

Burger, Kathryn (CI-StPaul)

From: Barry Foy <foodfoy@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2020 10:26 AM
To: *CI-StPaul_LH-Licensing
Subject: 857 Grand Avenue

Greetings,

The purpose of this note is to register my strong objections to the planned changes—all expansion, as far as I can tell—to the bar/restaurant Billy's at 857 Grand Avenue.

First of all, the idea that this is an appropriate neighborhood and intersection for “gambling” and “entertainment” indicates a warped sense of what kind of neighborhood this actually is. Second, 291 seats is vastly out of scale—again, no realistic sense of the nature of the area. These plans simply don't suit the location.

We all suffered sleepless, disrupted nights for YEARS thanks to the Wild Onion (former occupant of the Red Rabbit location): patrons that fought and puked and screamed and cried, week after week and month after month, in the middle of the night in our alleys and streets. Repeated complaints to the management accomplished nothing—even when they seemed willing to help (and we were never convinced that they were), doing anything about it was to a great extent beyond their control. The demise of that establishment couldn't have been more welcome, and the improvement since it closed has been gigantic.

The notion that having an adequate number of video cameras around Billy's premises is somehow going to make the place a good neighbor is ridiculous. In a word, the prospect of the proposed changes at Billy's, so out of scale and so capable of starting up a Wild Onion-style nightmare again, is something to be dreaded. Gambling does not belong on Grand Avenue, and if “entertainment” does, it doesn't belong at this particular corner. If there happen to be weaknesses in Billy's current business model, it is not up to us neighbors to remedy them with our own sleepless nights; any proposal must reflect the realities and sympathies of the neighborhood. I strongly urge you to block the proposed changes.

Thank you,

Barry Foy

(I am a board member of the Avon Place Condominium Association, but this represents my personal views only)

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