

TO: All Alders
SUBJECT: 18+Performance and Visual Arts Entertainment License
FROM: Franny Ingebritson
DATE: September 29, 2017

I am very concerned about the urban quality of life in my neighborhood on Wisconsin Ave. There is a high concentration of long term renters and a smaller number of owner occupied homes and condos but together we work to maintain a livability quotient that is reflected in the respect residents show their neighbors. We work with Capitol Neighborhoods and the police to keep our neighborhood safe and attractive to people, who are not only looking for a place to live, but a place to put down roots. That was me in June 2010 when I moved into my apartment on Wisconsin Ave. I was looking for a home.

At that time, I was aware that the former mayor had been willing to do whatever it took to push the Edgewater project forward. After Mayor Dave lost the election in 2011, city staff began talking about the behind scenes pressure to “just make it work”—give Bob Dunn what he wants.

It wasn't until the Fall of 2014, when the hotel began hosting uber-amplified live music on the Plaza that I became concerned. By the summer of 2016 their Thursday thru Saturday event schedule **exclusively** featured live bands with uncontrolled excessively loud amplified sound for 3-4 hours at a stretch.

I realized that the Edgewater team had misled the public on the types of events that were likely to occur on the plaza and the frequency of outdoor of events with amplified sound. During the review process Edgewater representatives were repeatedly asked by members of the Plan Commission, Common Council, and ALRC to give specific examples of the types of outdoor events envisioned for the public plaza. The examples included: weddings, art fairs, small concerts, outdoor concerts, dining, ice skating, a party, a tailgate party, a little acoustic guitar, a little 3 piece something with a little Fender amp, a charity event, a fun public space, any number of events, a lot of different things, etc.

In a July 1, 2016 article by Andea Zani in the *WSJ* we learned that **Dunn’s vision for the public plaza and the property overall was for it to be a venue for live music.** Why didn’t Bob Dunn or a member of his team share this vision with the neighborhood, city commissions, committees and the Common Council?

During a period of 7 months in 2016 and 2017, the Edgewater received approximately 40 noise complaints almost all of them during the evening hours when amplified live music was playing. Three other downtown hotels together received one (1) noise complaint— The Concourse, Inn on the Park, and the Hilton-Monona Terrace.

In 2014 when the outdoor amplified sound was excessively loud I called the front desk with no success. I was told, “We don’t have any control over the volume.” “We have a permit.” “The hotel has an agreement with the City.” “It’s a public event.” After that I began calling the police. I learned that the police were also told that the hotel had a permit and/or an agreement with the City. There were times when I called the police and they didn’t arrive before the band shut down. When the police proved ineffective, I began to walk over to speak to the front desk or anyone in charge of the sound. During the

incredibly loud soundtrack for *Finding Nemo*, the front desk told me, “The volume is just a pre-set thing by the AV department.” Following a conversation with two other staff members, the volume might have been lowered, but one could still hear it a block away.

After an Aug. 2016 neighborhood meeting some progress was made for about a week, before the hotel slipped back into their routine and the noise resumed. We were told at the meeting to call the police so there would be a record. Often times I didn’t call because I could see a police car by the hotel so I was hopeful that would take care of it. Noise complaints are a low priority. The police shouldn’t have to spend any time policing noise issues from what is supposed to be a first class hotel.

Something went drastically wrong with the Edgewater project. It’s easy to lose sleep wondering how city residents and neighborhoods can compete with developers, their lobbyists and lawyers.

I just want to choose what I listen to in my home. People who check out the outdoor amplified events on the plaza can leave whenever they’ve decided they’ve had enough. I don’t have that luxury. The only way I can escape the echo canyon effect of sound waves bouncing off the surrounding tall buildings is to leave my apartment.

It has been incredibly stressful living in close proximity to this hotel. Not only have I had to keep my windows closed while the City enjoys the nicest weather of the year, but even then I can hear the amplified sound in my apartment. When there’s a DJ or a band with someone who likes to talk a lot into the microphone, I can hear him in my study with an air conditioner running. After three years of living 75 steps from the Edgewater’s lot line, I now greatly appreciate wind and rain on summer evenings.

My apartment is my home. I’ve put down roots and I want to stay here. I know many people feel the same way. Somehow the City needs to rectify the unacceptable conditions we have had to live with as a result of a sham PAMA .