

Dear councilmembers,

I am an immediate neighbor of the Groveland Tap in Saint Paul (see photo below of my garage, circled in red, and the site of the new Groveland Tap patio, also in red). I am writing to ask you to reject or reword their proposed liquor license, or to grant it only on a probationary period, on several grounds.

1. **Worsening of the existing waste management issue:** The Tap has been struggling with overflowing dumpsters and garbage/recycling cans since the patio was built. I have documented this issue with some photos (attached). With the introduction of 100+ more seats on the patio, the waste problem will only worsen. I am concerned that in the summer it will become a health and hygiene issue with the presence of hot weather and an active urban animal population looking for food.
2. **Worsening of the existing parking issue:** Patrons of the Tap park in front of neighborhood houses, such that neighbors struggle to park on the block where they live. It is bearable with the current seating capacity, but introducing 100+ additional seats will further constrain parking in the area. The 1800 block of Berkeley is considering a parking permit application, but is also conscious that this will make the parking issue worse for surrounding blocks.
3. **Concern about noise pollution:** The Tap's picnic tables in the parking lot introduced additional noise to the neighborhood. As neighbors, we bore with it because we wanted the business to survive the pandemic—we have considered the Tap a generally good neighbor in the past. However, the patio is much closer to our back yards than the picnic tables in the parking lot. With conversation as well as amplified music on the patio, our backyard soundscapes will be significantly affected, reducing our enjoyment of our own property as well as our home values.
4. **Disregard for the licensing process:** The Tap built the patio without proactively communicating with close neighbors or securing the liquor license ahead of committing to the build. This creates an atmosphere of contempt for the neighborhood and the licensing process, since it assumes that approval is a foregone conclusion.
  - a. During the HLU committee meeting, Stephanie Shimp noted that the general manager had door-knocked to inform neighbors about the planned patio build and seating expansion. However, none of the neighbors on the call had gotten a door knock, including us. Door-knocking alone does not constitute a good-faith effort at informing neighbors, especially neighbors with property less than 10 yards from the patio's edge—those ought to be a top priority to inform.
  - b. During the HLU committee meeting, Stephanie Shimp also noted that she had built the parking lot adjacent to the Tap to provide parking for her building. This misrepresented the fact that the parking lot was built with the support of city funding.
5. **Noncompliance with existing license terms:** When the Tap had picnic tables in its parking lot during deep Covid, as well as its sidewalk tables out front, it did not uphold the conditions of the sidewalk license, which included daily litter pickup around the block and signage about patrons exiting into a neighborhood.

I ask that any license granted include explicit consequences for failing to comply with license conditions, and a timeframe to satisfactorily remedy the failure.

6. **Specific license terms:** The license should include explicit language around the patio license replacing the provision for picnic tables in the parking lot. Ms. Shimp noted at the HLU hearing that this was the intent, but I do not see it in the license text.

I would also ask that the license text be updated to include litter pickup in the alley, as well as any provisions arising from my points above around waste management, parking, and noise pollution.

Sincerely,



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