



For more information contact:
Nancy Crassweller, DCCRAA Facilitator, 608.268.2620

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Dane County Coalition to Reduce Alcohol Abuse Position Statement on Agenda Item 35

The Dane County Coalition to Reduce Alcohol Abuse strongly supports the position of Bassett District of Capitol Neighborhoods regarding the Echo Tap's proposed premises changes, which are before the ALRC this evening, April 25, 2012. It is clear that the residents' positions on four specific proposed changes have been thoughtfully considered and articulated. They have neither sweepingly dismissed all of the Echo Tap's requested business expansion proposals, nor accepted them all without reasonable consideration and qualifications.

Regarding installation of a seasonal structure over the patio, residents rightly acknowledge that such a structure will likely increase the number of patrons outside during bar hours and therefore be a potential source of increased noise. There will also be a likely benefit of fewer people smoking along the sidewalk areas. Concerns about the expansion of the size of the patio relate primarily to the addition of a gate that will allow patrons to enter from the sidewalk rather than having to go through the building. However, neighbors believe that negative consequences of such a gate will be avoided as long as entry through that gate is staffed responsibly similar to the main entrance. The Echo Tap's final proposal, to extend hours of patio operation by an hour daily, is understandably meeting with resistance from the neighborhood. As the residents explain in their letter, that specific proposal could result in more late night noise due to the combination of more people outside at an additional late night hour. Increased late night noise would be the most negative consequence of all the proposed changes.

We believe it is reasonable for the ALRC to allow the Echo Tap to move ahead with the other desired changes, and that the request to extend hours should be denied at this time. Residents have indicated they are willing to support its area businesses, while addressing their own concerns as well. They have noted that they are willing to revisit this proposal after the new patio has been in place for a year, giving them time to determine the impact of the changes on neighborhood residents.

The Bassett District of Capitol Neighborhood's letter expresses positions that provide thoughtful, clearly articulated guidelines for how the DCCRAA hopes the ALRC will consider the Echo Tap's proposed changes. The Coalition asks the ALRC to support the Echo Tap expansion of their patio, but deny the extended hours at this time.

Thank you for your time.