we won't ever willingly change for the neighborhood. We also own 911 Williamson a storefront with an apt above. You will notice that Plan B is surrounded by residential units on three sides . The backs of the houses on Jenifer are about 300 feet from the front of 924 Williamson. In at least 3 of the 5 Jenifer st houses the occupants have to try to sleep by moving to as close to the street side of their houses as possible. After that, we would have knock on doors across Jenifer at 1 am and see if we can bunk somewhere there.

The operators of Plan B are erratic. Most of the time the excess volume is kept inside. But often it is cranked up such as the recent Sunday AM. So ,until the disturbing of the peace can be settled more positively one would think that perhaps the occupany limit might be reduced. And ,other gifts re-examed.

Thank you for your attention

Dick Guyot

Firchow, Kevin

From: Dick Guyot [yulashoes_@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2010 5:48 AM
To: Hemming, Carrie; corey@planbmadison.com; Dick Guyot; gmelde@charter.net; gtipler@tds.net; Plominski, Katherine; lwermter@library.wisc.edu; Lindsey Lee; Rummel, Marsha; rico@planbmadison.com; 1st.john5.11@gmail.com; titus@chorus.net; trgallo@hotmail.com; turtlelegg@yahoo.com; cjc53703@aol.com; Firchow, Kevin; rstatz@cityofmadison.com; mnaboard@marquette-neighborhood.org
Subject: Barry Blesser : The Seductive (Yet Destructive) Appeal of Loud Music

The Seductive (Yet Destructive) Appeal of Loud Music[1]

By Barry Blesser, Ph.D.

Music makes me forget my real situation. It transports me into a state which is not my own. Under the influence of music I really seem to feel what I do not understand, to have powers which I cannot have.
Leo Tolstoy, 1890

Introduction to the Right Question

The scientific literature unequivocally proves that prolonged exposure to loud sound produces permanent damage to the hair cells in the inner ear. In addition to published research articles, the National Institute of Health and the National Institute of Occupational Safety provides public reports and recommendations. Loud music, like a jackhammer or jet engine, destroys hearing. See the review article about the relationship between loud music and hearing loss (Staff, 2006), which contrasts with many of the studies from 1970s (Dibble, 1995). During the last three decades, something appears to have changed in both the music culture and the technology used to support it.

Why is the warning to reduce the intensity of music often ignored? Few psychologists, audiologists, and hearing researchers ask the relevant question: Why do people choose to listen to music at high intensities? Since so many musicians and music enthusiasts are now choosing to use electronic amplification to raise the volume of music, there must be a good explanation for their behavior. I will argue that loud music is not (a) an accident that arises from ignorance of the consequences, (b) the result of being manipulated for commercial profits, or (c) a temporary fad that happens to exist in our culture at this moment in time. Excessive loudness serves a function.

Before beginning the discussion, I would like to relate a personal experience. Several years ago, I attended the awards banquet of a professional sound engineering society, which was sponsored by a company that manufacturers inexpensive ear protectors. A sample gift was placed on each plate. When the music entertainment began, at deafening intensities well over 120 dB, I was the only person in a room of 300 professional audio engineers who inserted the ear protectors. Although this experience is far from unique,

[1] Originally published in *eContact! 9.4 — Perte auditive et sujets connexes / Hearing (Loss) and Related Issues*. Montréal: Communauté électroacoustique canadienne / Canadian Electroacoustic Community, June 2007.
See also the expanded article: The Unexamined Rewards for Excessive Loudness, presented to the 9th International Congress on Noise as Public Health Problem, 2008,
http://www.blesser.net/downloads/ICBEN%202008%20Final.pdf

one would think that those who depend on hearing for their professional livelihood would be the first to protect their auditory assets. But audio professionals are not unique. One find excessively loud music at elegant nightclubs, sporting events, wedding parties, cinema theaters, popular concerts, customized automobiles, and in the ear buds of kids walking around in a daze. Loud music is a world phenomenon unrelated to social class or cultural status. What function does loud music serve?

Where to Search for the Explanation

Before offering my analysis and explanation for the phenomenon of loud music, I must concede that this subject has received very little attention from academic researchers. Although some provisional results in scientific studies are

strongly suggestive, a conclusive answer is not yet available. Moreover, formal research methods are often inadequate for answering complex behavioral questions, and phenomenological explanations using folk science often provide more insight. I start with the assumption that there must be one or more psychological benefits to loud music. Since the actual explanation may vary among individuals and cultures. I will present a catalog of possible explanations, rather than a definitive answer.

There are three separate but related motivations for loudness: social rewards, biological stimulation, and selective aural focus.

Loud Music Transports Listener to Another Space

The concept of aural architecture, which I developed in my recent book (Blesser and Salter, 2007), is directly relevant to loud music. Each sensory modality creates its own sensory space, which need not be consistent with other sensory spaces. A person can exist in a visual space, aural space, tactile space, olfactory space, and so on. To appreciate the difference between an aural and visual space, consider two examples of a box over your head. In the first case, the box is made of glass, while in the second case it is made of black cloth. With a glass box, you have a small aural space but a large visual space, and conversely, with the cloth box, you have a large aural space but a small visual space. When we experience space primarily using our eyes, which provides a clear sense of physical objects and geometries illuminated by light, we are not necessarily aware of other types of space.

Aural space is a harder concept because sound is ethereal. An aural space has boundaries based on those events that are audible; an aural space is determined by the acoustic horizon. Every sound source and every aural event within the listener's acoustic horizon is part of the aural space. The acoustic horizon is determined by the loudest sounds. In a quiet home, you can hear your footsteps on a hardwood floor but in a noisy city, you cannot. Sound chances the size of the aural space. Before a concert begins, you can hear the breathing of your friend sitting next to you, but after it begins, you hear nothing other than the music. Loud music makes a listener functionally deaf to everything but the music. The sound of your friend's breathing leaves your aural space. In real sense, loud music transports listeners into another aural space, moving them from the social space of

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people to the musical space of the performers. Loud music also suppresses the internal space of daydreams, overpowering the inner space of self-generated sounds and pictures, and listeners are only in the space of the musicians. Everything else is gone. Loudness is a space transporter because you become functionally deaf to the immediate environment.

Sonic Dominance and Aural Combat

Just as large animals dominate the jungle, loud sounds dominate the experience of aural space. Because our auditory system is active 24/7, and because we do not have the equivalent of ear-lids, listeners have no means of controlling the dominant sounds of the environment. Furthermore, our auditory cortex is connected both directly and indirectly to many other brain substrates. Unlike vision, which has voluntary control to select what is being seen, hearing is tightly coupled to our sense of the environment without control.

At a cocktail party with many equally loud conversations in different locations, an individual can select what to listen to. But when loud music is present, all other sounds are inaudible. Similarly, when the driver in a car raises the volume of music, he is transported out of the space of automobiles and trucks on the road. Listening to music with earphones blocks unwanted environmental sounds, transporting the listener to an entertaining music space. Like many artifacts of evolution, our response to loudness transports us to another world. Advertisers who present messages before movies know that loudness sells because you cannot focus on any other sonic event. You cannot escape physically or perceptually. They own your aural space, and they know it.

An aural space with loud music is often experienced as "exciting" because loudness represents intense activity. Because sound is always associated with a dynamic event that requires energy, loud music is equivalent to intense energy. In our pre-electronic world, creating a loud sound always required intense physical exertion. Loud drums require violent pounding. We respond to the implied physicality of loudness, even though electronic amplification only mimics physical exertion. From an evolutionary perspective, we still respond to loudness as if it represented a big event that was relevant to our survival. Loudness gets our attention.

Live Musicians Inhabit Paradoxical Spaces

Musicians creating live music frequently find that they are simultaneously living in two or more spaces. On the one hand, the sound from headphones embeds musicians in their electronic music; on the other hand, environmental sounds connect musicians to real people in a real space, be it the bartender, audience, or stage manager. How then

can a musician transport himself, at will, from one space to the other? To a large extend, the only control mechanism is loudness. The louder space dominates. There is no intrinsic biological means for controlling sound intensity, but electronic amplification allows headphone space to dominate an environment space.

Petersen (2007) argues that in-ear headphone can be used to make the musical space dominate the environmental space by creating sound levels above 140 dB, which is very

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dangerous. Such levels are not accidents. Consider the case of a fully packed nightclub with intoxicated listeners, and consider that the musician's headphones do not block out the audience noise. To be exclusively in the musical space, the musician may choose high amplification to mask the unwanted noise.

In some cases, musicians will blast one ear with their amplified music while leaving the other ear for the sounds of the environment. As a species, we are simply not designed to be in multiple spaces, especially when one space is virtual. We can switch visual spaces by changing our point of focus, but we cannot change aural spaces in a similar way. Inventive musicians design ad hoc solutions to supplementing our inability to select an aural space.

On a final note, intensity can function like a flavor enhancer that makes aural subtlety perceptible. Professional musicians and sound engineers often raise the level for just this reason: they can hear more nuances. Music with a very wide dynamic range presents a problem. The amplifier that makes soft nuances audible also makes loud components even louder and very destructive. Many years ago when I was designing artificial reverberators, I would often raise the sound level so that I could detect the unwanted artifacts of the algorithm. But I was oblivious to the damage produced by those loud sounds that I was ignoring. Although I was not consciously attending to those sounds, my inner ear was still being subjected to their energy.

Music Changes the Brain and Body

The phrase "altered state of consciousness" is generally a negative concept that is associated with drugs, tobacco, and alcohol. Moreover, the concept incorrectly implies the existence of a normal state. A more careful examination of the concept shows that our environment is constantly changing our perceptual, cognitive, emotional, and hormonal state. There is no normal. A stimulus that changes our internal state need not be an illegal substance. In fact, when fully disconnected from the environment, as with sensory deprivation, we lose our sanity (Cohen et al, 1965).

Music has always served as a means for changing our emotional state, be it relaxation, excitation, arousal, or tranquility. Blood and Zatorre (2001) showed that pleasurable responses to music correlate with activity in those brain regions implicated with reward and emotion. Raising the loudness of music, like a double shot of whisky, elevates the intensity of the experience. Background music at 40 dB is very different from a pounding rhythm at 120 dB. Listeners respond differently. Loud music can enhance neurological attentiveness, which psychologists call arousal.

While much of the evidence is inferential and speculative, there is no question that loud music is complex stimuli that, under certain conditions, can significantly change the mind body state. Neurobiologists are only now beginning to understand the complexity of our brain. Music interacts with brain substrates that are associated with rewards and emotions (Levitin, 2006). Music is a stimulant, like caffeine, sugar, alcohol, anger, vigorous

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exercise, sexual activity and many others. Loud music is a simply a stronger stimulant that soft music.

Loud Music Functions as a Self-Medicating Drug

Fast and loud music has been shown to enhance exercise on a treadmill without changing the perceived effort (Edworthy and Waring, 2006). Musicians exposed to loud music report intestinal distress (Rapid, 1990) Loud music has been shown to extend the influence of the drug ecstasy in rats (Iannone et al., 2006). Loud music has also been implicated in: psychological disorientation, ability to focus on other tasks, increases heart rate, decreases vascular blood flow, increases in the body's core temperature, and distress in the immune system. In one study, researchers found that loud music activated those brain regions that are associated with euphoria drugs, such as cocaine. There is evidence that music elevates endorphins connected with pleasure centers in the brain. Conversely, there is some evidence that when a person is exposed to high level sound, the brain contains chemicals that are also found in patients diagnosed with schizophrenia. Studies suggest that there is an increase in alcohol consumption in environments with loud music (van de Goor, 1990). Perhaps because loud music overpowers the senses and cognitive judgments, people at parities often overeat. In another study, some students who consistently listened to loud music exhibited maladaptive behavioral patterns consistent with substance abuse (Florentine et al, 1998). The American Academy of Pediatrics warns that loud music overstimulates children with attention deficit disorder.

Although the inner ear is thought to be the only means of sensing sound, there are reports that the sacculus (a component of the inner ear's vestibular/balancing system) responds to low frequency sounds that are above 90 dB (Todd and Cody, 2000; Todd, 2001). Furthermore, the sacculus has neural connections to those parts of the brain that are responsive to all forms of pleasure. By activating the sacculus, loud music with a strong beat may be a form of vestibular self-stimulation. Furthermore, since loud sounds trigger the stapedius reflex, which attenuates sound entering the inner ear, the relative contribution from the sacculus would be increased. Dibble (1995) suggested that popular music could only be appreciated at levels of 96 dB or more, which is consistent with the sacculus theory. The range of intensity between pleasure and damage is extremely small.

Social Synchronization of Brain States

Music has been around since recorded history just because it has such a strong influence on human mood and behavior. Religious and political leaders have used loud music to stimulate strong emotions and to suppress rational thinking. Hitler moved Wagner from the concert halls to the streets using large megaphones and amplifiers. Gospel music is a critical component in many religious services. The military uses marching bands, and the old Roman armies used mechanical noisemakers to stir passions and to frighten the enemy. In order to demoralize and disable their targets, the US used highly amplified music in the siege of Manuel Noriega at the Vatican Embassy in Panama, and at the siege of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco. Loud sound has been a weapon of torture. Loudness, especially with transients, is associated with fear. From an evolutionary

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perspective, loudness correlates with close distances, violent impacts, and large aural mass. Loud sonic events are bigger, closer, and energetic.

When engaging in a group activity, human beings function as if their brains were connected. Young women who live together find that their menstrual cycles become synchronized. Similarly, rhythmic hand clapping at a concert illustrated sensory motor synchronization. Synchronized brains produce strong group cohesion and a loss of individuality, which is why the military uses marching bands and why political rallies rely on loud music. Dancing to loud music is the obvious synchronization of mind and body. Loud music synchronizes the brains of listeners.

Social cohesion is a critically important part of our evolutionary heritage. We feel safer in a group because the community is more powerful than an individual; groups provide protection against unknown dangers; groups provide food, sexual partners, help with child rearing, and support in old age. Contrary to our cultural bias towards individuality, we were designed to connect to others in groups of 150 to 500 (Dunbar, 1998). Loud music enhances group cohesion. A live concert, even with reproduced music and lip-syncing performers, provides a connection to others in the audience.

Concluding Comments

The social, emotional, and psychological rewards for listening to loud music have not been studied in detail, in part, because such studies would expose listeners to be sound intensities that would damage their inner ear. For this reason, research studies are always indirect, using substitute species, questionnaires, statistical correlations, and anecdotal reports.

Even without a definitive conclusion, it is clear that loud music changes the mood and behavior of listeners, often in a pleasurable way. There may not be consistency among individuals with different temperaments and values, but the seductive attraction of loud music has a simple explanation: it does something pleasurable for listeners even if the details are not known or vary among individuals. But like all forms of pleasure, excess produces damage, and everyone must balance the risk versus reward. And that balance is a personal choice that cannot be legislated. Like every stimulant, moderation rather than excess is often the best compromise.

While the physiological properties of damaged hearing has been documented, there is less discussion about the social and emotional consequence of having a hearing disability. The obvious consequence of hearing damage to those that enjoy loud music is the loss of the ability to enjoy music. A more subtle consequence is the damage to one's social and emotional health. A half century ago, Roth (1955) reported that undiagnosed hearing loss was the primary cause of mental illness in the elderly, and more recently, Zimbardo et al (1981) demonstrated that simulated deafness in normal individuals produced symptoms of paranoia.

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Like every drug, loud music can be very destructive in high doses. But unlike ordinary drugs, it takes years of abuse before the damage is noticeable. That may be the primary explanation for why loudness is ignored. Like a mother who tells her children to brush their teeth to avoid mouth problems as an adult, for most people, the future is too hypothetical and remote to be taken seriously. Immediate gratification can thus produce deafness with a

corresponding disruption in social and emotional well-being.

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Biography

After receiving his Ph.D. from MIT in 1969, Dr. Barry Blesser spent the next nine years on their faculty. For the last 35 years, he has been exploring the influence of cognitive and perceptual psychology on the design and implementation of technology. As one of the pioneers of digital audio technology during the 1970s, he transformed his fantasy of a portable concert hall into the first commercial artificial reverberation system. While Dr. Blesser has focused on creating and implementing technology as a technical and management consultant, he also integrated the arts and social sciences into the design process. As an independent scholar, he has spent the last five years researching the new concept of aural architecture, which led to his current passion: the social consequences of functional deafness when in corrosive acoustic environments.

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Parks, Timothy

From: Murphy, Brad
Sent: Sunday, April 25, 2010 10:01 AM
To: Parks, Timothy
Subject: FW: For the record, Friday ,11-20 and Saturday, 11-21,2009

For the Plan Commission meeting.

From: Rico [rico@planbmadison.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 25, 2010 4:08 AM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Cc: cjc53703@aol.com; Murphy, Brad
Subject: FW: For the record, Friday ,11-20 and Saturday, 11-21,2009

Kevin,

I would like this submitted to the plan commission This has relevance to the current noise situation and his complaints.

Thanks,

Rico

From: Dick Guyot [mailto:yulashoes_@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, November 23, 2009 1:06 AM
To: rico@planbmadison.com
Subject: RE: For the record, Friday ,11-20 and Saturday, 11-21,2009

Rico:

Thank you for your immediate reply. I must appologise for being so elliptical about a number of issues. However, I will not be surprized if you believe I am making up what I say . I tend to avoid conflict. I try to avoid saying things that people, all of us being just human beings...might not like to hear. All that I want is that **sounds I make in my shop and sounds other people make in their buildings, do not leave the buildings.** That's simple...BUT NOT VERY SATISFACTORY. Because, being human we may deny what is unpleasant. I agree you can not hear on Jenifer , at the recent power settings the sound pulse that your machine puts out. No problem.

I have a slight case of "farmer's ear". I used to plow and cultivate, both which require constantly twisting around in the seat to watch for depth and direction...such that the **left** ear hears the blast of the tractor exhaust more than the right. With farmer's ear we naturally turn our heads to the right, away from a speaker or sound source so the left ear can participate since it's function is permanently degraded. One local architect had a job during college in a stamping plant. He will always have to put up with certain frequences in people's voices completely dropping out of recconition. My children who are now in their thirties,of course would not accept my caution not to play music so loud. When I was 13, I turned up the volume on our monaural 10 watt Bogen amplifier and of course my parents were upset. Yes, percieved sound intensity is relative, even logrithmicly... has to be, due to the range of intensities we are increasingly being subjected to. Thats psychophysics 101.

Rico, there's no point in your even bothering checking on Jenifer or even in our house. Most of your customers probably can't hear what I hear either. Peter Wolff has lived right next to Wil-Mar for nearly 40 years but music but it dosen't bother him. But then there's no point in talking to him unless he can see your mouth so he knows your talking. My spouse is hard of hearing. She hears about half the things I say to her. I didn't ask her if she heard the pounding, that is 22 ours ago. She volunteered that she heard it. She also knows I don't sleep much any more. I sleep often in the livingroom just like Steve Gallo sometimes does. But people who are hard of hearing seem to be so much in denial that its hell to get them to do anything. We are humans, we tend to believe only nice things about our selves. If we don't like things its easier to believe they will go away. They never happened.

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Actually, I was going to canvas the entire block 154. But I do have a life and I haven't had a chance. It's good that you might visit The Gallo's. Maybe you could visit 928 and 940 Jenifer. How about 913 Williamson? At 911 1/2 Williamson(our building) they broke their lease renewal and bought a house in the 1400 blk of Jenifer.
They were scarred away by your operation. The tenants there now aren't really happy either. Of course, maybe half of our tenants suggest they aren't bothered by the
sound...But if they can't hear it...it must not be there. It must not be a problem.

If several generations had unwittingly or foolishly abused their hearing that would be too big to accept. It just can't be true. The truth often hurts and denial just might set one free...or at least no one can be **made** to not believe that they are free.

It's late and I have to get some sleep in before next weekend.
Dick Guyot

From: rico@planbmadison.com
To: yulashoes_@hotmail.com
Subject: Re: For the record, Friday ,11-20 and Saturday, 11-21,2009
Date: Sun, 22 Nov 2009 18:18:45 -0600

Dick,

I walked up and down Jennifer on Friday night and could not hear the bass from my club. I have a right to operate a business since it is Zoned commercial. I have made every concession known to man on the sound, parking, noise, landscaping, ect.... I don't know what else to tell you. I don't think you will be content unless Im just not there. What other suggestions do you have? I have had no further complaints from anyone else. I am going to check in with the couple from the meeting that live near you and see if they still have a problem. I have been operating for three months now and have had not a single fight, or substantial police call... Ive had cops sit in my parking lot and say this is not even close to a problem. The reality is im not doing anything that is not within my right to operate a successful business in a RECESSION. I have brought tons of exposure, life, and business to Willy st. While I appreciate your feedback EVERY weekend its not helping because its the same story no matter what I do. Your response to this would be appreciated.
On Nov 22, 2009, at 2:12 AM, Dick Guyot wrote:

> Rico: This morning, Sat at about 1:am I was getting concerts from two places: 945 Williamson(where occasional big house parties carry-on too loud and too long into the morning) and Plan B. The house is set at the back of the lot, which has two residence buildings. The owner of record is Ray Peterson, for a long time Madison's worst land (slum)lord. The crowd that appears to have a land contract on all three buildings (the third is the brick next to our 937) is not the most responsive absentee landlord.
>
> My delimma was that if I called the police on that racket-making place then it would be asked why not Plan B also. Both venues were loud enough to be heard anywhere on the block. Plus, the party house is only 60-70 feet from my kitchen. They had some Bass kind of Tube(I presume also). Yours was sensible everywhere inside my house so that reading and thinking was impossible. Their music was simply louder being closer . The situation was irritating and disheartening. It sure would be nice to not have to wait until about 3 am to be able to do mental activities or even get to sleep if I wanted to.
>
> I need to contact the acting landlords to see if I should call one of them or the police in the future. I know the partner who gets to do all the skilled work and know his number.
>
> This morning, now 1:50 am, your boom-box sounds a little more invasive. It seemed slightly muted psychophysically when teamed with the clueless nearby neighbors.
>
> Yes, I would like you to not raise the volume above the minimum level you seem to be generally following. However, the volumes do seem to increase after midnight. Wether that is a manipulation or a common psychophysical effect, I couldn't know.
>
> Finally, for now, I hope you do not lull yourself into thinking that keeping the doors closed will make **all** problems go away.

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Firchow, Kevin

From: Greg Melde [gmelde@charter.net]
Sent: Saturday, April 24, 2010 4:16 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Subject: Plan B - 924 Williamson St

Dear Mr. Firchow,

I live across the street from Plan B, at 913 Williamson. From time to time, I can hear the music -- but it seems to come and go. Most of the time I can't hear it. It has never been loud enough to be disturbing to me.

I attended the neighborhood group meeting at Plan B. It was my understanding from the discussion, that it would be good to have a smoking patio so people would not be wandering around the parking lot. This area would not have tables and chairs, but would allow people to bring drinks outside while they smoke. Perhaps canvas curtains around the patio would muffle the sound of people talking.

I support an increase in the building capacity. Sometimes people wait in a line that extends outside the building. Expanding capacity would let them enter, rather than standing outside talking and making noise.

For these reasons, I support the conditional use request for 924 Williamson Street being considered by the City Plan Commission.

Thank you for your consideration.

Greg Melde

913 Williamson Street

Madison, WI 53703

Firchow, Kevin

From: Ryan Nilsestuen [rynils@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 25, 2010 2:48 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Subject: 4/26 hearing on Plan B

Hi Kevin,
My partner and I won't be able to attend tomorrow's hearing, but we wanted to express our concerns about the proposed changes to 924 Williamson St (Plan B). We currently live at 947 Williamson St. Having a nightclub in a mixed use residential neighborhood is bad enough with the extra noise pollution, litter, reduced parking, and loud, intoxicated individuals wandering around. We are concerned that the proposed changes will only exacerbate these problems and negatively impact the quality of life for people who live in the neighborhood.

Please share these concerns with the City Plan Commission.

Sincerely,
Ryan Nilsestuen