



To Preserve And Promote Our Historic Lifestyle

October 08, 2013

Via Email

Douglas Paige
Acting Executive Secretary
Board of Liquor License Commissioners for Baltimore City
231 E. Baltimore Street – 6th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Mr. Paige:

This letter is on behalf of Federal Hill Neighborhood Association's (FHNA) opposition to Mr. Warren Norris's application for the transfer of the liquor license located at 1400 Light Street to 1100 – 1106 S. Charles Street.

Federal Hill has reached a critical mass of liquor license establishment patrons, and when this critical mass leaves the immediate area of Cross and S. Charles, its impact on the surrounding residential neighborhood is not adequately mitigated. This proposed expansion would take a license, which when last used in 2012 and had an associated maximum capacity of 98, to a significantly larger figure, approximately 300 as stated by the proposed liquor licensee transferee, ultimately to be determined by the Fire Marshall. As recognized in a recent letter from our State Representatives in the 46th Delegation, we have a sum maximum capacity of over 5,000 liquor license establishment patrons, which has increased nearly 40% over the past 10 years. Our neighbors have encountered a noticeable growth in quality of life issues driven by this increase. This neighborhood cannot possibly support more patrons at this time, especially late during the evening and on the weekends.

We have met on behalf of FHNA with the leadership of 4 other surrounding neighborhood associations on at least three (3) occasions (May 28th, Jun 14th, and Jul 21st) with Mr. Norris, his restaurant group, and their counsel, to discuss their proposed plans. Their proposed plans do not take into consideration the existing crisis in Federal Hill and the negative impact a liquor license establishment of 300 persons would have on the neighborhood, immediately increasing our capacity for patrons by 6%. During the course of negotiations, our community has shown reason in our willingness to work out an MOU with a maximum capacity increase of nearly 50% while their group has refused to budge from a figure of 300. The neighborhoods have been clear in our desire for assurances that this proposed "restaurant" will not operate as a "large bar", and those assurances have not been provided. Specifically, these assurances relate to a reasonable food requirement and parking accommodations for staff and employees. There is simply no public need for this and without an executed MOU, it is certain that genuine skepticism on the community's part exists.

Our Board discussed this issue and voted unanimously to stand unwaveringly by South Baltimore Neighborhood Association (SBNA) in their lead effort to oppose this transfer. On



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behalf of FHNA, I strongly urge the BLLC to deny the proposed transfer as it has been proposed.

Thank you for your time and for all that you do for Baltimore City and our neighborhoods. If you have questions, please contact me directly at costello.eric@gmail.com or 607-743-8926.

Sincerely,

Eric Costello, President
Federal Hill Neighborhood Association

CC:

Delegate Luke Clippinger, Maryland, 46th District
Councilman William H. Cole, IV, Baltimore City, 11th District
Senator Bill Ferguson, Maryland, 46th District
Chairman Steve Fogleman, BLLC for Baltimore City
Delegate Pete Hammen, Maryland, 46th District
Susan Hughes, Community Law Center, Counsel for SBNA
Delegate Brian McHale, Maryland, 46th District

BCC:

Wallace Baker, Leadenhall Baptist Church, Director of Operations
Claire Bogdanski, FHNA, Acting At-Large Director
Eric Costello, FHNA, President
Keenan Dworak-Fisher, FHNA, Member
Ginny Gerhart, FHNA, At-Large Director
Joe Halperin, FHNA, At-Large Director
Mark Jaskulski, Federal Hill South Neighborhood Association, President
Corwin Jones, Sharp Leadenhall Improvement Committee, President
Jody Martin, FHNA, Vice President
Bob Merbler, FHNA, At-Large Director
Gayle McClure, FHNA, Treasurer
Brian McComas, Federal Hill Hospitality Association, President
Amy Mutch, SBNA, President
Jen Nelson, FHNA, Member
Bob O'Donoghue, FHNA, At-Large Director
Rich Polan, FHNA, Member
Bill Romani, FHNA, Member
Will Runnebaum, Federal Hill Business Association, President
Marie Sennett, SBNA, Liquor Committee Chair
Kelly Sheehan, FHNA, Secretary
Andrea Sommer, Federal Hill Main Street, Executive Director
Diana Sugg, FHNA, Liquor Advisory Committee, Acting Chair