

LANCASTER CITY NOISE CONTROL BOARD

MINUTES

May 8, 2018

The Lancaster City Noise Control Board held a public hearing following public notice pursuant to §198-7. A.(3) of the Noise Control Ordinance on Tuesday, May 8, 2018, at 4:00 p.m., in the Mayor's Conference Room, Municipal Building, 120 North Duke Street, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

PRESENT: Christopher Brooks, Kenneth Hammel, Adam Taylor, and Sam Wilsker

EXCUSED: Jason Wynne

STAFF: Paula Jackson, Chief Planner

GUESTS: Michael Geesey, Marion Court Room; Laura Hager, Eric Parker, and John Walker, Steeple House Condominiums; Karen L. Kline and Claudia Ritter, 35 North Mary Street

Call to Order

Mr. Hammel, who volunteered to serve as Acting Chairman for this meeting, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Introduction of New Members

Christopher Brooks and Adam Taylor, recently appointed to the Noise Control Board, provided brief backgrounds about their professional experiences with performing arts. Mr. Brooks, an acoustic consultant for 25 years, has worked on acoustic design for variety of educational institutions, theatres, and performing arts centers. Mr. Taylor, founder of Bom Bom, a full-service design agency in Lancaster, is a multimedia designer with experience working on web, print, development and branding projects for regional and national clientele.

Approval of the December 12, 2017 Minutes

Mr. Hammel asked if there were any corrections or additions to the December 12, 2017 meeting minutes, previously distributed. Hearing none, they were approved as written.

Application of Marion Court Room

The application that had been advertised for this hearing read as follows: "Marion Court Room requests a variance for karaoke on Saturdays, April 28 – October 6, 2018, from 9:00 p.m. to midnight." Mr. Geesey stated that he was withdrawing his application but wanted to meet with the Board to assure that there were no concerns being raised by neighbors. He asked to be treated the same as other bars having outside music. Mr. Hammel responded that nonamplified acoustic music with amplified singing has been approved in the past. This approach has seemed to be reasonable to the Noise Control Board. His recollection was that the only variances granted in the past were for acoustic musicians and amplified vocals.

Discussion followed about the Launch convention and the volume of bands performing at various venues. Ms. Jackson stated that pursuant to the Noise Control Ordinance, the Bureau of Police grants special variances for occasional events or activities. In response to a question from Mr. Hammel, Ms. Jackson stated that noise complaints should be registered with the Police.

A short discussion about the Noise Control Ordinance followed with members commenting on what is considered a noise disturbance. Ms. Jackson noted that reference to decibels was removed from the Ordinance some years ago. [Note: Administrative Resolution No. 11 – 2007, adopted by City Council on July 24, 2007, amended the Noise Control Ordinance by deleting and/or repealing the definitions for ambient noise, A weighted, sound level, decibel, db, pure tone, sound level, sound level meter, and zoning districts.]

Because Mr. Geesey withdrew his application, the Board determined that no action was needed.

Other Business / Public Participation

Ms. Ritter and Ms. Kline, residents of 35 N. Mary Street, attended the meeting to find out if anything could be done to address the loud and disturbing noise of an air conditioner compressor installed along the side of the house at 33 N. Mary Street. They described the individual rehabilitating the house as a “flipper” and as an individual unconcerned about the noise impact on the neighbors. The unit is placed 13 inches from her property, leaving her with 18 inches for egress from the rear of her property. This past weekend, the unit ran for 8 to 10 hours, and Ms. Ritter and Ms. Kline could not hear each other sitting outside on their patio. They have contacted the Zoning Officer, who spoke with Chief Planner Paula Jackson, and have called the Police. Ms. Ritter questioned if the compressor could be moved to the rear of the house. Board members recommended that she continue to contact the Police and possibly record the sound, with someone talking during the recording for a reference.

Election of Officers

Ms. Jackson mentioned that the Bylaws call for the election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson in February of each year. However, because there were no other agenda items, she did not schedule a meeting, which would require placement of a legal notice, just for the election of officers. Mr. Hammel made a motion to elect Mr. Wilsker as Chairperson and Mr. Brooks as Vice-Chairperson. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion, which was approved.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.