

Letter in Opposition: BZA No. 12799A - 6201 3rd Street, N.W. – Request for a Modification  
November 23, 2018

Dear Board of Zoning,

Having lived one block from VIP Room, 6201 3rd St. NW, for close to 20 years, I have during the time of its operation:

- Made myriad after-midnight noise-complaint calls,
- Dealt with parking frustrations (including the blocking of my own driveway on two occasions),
- Picked up dozens of beer and liquor bottles, beer cans etc., while walking my dog the morning after VIP Room events,
- On one occasion, observed what I surmised was an inebriated VIP Room patron urinating on the oak in my tree box

It is, in my informed opinion as a two-decade resident of Manor Park, absolutely unconscionable that the establishment ownership is pursuing approval for 12799A “Request for Modification,” which I recently learned has begun within BZA; I further understand that a hearing has been scheduled for November 28. This is astounding considering the ownership knows full well that the adjacent homes have repeatedly protested the noise, litter, and parking congestion caused by events at the establishment.

In 2017, our community agreed to the compromise of granting the VIP a license to serve, but not sell, which is more than fair considering its location in a quiet, family oriented neighborhood. Manor Park bears absolutely no similarity to areas of the city that feature more restaurants, bars and nightclubs.

The memorandum by case manager Stephen Mordfin erroneously claims that the BZA has received no concerns from the surrounding neighbors -- which is true simply because we were never notified (despite the requirement) that the modification was being processed. I only learned of this circumstance because our ANC rep let us know the request for modification had been made. I was anticipating a request for input due to my proximity to the VIP Room. I’m not sure if my not being informed was oversight, but my concerns, and the concerns of my neighbors, must be taken into consideration. A complete picture of issues our community has with the VIP Room is critical to any ruling.

As made clear by similar letters you will doubtless receive from fellow residents at or near 3rd and Rittenhouse, NW, we can convincingly demonstrate that Mr. Mordfin’s memorandum is inaccurate when it notes that “there is no record of negative impacts on the neighborhood.” Complaints against the VIP Room are, again, numerous and well-documented.

I’m sure you know that in its order granting a Tavern license to VIP in 2017, ABRA validated community concerns, and placed conditions on the license that were consistent with the VIP

Room's "no sale of alcohol" restriction. This was, and remains, a comfortable compromise for residents like me, who are okay with the establishment's ability to serve, but not sell, alcoholic beverages. Modifying that neighborly agreement effectively puts a nightclub in the midst of a quiet, residential neighborhood. I don't mind my 9 year-old-daughter being woken up on the occasional Saturday night, but I am not prepared to deal with that on any given day of the week, to say nothing of the inevitable increase of litter, traffic, and shouts of profanity late-night.

As noted in the "Findings of Fact", #34 explains: "it is in the best interest of the neighborhood that the Applicant ensures that the use of the property does not exceed the grant of authority provided by the BZA, which would have a detrimental impact on the quality of the life of VIP's neighbors".

I ask that the establishment be bound to adhere to this logic. Please consider the VIP Room's request from the perspective not only of its ownership, but also from the community in which it is located. It's current model of operation is a fine balance between the two. To change that would demonstrate disregard for the cherished character of our neighborhood.

Thank you,

Jay Ferrari

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