

Communications received by Ward 7 office.

From: jane Tschida <pauljanetschida@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 11:30 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: ordinance change

Hello Jane.

It's been a while since I talked to you! I currently am a member of the St. Paul American Association of University Women. As you probably know, we are a non-profit located at 990 Summit Avenue which provides scholarships for women and girls. Among other activities, we help St. Paul organizations like the women's shelter on Grand Avenue and Ujamaa Place for young Black men.

We also own a small wedding event business that keeps us alive. I hope you will vote for an ordinance change before the council Wednesday, August 17, which ensures that people who rent our facility can continue to serve liquor at their events.

Thank You!

Jane Tschida, 362 Summit Avenue, St. Paul

From: Mike Shreve <shreve@crccs.com>
Sent: Monday, August 15, 2022 8:09 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Neighborhood

August 15, 2022

Re: File # Ord 22-36, Proposed amendment to City Ordinance 409.01

Dear Council Member,

We are writing to express our STRONG OPPOSITION to the proposed amendment to City Ordinance 409.01 section d item 3 which regulates alcohol service for private events at rental halls in the City. The proposed amendment would allow any rental hall in the City to serve alcohol an unlimited number of times each year.

In our residential neighborhood, we have a disruptive rental hall that frequently disturbs the peace with excessive noise, drunken and disorderly conduct, and the trespass of private property. For some time, this property has been illegally serving alcohol without a license on a BYOB basis.

We and multiple other neighbors have filed complaints to the City about this property. These complaints have directly led to the proposal of this amendment, We are frustrated that our efforts to address a neighborhood nuisance have instead caused the City to consider changing the liquor law which only serves to facilitate the ongoing nuisance.

The proposed amendment would create a loophole in the liquor law which would allow any current or future rental hall operator to operate as if they have a liquor license without consideration of the appropriateness of land use, zoning or proximity to schools. In the amendment there is no mechanism for the notification of or gathering input from affected neighbors.

In St. Paul there are multiple such rental halls in residential neighborhoods and in proximity to schools. By making these changes, these rental halls will essentially become bars with alcohol service permitted every day of the year.

PLEASE VOTE NO on the proposed amendment.

Sincerely,

Michael and Judy Shreve
1017 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105

From: Sara Seifert <sara.j.seifert@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, August 15, 2022 6:48 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Cc: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Amending Chapter 409.01 of the Legislative Code for the Benefit of the For-Profit Entity Operating as the St. Paul College Club

Dear Council President Brendmoen and Councilmember Noecker,

I am writing in opposition to Amending Chapter 409.01 of the Legislative Code. This amendment will allow an unlimited number of alcohol service events at the 990 Summit residential house being operated for profit as the St. Paul College Club.

There are serious problems with the proposed amendment that will have far reaching negative consequences across the city. Further, I find the disparity of alcohol service enforcement activities at DSI involving the present matter at the College Club and a similar matter involving Billy's on Grand absolutely shocking.

I live two doors east of the College Club. I was on a short vacation last week when I became aware of this proposed amendment and could not attend the public hearing. Please consider the following comments:

1. The brief staff report provided by DSI at the beginning of the first reading was incorrect. DSI's Dan Niziolek opened his discussion with, "in the past we have allowed Rental Halls to allow their hosts to serve complimentary alcohol to their guests". This is incorrect. St. Paul code presently does not allow alcohol service at Rental Halls under any circumstances. The current code reads: "no establishment holding any city license under a chapter other than 331A, 409 or 410 shall sell, serve, display or allow to be served or consumed alcoholic beverages". Rental Halls are licensed under Chapter 405 and are therefore disallowed from holding events involving alcohol. Contrary to what Mr. Niziolek went on to state, the amendment is therefore not "small", rather it creates an entirely new regulatory pathway via a Rental Hall license and companion Alcohol Caterers license for full 365-day for-profit alcohol service in St. Paul. This type of pathway is used in at least one other state to license bars.

A more appropriate staff report would have identified that I brought the College Club's noncompliance regarding alcohol service to DSI's attention in a detailed nuisance complaint letter dated December 10, 2021. I requested enforcement action and included the below picture taken from the neighbor's yard of a driveway bar service setup at the College Club along with a specific reference to municode Sec. 409.01. The matter I brought to DSI is a straightforward St. Paul municode violation unrelated to any misalignment between City and State law.

I am unaware of any other enforcement action against any other St. Paul licensed Rental Hall and believe this amendment is being presently pursued by DSI in response to my enforcement request for the sole benefit of the College Club.

2. At the second reading, a College Club officer and College Club director (residents of Ramsey, MN and Oakdale, MN, respectively) and the manager at the College Club (a resident of Minnetonka, MN) testified that "the business itself has been a wedding business since 1950" and the amendment will allow the business to "continue doing business in St. Paul like we have for 70 years". These statements are false.

The nuisance problems at the College Club are NEW and started when the College Club incorporated a self-described "for-profit business corporation" a few years ago in 2013. This for profit corporation began to achieve "business success" in wedding events and began distributing income in 2018. The emergence of a self-declared profit motive is a very recent development at the College Club that has led directly to the unlawful and noisy assemblies involving alcohol at the chapter house.

The College Club is in fact not even technically the same charitable entity that it has been in past years. In late 2019, the College Club applied for and was granted an individual tax-exempt status. They no longer rely on an affiliation with a parent organization such as the American Association of University Women to maintain their charitable status.

I estimate that events involving alcohol service generate around \$2M in annual revenue for the for profit corporation and the man managing the operations is likely paid far in excess of \$100,000 annually (the last public disclosure of his compensation in 2012 was \$84,357).

Meanwhile, the charitable non-profit organization that owns the house only reported an average of \$18,980 in annual expenses associated with its vaunted scholarship program during the last two years of available public filings.

From my standpoint, it appears that the alcohol events at the College Club primarily support the financial interests of just one man: manager Brian Quist. He got his job during the time his mom Jan Quist was the organization's Treasurer.

All of these facts are available publicly in documents posted online.

3. I note with significant dismay the polar opposite in DSI engagements when comparing the treatment of the College Club to that of the bar Billy's on Grand. Both establishments are the subject of multiple nuisance complaints filed by neighbors, both have had many police calls and both have run afoul of City codes involving alcohol service. But in the case of Billy's, according to a recent Fred Melo feature article in the Pioneer Press, DSI is actively seeking to revoke their properly obtained liquor license. This is contrasted to the present case of the College Club, where DSI is actively seeking to establish new law to legalize presently illegal activities involving alcohol. The inequity in these approaches for establishments just 2 blocks separated, one operating illegally and in a residential zone, and the other operating legally and in a commercial zone, is striking. A complete comparison will certainly make for interesting reading. We'll see how voters feel about such a gross disparity when this issue becomes the subject of a very thorough public disclosure.

I also suspect that Billy's will seek a Rental Hall license and partnership with an Alcohol Caterer to continue their operations should their liquor license actually be suspended. This is how bars work in North Carolina where customers become "members" for nominally private events for a small "fee" at the door. Hastily bringing the antiquated policies of the deep south into St. Paul with effectively no public discussion will be quite the social experiment.

Most definitely, one way or another, we are all in for some serious surprises as this goes forward.

I request a personal meeting to discuss this matter with you both before any vote. Please contact me at 612-803-6998.

Regards,

Sara Seifert

976 Summit Ave.

