

March 12, 2024 Warner Park Meeting with Mallards on Proposal to Increase their Fireworks Program from 6 to 8 Shows for the Summer of 2024

Summary of Comments

Attendance:

- Approximately 30 constituents attended all or part of the meeting
- Approximately 2130 postcards were sent out to invite area residents of this meeting

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND REPLIES

Question: What has feedback been so far in support and against fireworks? **Reply by Parks:** unknown, wasn't checked in advance of meeting.

Question: Can we use more drones? **Reply by Mallards:** 10-20 times more expensive than regular fireworks. Hope for the future that this price will come down over time. One of the 6 planned is fireworks with drones. Financially not feasible this year to replace fireworks with drone shows.

Question: Is it possible to raise ticket prices, for example \$1/ticket, to cover drones? **Reply by Mallards:** This was done with previous drone show. However, ticket prices would have to go up \$10-15 to cover actual added cost of drones.

Question: What are the Mallards doing for environmental cleanup? **Reply by Mallards:** Mallards does clean up immediately after and day after. Chemicals burn in the air, so just cardboard debris. Drift depends on the day. They will move the site in the case of heavy winds. Shows haven't been cancelled due to wind (rain and wind will cancel it but not wind alone).

Question: What days are schedule for fireworks in 2024? **Reply by Mallards:** Fireworks dates 6/28, 7/3, 7/4 (softball – smaller fireworks), 7/19, 7/26, 8/2

Comment: Eagles will fledge the day before the 3rd. **Reply by Parks:** DNR and Fish and Wildlife Service position is that because of the short duration of fireworks, distance over 2000 ft, and decibel level, no permit needed. Comparable to thunderstorm.

Comment: Freemont street, her pets don't like fireworks at all, it doesn't make sense that it doesn't affect wildlife.

Question: When would the 2 additional fireworks occur? **Reply by Mallards:** 8/3 or 8/4 for softball and 7/6 for Mallards.

Question: Total number of games and increase in stadium usage? **Reply by Mallards:** 36 Mallards games, adding softball and youth tournaments on weekends. Some youth events will be ticketed, some won't.

Question: Could that additional revenue contribute to drone shows. **Reply by Mallards:** But it would not be revenue as they are community uses.

Comment: Mallards has no idea how fireworks affect the people in the community. Woman and her dog were both very frightened during fireworks. Dog bit her when she was lifting her dog, and she had to seek care and then pay a fine because her dog bit her. She can't tolerate the noise. She wants reimbursement for her costs from the Mallards. She is planning to move from her home and will not stay in her house during the nights that there are fireworks. She is a taxpayer.

Comment: Agrees with previous comment regarding lack of responsibility from the Mallards, her dog can't go outside for the entire summer because of the noise. Her dog is traumatized and terrorized from the fireworks. Neighborhood fireworks and inspired due to excessive Mallards fireworks. Concern about houses catching fire. Kids doing this because of excessive Mallards fireworks.

Comment: Brentwood Village Neighborhood Association. Enjoyed Rhythm and Booms fireworks show. Appreciates the concerns about the animals, including the wild animals, and domestic animals. After a fireworks display, people have license to go out and use fireworks excessively. **Reply by Mallards:** Fire dept has told them that they support the shows because they are a safer way to enjoy fireworks. And Mallards is not responsible for actions of others in the community who choose to use fireworks illegally.

Comment: Sympathizes with the sound issue. Combo of fun and scary. Prefers drones because they are quieter. Didn't like fireworks as a kid due to noise. Ordinance being offered to protect natural areas – there should be a priority to protect wildlife. **Reply by Mallards:** Exploring lower decibel level fireworks shows. Looking into trying fireworks which decrease noise, these are typically used for interior fireworks. They don't have the explosion point in the sky. 1/3 to 1/2 the noise as traditional fireworks. Visually not as beautiful or interesting, but Mallards is willing to experiment.

Question: Are extra fireworks due to addition of softball? **Reply by Mallards:** Yes. Mallards' intention was never to increase number of fireworks shows; this issue came up because of addition of summer collegiate softball (and desire to deliver experience similar to Mallards baseball).

Comment: Delaware St, husband has PTSD from service, dogs have a hard time. It is a very difficult week for their family. Fireworks used to be a lot shorter after R&B. But as time goes on, more events, longer events. PTSD, animals, wildlife, environment all affected. North side is a dumping ground with F35s, fireworks and more. **Reply by Mallards:** never longer than 7-8 minutes (short show). Festival show is 23 minutes. These times (lengths) won't change.

Comment: Rhythm and Booms fireworks show was much worse. Mallards have been very respectful. Cleanup is excellent. No litter. Unfair to say Mallards are responsible for kids using illegal fireworks. Kids and families love it.

Comment: Most concern during previous debates on the issue of fireworks was about wildlife in the park, and the water. Worried about the number increasing constantly. We can just leave it like it is with 6 total. **Reply by Mallards:** Board of Parks Commissioners has to approve fireworks every year. Neighborhood will have opportunity every year to have the conversation about number of fireworks.

Comment: Mallards are a good neighbor. But eagles are a concern, don't fire on 6/28 due to the possibility of a 2nd chick, which would come later. The women of softball ARE the fireworks. Northport apartments have refugees as residents, so the fireworks would not be considered fun for their kids. Same for people with PTSD from service. These people are our neighbors. Money should be raised for drone shows. **Reply by Mallards:** Fish and Wildlife makes a distinction between explosion decibels at explosion site and further away. Constituents should continue working with the DNR on the issue of eagle nesting. The eagles fledge at the end of June. Hatching at end of March. Could watch to see what is happening with the nest and get DNR input as a 3rd party.

Comment: Love the Mallards. Packers Ave has 39k cars/day. F35s, helicopters, we just get dumped on with the noise. People ill on her street, people with PTSD, dogs everywhere going crazy due to fireworks. Would lasers be a possibility? **Reply by Mallards:** Lasers don't work well outdoors.

Comment: Deeply affected by this. Mallards are great neighbors. She has 4 special needs rescue dogs. Worried about all of the wild animals. Is there another way to celebrate without impacting the wildlife? Is there a grant to get more money to fund fireworks that are better for everyone?

Comment: Eagle's nest lodge group is in place because DNR can't watch the eagles. The first year, they wouldn't do fireworks until the eagles fledge. Supportive of the Mallards. Steve's legacy is to create consensus and put community first and should continue this moving forward.

Comment: Likes fireworks on the 4th of July, but the more frequent they are, the less entertaining. Fireworks are just icing – they aren't central or intrinsic to baseball. Why are fireworks necessary at a baseball game? She would rather leave games before fireworks begin.

Comment: Drone shows are the positive solution. Illegal fireworks are getting worse and are worse when the Mallards has fireworks. Can you be proactive and get illegal fireworks abolished?

Comment: Appreciates the mallards, that they are working with the community. Fireworks aren't necessary for baseball. Celebrities, dance troupes are all options – but do we need extra entertainment? Appreciates the Mallards, would like to see it go another direction.

Comment: Just because the Mallards are good neighbors doesn't mean they can have more fireworks, just because they are adding softball doesn't mean they can add more fireworks, it doesn't have to have more entertainment and does this have to do with beer sales? Although my dog is fine, and I don't have PTSD, does that make it ok for my neighbors to have to suffer for fireworks? Regarding impact to wildlife: the eagle is the poster child but it is more than that.

Reply by Mallards: No beer sales once fireworks start.

Comment: Why do we do fireworks? Looking for a balance.

Comment: Concerns about additional fireworks. 8 fireworks shows is excessive. Great about women's softball. Looking for middle ground. Low decibel fireworks would be great.

Comment: Sad year that the Rhythm and Booms fireworks show was taken away. When it moved downtown, there was no parking available, that didn't work, and then guns started showing up at the fireworks (downtown). Mallards trying to do something nice on this side of

town, but receiving a lot of pushback. He also has a dog. Movies don't bother the dog. Why not put animals in the basement during the fireworks if they are affected? Also, can you bring the circus rides back? Moving fireworks to the football area on Sherman (as is recent practice) is great for older adults who want to attend.

Comment: 6 is middle ground. Don't want 2 more.

Comment: Mother is 85, endured WW2 at young age. When she hears fireworks, she goes into basement until they are done. Flashbacks and terrible memories of times of war. Also, we haven't talked about the chemicals on the ground from fireworks. Need to pay attention, there is scientific data available to support this.

Comment: The group present in the room doesn't represent everyone. She lives on the park, has kids and dogs. Her neighborhood really appreciates the fireworks, dogs are small and unaffected by fireworks, her kids love the fireworks every summer. **Reply by Mallards:** Sam (Mallards GM) lives on the North side, has dogs, experiences the fireworks as a resident as well.

Comment: Nextdoor is a good platform, could Mallards advertise when fireworks are going to be set off, to let people know in advance.

Mallards: Moved the site from 800 ft from nearest forest area to 2000 feet from nearest forest area. Would love feedback. If they get approval for additional shows – at least one show would be a reduced decibel level show. They hope for more engagement. Appreciate everyone's perspective.

Comment: Noise has been addressed, but pollution aspect hasn't been addressed. Heavy metals previously going into the lagoon. Pollutants not easily addressed.