

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING - Music, Entertainment and Culture District Feasibility Study and Strategy
 - Jim Harcourt, 7 Picton Street – indicating that a large number of Downtown homeowners and taxpayers have reviewed the Study collectively and individually and there are a number of points of consensus, stating that the Study initially speaks to honouring the interests and quality of life of Downtown residents, but the conclusions fail to address these matters; suggesting that the Study ignores the Downtown demographics and the concerns expressed by Downtown residents; expressing surprise at the recommendations and priorities and a degree of anger as there is a belief the residents have been largely ignored; advising that if the recommendations of the Study were implemented, they could have a substantial and immediate impact on residents that could potentially be irreversible; noting that several recommendations could see residents being impeded from using their own living rooms and patios, and having their sleep and relaxation negatively impacted; also noting that boundaries have been ignored east of Wellington, between Wellington and Waterloo, where most of the properties are private residences and that the high rise buildings amplify the noise even further; also expressing concern that there would be a negative impact on the value of homes; pointing out that while the recommendations speak to the economic and social impacts, they do not consider that residents and taxpayers may be forced to leave their Downtown homes to improve their quality of life, while the economic success of the Downtown is dependent on residents remaining in the Downtown.
 - Sean Quigley – advising that he has been an artistic director of two professional theatres, taught post-secondary school theatre and has directed at several venues across Canada; suggesting that the name being used for the District is a bit confusing as music and entertainment are all culture; noting that these kinds of districts are often organically grown, while others are planned in advance and citing examples of each in the United States; referring to three foundational elements of culture districts as identified by Lawrence McCullough: teaching, developing and showcasing; reminding the Council Members of the City of London's Cultural Prosperity Plan; pointing out that consultation has occurred for more than a year and that Council Members should look at the Cultural Prosperity Plan again; referring to the fact that London recently hosted Country Music Week, which involved local artists; indicating a need to separate festivals from culture districts as they are not necessarily the same thing and nor is tourism; emphasizing that local talent needs support and focus must be on teaching, developing and showcasing artists.
 - Ben Benedict, John Street – indicating agreement with everything said so far; noting that the report indicates that each space needs individual care and attention; advising that he is a professional communicator and that there are problems that are not spoken to in the report; noting that London has a great musical history but Council has not and London has not sufficiently invested in local bands and musicians; suggesting that it has been indicated there are some problems that nothing can be done about; suggesting that some bars in proximity to his home are doing a great job, but are hampered by City Council; alleging that no one has listened to him or his neighbours; suggesting that a great idea would be to extend late night LTC service on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays; advising of various safety and quality of life concerns in his neighbourhood and noting that substantial issues could be created and not one solution fits the needs of all.
 - Chris Campbell, Tourism London – confirming that Global Spectrum is still operating Budweiser Gardens, but under the name "Spectra".
 - Shirley Clement, 2 Carrothers Avenue – indicating that for years London has been trying to find a balance between music lovers and quality of life for Downtown residents; indicating agreement with the comments made by Jim Harcourt; noting that after mentioning the need to mitigate negative impacts on Downtown residents, the report then recommends increasing the noise limits; advising that her experience with amplified music is from Rock the Park where for 5 or 6 days the sound levels make it

impossible to stay at home during that period; stating that residents have left during that period as their share of helping the issue of balance, for but those who stayed in 2016 the Rock the Park decibel levels ranged from around 100 to 104 decibels, every day exceeding the maximum allowable decibel level of 90, which was hardly respectful of residents; noting that the fines for exceeding the allowable noise levels are not prohibitive and are simply a cost of doing business for concerts; emphasizing that while residents are prepared to absorb this noise assault as their share of living Downtown they are not prepared to do so without something in exchange in terms of sound volume, hours of operation, days of occurrence, etc.; noting that residents have participated in this process in good faith and expect an effort by staff and Councillors to find a reasonable compromise; advising that something that should be everyone's concern is sound, referring to the attached Position Paper on Noise Pollution from the Canadian Hearing Society.

- Jen Pastorius, Old East Village BIA – reiterating that the Cultural Prosperity Plan spoke to enhancing key culture corridors through placemaking initiatives; noting that Old East Village was identified as a culture district in 2013; seeking the same provisions as for the “Downtown”; requesting that the document be circulated to culture venues; emphasizing the following four points: there should be parity between the Old East Village and the Downtown; the Western Fair District lease agreement should be reviewed prior to any fencing decisions being made; it is good to see that funding may be into the next term as getting things right is important and access to that funding is needed across the board; and grassroots culture is decentralized by nature and is amazing and chaotic so it would be best served in a variety of ways as it cannot be easily placed inside one box and shouldn't be subjected to gatekeeping, but rather provided options; and indicating that she is looking forward to the next steps.
- Catherine Charlton, Picton Street – indicating that she would like to see balance; noting that she feels there is a disconnect between the facts and the recommendations, specifically as it relates to noise levels and duration; stating that the report says to move noise levels up from 90 decibels but the limits in 9 other cities don't reach 90 decibels, rather they are 60-80 in most communities with some evenings in the 75-90 decibel range; asking why the City feels we need to have more than 90 decibels when the other communities have been able to achieve the balance London's Downtown residents are looking for; advising that there are 13 weekends from June 1 until Labour Day and the event approval level is somewhere around 12 weekends; wondering if there is ever a free summer weekend in Victoria Park where area residents can enjoy the Park itself; noting there is an element of “not in my backyard” and an assumption that we will add to the existing facilities and Downtown residents don't want that; relaying that the London Free Press conducted an online poll asking who would like a district in their area and 77% said “no”; asking that before any quick decisions are made that the impact on residents be considered and that any residents that could be impacted by amplified sound are consulted with; questioning why there would be a need to provide a noise permit to extend the hours to midnight or beyond, particularly as this would directly impact residents' sleep and asking that you consider her additional comments she provided by email.
- Keith Brown, 253 Victoria Street – indicating that he is a local artist and public speaker who has travelled across Canada and the world; advising that the majority of work that he does is not in London; noting that the one thing that all festivals have in common is a large emphasis on “local”; agrees there is a need for a local focus on teaching, developing and showcasing local artists; advising that through the Fringe Festival he had an opportunity to expand and get better; and asking that he be given a reason to stay in the City and work here as he has lived in London his entire life, loves London and wants to stay here.
- Anna Maria Valastro – indicating she would like to see more local talent; asking for information about the number of complaints and stating you can't really force this on residents; recommending that a task force be established of private residents and commercial representatives to work out details that could be brought forward for broader deliberation in the community; noting that the proposed task force could meet with the Business Improvement Areas and work out some recommendations pertaining to traffic, noise, etc, with staff facilitation; noting that the capacity for a local bar is 1300 people

across 7 rooms but that the movement of people from room to room can't be restricted and area residents can't get anyone to talk to them about this issue and at this point residents want to talk amongst themselves and not with City Hall; and making a formal request that the City release enforcement data on noise complaints and provide it to her email at bettyboop07@execulink.com, as chair of her neighbourhood association.

- Mohamed Moussa, 155 Thornton Avenue – indicating that it is a very well researched report; advising that he believes the concern is not against culture or entertainment districts, but rather noise; noting that Council says we should build inward and upward, but some businesses are not being heard; advising that his tenant is not happy with the amount of noise from bars and patios; stating that he was at the Planning and Environment Committee meeting last year where they were discussing suspending the City's regulations in order to permit music on patios and while that didn't happen, some businesses went ahead and did it anyway and the City's By-law Enforcement Office did not do anything about it; indicating that City Council and staff need to address noise issues as nobody is complaining about visual arts or performing arts, just noise.
- Valerie Grant, 22 Picton Street – noting that she has been involved with Planning and representing residents in the area and it would be a tragedy to have area homeowners feel that they have been pushed to live outside the area; recognizing that sometimes it is nice to have outdoor events, but it should not be forgotten that people should be able to also enjoy living in their homes; enquiring why there is a difference between licensed events and use of amplified music on patios; there are fines associated with liquor licensing that go up to \$6,000 and the safety of Londoners is certainly something that needs to be thought about; wondering why there is liquor allowed in parks where children are when most residents wouldn't think of bringing children into a bar; plans and studies should consider where liquor is permitted and look at enforcing the law with respect to alcohol use.
- Eugene Ditrolio, 14 St. George Street – wondering why some people believe volume of sound is considered quality when it is not; stating that this thought is perpetuated by the fact that we currently allow 90 decibels and there is thought being given to increasing that; noting that in Toronto they are trying to tweak a few things and find some balance; indicating that here in London being able to get special permits whenever you want is seen as acceptable; and summarizing that the decibel level is key to solving this problem as we all agree on the culture aspects.
- Heather Chapman, 152 Albert Street – indicating that she has no issue with supporting the food, culture and entertainment business; advising she is concerned with the watering down of the current by-laws, especially noise enforcement, simply because there is an event; describing a situation she personally experienced as a result of a local business extending the hours of an event they were approved for, which required a number of calls to local Police, who dealt with the matter, but very likely had much more important things they needed to deal with; advising that no one will want to come Downtown to live and that real estate values of Downtown properties will be negatively impacted, as will residents' quality of life; reminding people that many professionals live Downtown and if they are not able to get a good night's sleep, that could very well negatively impact their work performance; emphasizing that Downtown residents feel that the City is not looking out for their best interests and as taxpayers they have a right to enjoy their homes and not to be bombarded with outside patio noise; indicating that as the night goes on the noise escalates which will be even worse if you add in electronic music; and summarizing that it is not fair to the taxpayers in the Downtown to increase noise levels as it would encroach on their quality of life.