

----- Forwarded Message -----

From:

To: "dpwaugh@gmail.com" <dpwaugh@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, September 7, 2014 10:28 PM

Subject:

Hi David,

The question of loud is not as simple as it may sound. (Bad pun unavoidable!) The question is not merely is it loud or not. It really comes down to loud being in the ears of the beholder. It's not only is it loud but also what is the source of the noise, how long does the noise continue, how is sound handled, and how does the individual impacted react to various aspects of noise and sound.

While I accept the Barrymore may claim they don't do loud shows in consideration to the neighborhood that is an extremely subjective statement and definition. They may not consider a show loud as when that's your business sound is part of the deal. Also, if a person likes a particular musical act their sound level may not be interpreted as loud but as enjoyable. We live right across the street from the parking lot so are very close to the action and we support the Barrymore as they do a lot directly and indirectly for the neighborhood. That said, there are some loud shows held there. I can guarantee you that Los Lobos, GWAR, and hip hop shows (just to name a few) can be challenging in their decibel levels. My husband and I have lived here for 25 years which means we were here prior to them being an active music venue; they were predominately movies when we bought into the neighborhood. Additionally, we have both worked for/with them in various capacities over the 25 years of living in their shadow. We are also no prudes when it comes to the machinations of the music world. My husband has worked in live sound (with bands, touring, stagehand, audio engineer) for 35-40 years. Between living in Milwaukee in the 70's and 80's and Madison since, I have also worked in music in various capacities for 35+ years. Those years are not without a plethora of REALLY entertaining stories and observations. Living here is also not without a certain entertainment value of watching the groupies, seeing Bob Dylan come and go for a week while he's conducting rehearsals at the Barrymore, and watching various behaviors and actions of touring acts and their crews. So please know that what I say comes from a very aware stance. I may be biased in some ways but not without a realistic basis.

Like I said, when we moved in the theater was basically a movie house and prior to that was an X rated theater. Our neighbor actually preferred the X time as it was frequented by business men who all left around 4 in the afternoon and the facility was then pretty much quiet. I appreciate the outlying areas have little or no issues with sound but please don't think for a moment that mixing a live venue with a dense urban area is without some very challenging moments. The Barrymore is a theater for hire which means that the promoter is generally in a capacity to call the shots and should be the one to take control of issues. That, however, assumes the promoter cares about some of the factors that may exist. My sense is that they are less concerned about some of those issues than they are with putting on a profitable

show. Immediate concerns of the neighbors aren't really on their radar. I don't believe the Barrymore is often in a position to assure some areas of concern are addressed as they have rented out the theater and thereby the promoter is in charge. There are some situations where the promoter should be laying out "rules" of conduct prior to the arrival of the act and if they don't the behaviors that cause problems and create issues are too late to be handled effectively. We have had countless discussions with the Barrymore management over the years and while we love them dearly there's a point when they are unable or unwilling to take remediating actions.

Sound is a tricky beast. The outlying areas may be somewhat more immune from the sound as the theater is in a slight depression and the areas to the north, west, and east are above the theater in terms of terrain. I don't know this to be a fact but it may help the sound pattern that gets out into the immediate area.

Additional and not so obvious considerations for noise factors are the semis and busses that can pull into the parking lot at all hours of the day. Touring is a weird business and if the tour or its management aren't willing to spend money on hotel accommodations for the act and crew those same people are likely to get done with one show and jump in the vehicles and drive to the next location. This can mean that if a show is in Milwaukee, Chicago or Minneapolis the night before their appearance in Madison those busses and semis can be pulling into the area as early as 4 a.m. It's also possible that the busses and semis will sleep over in the parking lot. So if we'd gotten to sleep with all the engine noise it's possible to be awakened at 4 or 5 a.m. when they finally do hit the road again. When vehicles don't leave the Barrymore till the following morning at 1 or 2 or even later it's feasible we will listen to idling busses and semis for 20 (or more) hours in a row. The Barrymore provides shorepower (access to a power source so the busses can plug in instead of idling their engines) but some drivers have been unwilling to use it. Don't ask me why, I just know some don't or won't utilize it. Not only is there a noise component to idling engines for hours on end but on summer days when we'd like to have windows open not only is the sound prohibitive but by hour 4 or 5 the smell of diesel can be tiring and overwhelming. To smell it for 20+ is a place you never want to go.

The parking at the Barrymore may be somewhat distributed as the parking lot is small but it too has other associated problems. People may show up early and hang out, drum circles may form, car stereos may be played loudly, and in general some partying can occur. Those same people can stay late in hopes of catching a glimpse of the performers or they stick around for meet-and-great sessions held outside by the tour bus. 50+ people hanging out can be loud in its own right. Not to mention that by the time the show is over the audience can be pumped up from both the experience they've had as well as the alcohol they've consumed. At least with the small parking lot some people have had to park elsewhere. If the parking lot for a venue can accommodate the whole group in attendance these problems may be greater in magnitude than what we see at the Barrymore.

Like I said, there are loud shows at the theater. There are ways to measure decibel levels but that is a complicated discussion as there are different weight levels to sound level definitions. I couldn't even begin to speak to the technical aspects of this. But know that bass levels can make windows rattle and if the theater doors are opened to allow air in the sound from within gets out

and becomes problematic quickly. A lot has to do with the sound engineers behind the mixing board for any show. Are they good at what they do? Does the act they work for want the show to be ear splitting loud? Does the engineer and the act want to go, to quote Spinal Tap to "11?" Does the engineer or the act even care what it really sounds like?

Some of these problems may not be a problem in a new facility. Will it be better sound proofed than an 85 year old facility? Will management specify, hold to, and enforce certain expectations of conduct like not showing up before certain hours of the day, leaving right after the show, not sleeping overnight in the parking lot, using shorepower, etc.

So there you go. I've tried to provide you with an awareness of what can actually be involved with the question of noise issues surrounding a live music venue. Hope this helps in your inquiry. If there are any further discussions you'd like to have I am more than willing to talk with you by email or in person. Just let me know if I can be of any further assistance or insight. Good luck, this is a very sensitive situation and if you're negatively impacted it can be a very painful, overwhelming, and difficult situation to live with. Before any live venue gets approved for being built and existing immediately adjacent to an urban area, dense or not, I would suggest great consideration be given to the realistic aspects of that scenario. Living by a live venue is not necessarily for the faint of heart! Nor is it for people who like and require a certain level of quiet in their living environment. Some may find it fun and amusing but many will probably consider it a challenge and some will even find it an untenable situation.

On Wed, Sep 10, 2014 at 6:58 AM, Terry wrote:

Hi Kristen,

I am including Kate who lives on Corscot between the Barrymore and Mr. Roberts bar, both have live music.

I don't know the proposed type of music venue under consideration, but there are different issues with the Barrymore and Mr Roberts.

Barrymore-

Annoyances: Parking in the neighborhood is an issue when there is a popular concert. When there is a large traveling bus, it runs constantly and creates a hum that is audible when it is the season that windows are open. The music does carry into the house all year especially when there is loud bass and percussion. Dumpsters are emptied and crashing bottles are extremely noisy. This can start at 6am.

Good: The loud music stops around 11pm and the crowds disperse usually only hear people talking. These are rules that were established with the neighborhood as to cut off time and it is not daily.

Mr. Roberts-

Annoyances: This is a bar with live music, so the music continues until bar time. The parking lot is behind the bar, and therefore borders the backyards of several neighbors, including us. The crowd has been there for more than music and when leaving the bar, rev motorcycles and cars screech on the gravel. People hang out in the parking lot and have loud conversations or yell, scream, laugh and wake us up. This has been a problem bar since we bought our house 36 years ago. The dumpsters are extremely noisy. This can start at 6am.

Good: The alders over the years and police enforcement have tried to curtail the above problems. The back bar door is supposed to be closed at all times to help decrease the music sound that permeates all year round. There are signs posted to encourage patrons to be respectful of the neighbors. The owners usually answer the phone if they hear it when we call to complain that the door is open or there are raucous people in the parking lot. They have put up a fence to help with patrons cutting through our backyards. We have had to go and check to see if the door is open, we have had to call the police for noise issues both music and people hanging out in the parking lot. These issues may be similar to the Harmony Bar, but I think the people that frequent the two bars are of different natures.

I hope this helpful. Feel free to ask more questions. I would encourage being proactive and having rules set in the license that are spelled out and remain in effect and are brought to the neighbors attention if there is a proposed change.

Terry

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Barrymore/Atwood parking/noise

Date: Wed, 27 Aug 2014 13:02:46 -0500

To: dpwaugh@gmail.com

Dear David,

Your committee is wise to consider these issues. I reside at 2422 Sommers Ave, which is one block off Atwood. Parking is a HUGE issue in our neck of the woods, as development in the area continues. I honestly cannot say that the issue is due to the Barrymore in particular. In fact, I suspect that it is actually other establishments that contribute to the parking/noise on our particular block. The Barrymore acts as an anchor for the development of these other establishments. The proposed theater in your area might be a GREAT neighbor with sufficient parking, but your neighborhood will need to remain vigilant to ensure that as more businesses are attracted to the area, you hold them to the same standards.

Personally, I would like to see permit parking or limited hours parking, or at the VERY LEAST emergency snow parking introduced in our neighborhood that limits unwanted parking from patrons to businesses that have not invested in sufficient parking spaces to meet their customer demand.

Bottom line: We love living in the area near the Barrymore and have not experienced DIRECT negative impacts from the theater (although I suspect neighbors closer to the venue would say

otherwise when it comes to parking. We're more than several blocks away!).

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: [SASYNA-Discussions] New Music venue on E. Washington

Date: Wed, 27 Aug 2014 14:52:53 -0500

To: David Waugh <waugh@mendotalakehouse.com>

Hi David,

Thanks for seeking out some healthy cross-isthmus-pollination!

Think back to when you were in your teens->20s. You didn't go to concerts by yourself, one to a car: you either went in a car packed with friends, or you biked, or you took the bus with your posse. That propensity is even more so now. Get on any bus heading out our way in the two hours before the show, and it is packed with concert-goers. The bike path has streams of posses headed up & moving out from campus/downtown to Atwood.

280 onsite stalls + hundreds of on street parking spaces withing 1/2 mile on under-utilized streets like E. Wash, E. Main (& intersecting cross streets) is more than enough parking for a 2000 seat venue so easily accessed by bike and bus. The folks who want the isthmus to be a suburb ringed by empty industrial lots are really holding back the potential for living in the coolest place in the upper-midwest.

There are solutions to mitigate all of the horrors envisioned.

-Enforce drink limits by hiring only the strictest bar tenders who know how to cut people off, and who ***will*** cut people off. Hire Alison Mader, iron fisted bartender of the Harmony Bar (capacity: 195; parking available: 7), as a consultant on how to make this happen.

-The Harmony Bar handles crowds well. They get along well with their neighbors (I'm one; I live less than a block away...) because:

a) they don't overserve;

b) they don't allow already-drunk people in the door (they just turn them out the moment they stumble in);

c) they end concerts well before bar time;

d) they take responsibility for what happens outside of the venue (not letting patrons hang out & yap loudly after the concert, etc.);

e) they often serve dinner to the crowds arriving for Barrymore shows. A lot of the concert-goers show up at the Harmony for a post-concert drink. This helps space out the arrival/departure times of the concert-goers, meaning, less of a crowd-crushing atmosphere pre- & post-concert.

-Follow Chicago's lead. All neighborhood bars have this sign prominently posted at all exits: PLEASE RESPECT OUR NEIGHBORS, LEAVE QUIETLY. (Frankly, this should be standard at all Madison bars.)

A lot of it comes down to good management on the part of the venue. They have to orient the acts toward civilized audiences. The Barrymore has a wide-range of acts, but insists on good behavior & crowd control.

It also seems to me that in the Stonehouse/Frank case, there is something of an internal check on the behavior of management & crowds in that if things start to get out of hand routinely, it will ruin their reputation as a place to live. A poorly managed concert venue would ruin the rentability of their on-site apartments. (The Harmony is a micro-version of this since they have a couple of apartments upstairs).

Both the neighbors and Stonehouse need to be aware of the many variables involved in making it a success. Properly managed, it really could be a tremendous success. Parking, however, is simply not an issue in this, the age of rapidly declining car ownership/use, especially among those of concert-going age.