

[EXTERNAL]Special Use Permit #2023-00040 99 - PLEASE DENY

Aaron Ellison <aaron.ellison@gmail.com>

Mon 6/19/2023 7:35 AM

To:PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

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I am sending this email in reference to Special Use Permit #2023-00040 99. According to the staff report [SUP2023-00040 Staff Report](#), they are requesting "music at low background levels" 8 AM - 10 PM (Mon - Thur) and 10 AM - Midnight (Fri - Sun). There is also a note that states that there will be "no amplified music after 11PM".

Last year the music was able to be clearly heard from the tennis courts and the Rivergate City Park on Montgomery street. The low level of background noise only seems low when compared to the live music or amplified music that are also provided by the location. In addition, there will be anticipated cheering, applauding, and celebratory outburst that should be taken into consideration when making the final decision.

I am pleading with you to not approve the request. ANY amplified music causes disturbances to the residences that are adjacent to the proposed location.

Respectfully,  
Aaron Ellison  
703-494-9404  
925 North Fairfax Street Unit 1010  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5554

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re: Special Use Permit 2023-00040, 99 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria, VA 22314 Dear Planning Commission members.

Asif Faiz <afaiz29@gmail.com>

Tue 6/20/2023 6:19 AM

To:PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

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It appears that the zoning considerations in the Special Use Permit 2023-00040 application do not explicitly mention the replacement of a former hotel with some 120 Venue condo units and 30 plus townhomes in close proximity of the proposed entertainment area.

The residents of most of these units will be affected by increased noise and air pollution as well as increased traffic and parking demand.

Noise propagation is not unidirectional that it can be controlled by facing the loudspeakers in the direction of the river! . Noise propagates in all directions and is amplified by buildings, including our 13 story Venue tower.

Smoke and air pollutants from cooking and heating facilities in outdoor trailers would also impact the Venue housing units.

Also bright outdoor lighting could result in excessive light and glare exposure for the Venue units facing east and north.

In short, the proposed outdoor trailer based restaurant/ entertainment facility is not compatible with a 150 plus residential units in close proximity.

It will directly affect the quality of life of a few hundred Alexandria City tax-paying residents.

We ,as retired senior citizens, decided to purchase our Venue condo unit in North Alexandria in anticipation of a calm, uncrowded, and relatively quiet neighborhood close to the river. Who would have imagined the installation nextdoor of two trailers in a floodlit parking lot, masquerading as a restaurant, with loud music blaring forth way past our bedtimes every day of the week.

Please reject this application

Regards

Asif Faiz

Ph.D, P.E. F. ASCE, F.IEP

Unit 905, Venue Condominium,  
925 N Fairfax St.

Ph : 703 965 2545.



June 18, 2023

Planning Commission  
Alexandria City Hall  
301 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: Special Use Permit 2023-00040, 99 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria, VA 22314

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a Unit Owner at the Venue Condominium (located at 925 N Fairfax St) and I am submitting this letter in opposition to the above-referenced application for a Special Permit.

In purchasing residential real estate in this location, the possibility of an outdoor restaurant and bar with music and entertainment was never anticipated. This addition to our immediate surroundings presents the issue of constant noise that will interfere with the peace and enjoyment of our homes. Noise will be generated not only from outdoor music, DJs, and other activities (with or without amplified sound), but also from the constant gathering of the general public in our "backyard" for the purpose of outdoor entertainment. This is especially true for the units that face in the direction of the Canal Center, regardless of the volume of such noise. If this outdoor installation had existed prior to the construction of the Venue, many of us would never have purchased here.

In addition to noise, the other issues of concern are smells emanating from outdoor cooking, the presence of food and trash attracting rats, racoons and other animals, late night loitering, the unsightly appearance of two 20-foot trailers parked directly in our line of view and immediately out our back doors, and the general degradation of the current peaceful atmosphere of the neighborhood.

The reference to City Ordinances in the Staff Report does little to reassure. If violations occur, one wonders if there will be City resources available to address such matters. Last summer there were outdoor events in this exact same location with amplified music that was audible inside the units facing the Canal Center Plaza, even with all doors and windows closed.

Unfortunately, I found it next to impossible to reach anyone at the City in order to file a complaint. After trying many times, my complaint was finally heard, but the response was dismissive, citing the fact that permits had already been issued and available resources were limited. Understandably, this type of complaint is not high on the list of City concerns.



In light of the above concerns, I am asking that this application be rejected in its entirety. In its place I would recommend that the applicant pursue a permit for a location inside one of the Canal Center buildings.

Thank you in advance for your serious consideration of this matter.

Best Regards,



Lisa Clough

925 N Fairfax Street, Unit 602, Alexandria, VA 22314

Email: lgclough4@gmail.com

Cell: 617-640-6270



## Samantha Lockwood

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**From:** Asif Faiz <afaiz29@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 8:01 AM  
**To:** Samantha Lockwood; Antoine D Pierce; Mavis E Stanfield; Tony LaColla; Karl Moritz; Ann Horowitz  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Fwd: Special Use Permit 2023-00040, 99 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria, VA 22314 Dear Planning Commission members.

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

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Esteemed Planning Commission members,

It appears that the zoning considerations in the Special Use Permit 2023-00040 application do not explicitly mention the replacement of a former hotel with some 120 Venue condo units and 30 plus townhomes in close proximity of the proposed entertainment area.

The residents of most of these units will be affected by increased noise and air pollution as well as increased traffic and parking demand.

Noise propagation is not unidirectional that it can be controlled by facing the loudspeakers in the direction of the river! . Noise propagates in all directions and is amplified by buildings, including our 13 story Venue tower.

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We ,as retired senior citizens, decided to purchase our Venue condo unit in North Alexandria in anticipation of a calm, uncrowded, and relatively quiet neighborhood close to the river. Who would have imagined the installation nextdoor of two trailers in a floodlit parking lot, masquerading as a restaurant, with loud music blaring forth way past our bedtimes every day of the week.

Please reject this application

Regards

Asif Faiz  
Ph.D, P.E. F. ASCE, F.IEP  
Unit 905, Venue Condominium,  
925 N Fairfax St.



Ph : 703 965 2545.

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## Samantha Lockwood

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**From:** Aaron Ellison <aaron.ellison@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 9:04 AM  
**To:** Ann Horowitz; Nancy Williams; Samantha Lockwood; Antoine D Pierce; Mavis E Stanfield; Tony LaColla; Karl Moritz  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Special Use Permit #2023-00040 99 - PLEASE DENY

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

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I am sending this email in reference to Special Use Permit #2023-00040 99. According to the staff report [SUP2023-00040 Staff Report](#), they are requesting "music at low background levels" 8 AM - 10 PM (Mon - Thur) and 10 AM - Midnight (Fri - Sun). There is also a note that states that there will be "no amplified music after 11PM".

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Respectfully,  
Aaron Ellison  
703-494-9404  
925 North Fairfax Street Unit 1010  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5554

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## Samantha Lockwood

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**From:** Loretta Comfort <loret52@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 9:23 AM  
**To:** Ann Horowitz  
**Cc:** Samantha Lockwood; Antoine D Pierce; Mavis E Stanfield; Tony LaColla; Karl Moritz; Bob Comfort  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Letter in opposition to Special Use Permit 2023-00040, 99 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria, VA 22314

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

You don't often get email from loret52@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

June 19, 2023

Planning Commission  
Alexandria City Hall  
301 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: Special Use Permit 2023-00040, 99 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria, VA 22314

To Whom It May Concern:

My husband and I strongly oppose granting Bike Club the special use permits they seek to establish an outdoor restaurant, bar, and live entertainment business at Canal Center. The noise, odors, aesthetics, and very long hours the Bike Club plans to remain open will negatively affect the quality of life of those of us who live adjacent to the site and are incompatible with the otherwise quiet, family-oriented nature of the neighborhood.

Canal Center is primarily an office building in what used to be an office/commercial/industrial area of Alexandria. Recently, however, North Old Town has focused on residential developments, such as The Venue high-rise and townhomes (at the site of the former Crown Plaza Hotel), 801 Fairfax, The Muse, and soon to be Montgomery Center. Never before have so many families inhabited this previously industrial area. In The Venue, there are 140 townhomes and condominium units. The new residential face of this neighborhood needs to be taken into consideration when making permitting decisions that will have an effect on homeowners and renters.

The proposed outdoor restaurant, bar, and live entertainment space with sound amplification is not in keeping with the needs of residents and will be a nuisance. We experienced a trial of this Bike Club experiment last summer. After moving into our unit in July, we wondered what the constant noise was on weekend afternoons and evenings from the area of the Mt. Vernon Trail (which is located directly outside the doors and windows of our homes). It turns out it was the outdoor entertainment and groups of people milling about right below our homes. To block out the noise, we were forced to close our door (the only source of fresh air) and blare our TV set. Some might believe that sound diminishes as it rises to the upper floors of a building. In reality, it bounces off other buildings, gaining volume as it rises. My husband and I, and a majority of our neighbors, purchased our homes in North Old Town because it is quiet and peaceful, two qualities essential to maintaining our humanity in these times of political, economic, and social upheaval.

Most residents of the Venue are past our clubbing days. We do not appreciate bars operating within view and hearing of our homes. On our floor alone, there are two out of 10 units housing families with infants. We remember the days of tiptoeing ever so stealthily to keep the baby asleep so we could either rest or get some chores done. Others who are climbing up the career ladder set early alarms for work. At the other end of the spectrum are the septuagenarians, like us, who have a hard enough time sleeping without having to deal with the sounds of unwanted music below. With extended hours of service and access to liquor until midnight as proposed in the Special Use Permit, we guarantee that voices will explode, rowdiness will ensue, public urination will be inevitable, and discarded garbage will appear, luring vermin. Outdoors at Canal Center, mere steps from the Venue and other developments mentioned, is not the appropriate location to establish an open-air eatery and bar with amplified entertainment.



North Old Town has been designated an arts area, and we are excited about that. We're excited about the theater, the Arts League presence, etc., but if Bike Club desires to join in the cultural arts brigade, we encourage the city permitting office to usher them to an indoor space that **contains** the noise, the odors from cooking, the garbage and trash, and the wandering drinkers. We believe there are indoor spaces available at Canal Center. Canal 44 restaurant is a good example of effectively using both indoor and outdoor balcony space **facing the river**, where any voices or music trail off over the Potomac, not into our homes.

Residents of the Venue worked hard to purchase or rent our new homes. Please allow us to enjoy our homes without having to have a daily battle against noise, drunkenness, food/smoke odors, and crowds at our doorstep.

Thank you.

Loretta Comfort  
925 N. Fairfax St.  
Unit 1001  
Alexandria, VA 22314

He is happiest, be he king or peasant, who finds peace in his home.  
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

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## Samantha Lockwood

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**From:** Mavis E Stanfield  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 11:54 AM  
**To:** Samantha Lockwood; Antoine D Pierce  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL]Special Use Permit #2023-00040  
**Attachments:** SUP2023-00040 Staff Report.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Please forward this letter also.

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**From:** Michael Spatz <mjspatz@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 20, 2023 11:51 AM  
**To:** Mavis E Stanfield <mavis.stanfield@alexandriava.gov>; Ann Horowitz <ann.horowitz@alexandriava.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Special Use Permit #2023-00040

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [mjspatz@gmail.com](mailto:mjspatz@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Ms.Mavis Stanfield and Ms. Ann Horowitz,

I am writing to express overwhelming support and approval to approve the attached special use permit. These events are fun and are enjoyed by many, many people and their families all around the area. They have been having these events for two years already without issue. Families enjoy them and they are fun and good for the community. I live in the Venue condominium complex and my balcony faces where Bike Club is. Bike Club has ALWAYS been very respectful about any noise in the area and have always stopped any music by 8:00pm on a Friday or Saturday evening in the summertime when it stays light until 9:30pm. Trash is ALWAYS picked up as well.

Unfortunately there are a few people that live in the condo complex that would like to shut it down for everybody. You must not let that happen. The few people trying to shut it down complain about everything all the time and are utterly incapable of thinking beyond themselves. Having these types of events is exactly the reason you want to live here in Old Town North. To have access to unique, fun, and free events such as these. Bike Club has been hosting a comedy club inside as well. It's wonderful to be able to walk over there and get a taco or something from one of the food trucks while mom or dad can get a beer or glass of wine.

Please do not let a small miserable minority shut this down. These events have been going on since before Venue was even built. Too many people beyond the few trying to stop it down enjoy the events. Thank you.

Mike Spatz  
703-819-7482  
Venue Condo Unit 1008

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## Samantha Lockwood

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**From:** Lisa <lgclough4@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 19, 2023 7:22 PM  
**To:** Ann Horowitz  
**Cc:** Nancy Williams; Samantha Lockwood; Antoine D Pierce; Mavis E Stanfield; Tony LaColla; Karl Moritz  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL]CORRECTED Letter in Opposition to Special Use Permit #2023-00040 (99 canal plaza)  
**Attachments:** Group Letter to Planning Commission 6-19.pdf

Some people who received this message don't often get email from lgclough4@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi All,

Attached please find the letter of objection signed by multiple unit owners.

To simplify matters, you can present this one at the hearing instead of my individual letter (since it is basically the same letter). If more unit owners sign tomorrow, I will send another copy to reflect their signatures.

I apologize for the piecemeal nature of our correspondence but we were given only a few days to respond before the hearing. I have been working 24/7 to notify the condominium unit owners; however, I do not have contact information for the Venue Townhomes. I am concerned that they have not been appropriately notified.

Thank you,  
Lisa Clough  
617-640-6270

On Mon, Jun 19, 2023 at 3:43 PM Ann Horowitz <[ann.horowitz@alexandriava.gov](mailto:ann.horowitz@alexandriava.gov)> wrote:

Hello Lisa,

Thank you for reaching out on this case and for identifying the typo. We will correct that for the 6/22 Planning Commission hearing.

Additional comments from your development may be sent individually or all may sign one letter. Please forward any emails to me and Mavis Stanfield and we will be sure that the Planning Commission receives these prior to the Thursday hearing.

Ann

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**From:** Nancy Williams <[Nancy.Williams@alexandriava.gov](mailto:Nancy.Williams@alexandriava.gov)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 18, 2023 6:03 PM



**To:** Lisa <[lgclough4@gmail.com](mailto:lgclough4@gmail.com)>

**Cc:** Samantha Lockwood <[samantha.lockwood@alexandriava.gov](mailto:samantha.lockwood@alexandriava.gov)>; Antoine D Pierce <[antoine.pierce@alexandriava.gov](mailto:antoine.pierce@alexandriava.gov)>; Mavis E Stanfield <[mavis.stanfield@alexandriava.gov](mailto:mavis.stanfield@alexandriava.gov)>; Ann Horowitz <[ann.horowitz@alexandriava.gov](mailto:ann.horowitz@alexandriava.gov)>; Tony LaColla <[anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov](mailto:anthony.lacolla@alexandriava.gov)>; Karl Moritz <[Karl.Moritz@alexandriava.gov](mailto:Karl.Moritz@alexandriava.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL]CORRECTED Letter in Opposition to Special Use Permit #2023-00040 (99 canal plaza)

Lisa Clough,

I am copying the BCU staff so that they can add your letter to the docket item on Tuesday. Monday 6/19 is a holiday. BCU will share the letter with the PC when the City reopens on Tuesday. The planners are Mavis and Ann. I am copying them too. You can always determine the assigned planners by a notation on the first page of staff reports with info on full names and emails.

Thx

Nancy

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 18, 2023, at 5:17 PM, Lisa <[lgclough4@gmail.com](mailto:lgclough4@gmail.com)> wrote:

You don't often get email from [lgclough4@gmail.com](mailto:lgclough4@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi again,

I apologize! I found a mistake in my first letter so here it is again. Please pass along this version only.

Thank you,

Lisa Clough

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Lisa <[lgclough4@gmail.com](mailto:lgclough4@gmail.com)>



Date: Sun, Jun 18, 2023 at 3:33 PM

Subject: Letter in Opposition to Special Use Permit #2023-00040 at 99 Canal Center Plaza

To: <[nancy.williams@alexandriava.gov](mailto:nancy.williams@alexandriava.gov)>

Hi Nancy,

I am attaching a letter in opposition to the SUP referenced above. I was not able to figure out from the City website exactly whose email to use but I am guessing it's yours. If this is not correct, please let me know.

I am also attaching The Bike Club's Presentation Flyer we received last week. On page 2, it reads "Situated near the corner of South Peyton and Prince Streets." I am assuming this is a typo (?)

I will call you tomorrow (or Tuesday if you are closed) to follow up on this matter. I am wondering if some of the Unit Owners here can collectively sign and submit a similar letter to mine (instead of everyone sending separate letters).

Thank you in advance for your help.

Best Regards,

Lisa Clough

925 N Fairfax St, Unit 602

Alexandria, VA 22314

617-640-6270



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June , 2023

Planning Commission  
Alexandria City Hall  
301 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: Special Use Permit 2023-00040, 99 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria, VA 22314

To Whom It May Concern:

The undersigned Unit Owners of the Venue Condominiums and Townhomes are submitting this letter collectively in opposition to the above-referenced application for a Special Permit.

In purchasing residential real estate in this location, the possibility of an outdoor restaurant and bar with music and entertainment was never anticipated. This addition to our immediate surroundings will result in constant noise that will interfere with the peaceful and quiet enjoyment of our homes. The noise will be generated not only from music, DJs, and other outdoor activities (with or without amplified sound), but also from the mere gathering of the general public in our "backyard." This is especially true for the units that face in the direction of the Canal Center, regardless of the volume of such noise. If this outdoor establishment had existed prior to the construction of the Venue, many of us would never have purchased here.

In addition to noise, the other issues of concern are smells emanating from outdoor cooking, the presence of food and trash attracting rats, racoons and other animals, late night loitering, the general degradation of the peaceful atmosphere of the neighborhood, and the unsightly appearance of two 20-foot trailers parked directly in our line of view and immediately outside our doors (there is only a narrow bike path that separates our property from the proposed location of this establishment).



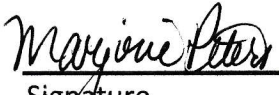




The reference to City Ordinances in the Staff Report does little to reassure. If violations occur, one wonders if there will be City resources available to address such matters. Last summer there were outdoor events in this exact location with amplified music that was audible inside the units facing the Canal Center Plaza, even with all doors and windows closed. Unfortunately, it was next to impossible to reach anyone at the City to file a complaint. Even when the complaint was finally heard, the response was dismissive, citing the fact that a permit had already been issued and resources to address this kind of complaint were limited. Understandably, this is not high on the list of City concerns.



In light of the above concerns, we are asking that this application be rejected in its entirety. In its place we would recommend that the applicant pursue a permit for a location inside one of the Canal Center buildings.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this matter.

Signed by:

	Lisa Clough	925 N Fairfax St #602	lgclough4@gmail.com
Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
	Yvonne Medina	925 N. Fairfax St Unit 1204	Yrmedina@comcast.net
Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
	Marjorie Peters	925 N. Fairfax St Unit 906	marjoriepeterspgh@gmail.com
Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
	Aaron Ellison	925 N. FAIRFAX ST UNIT 1010	AARON.ELLISON@GMAIL.COM
Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
	Glorimar Fortuna	925 N. FAIRFAX ST UNIT 908	fortunagps@gmail.com
Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
	Abdullah K	925 N. Fairfax St Unit 402	Kyokavn-93@hotmail.com
Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
	Meg Gaffney-Smith	925 N. Fairfax St Unit 304	Meggy261128@gmail.com
Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)

Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
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Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
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Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
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June 20, 2023

Planning Commission

Alexandria City Hall

301 King Street

Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: Special Use Permit 2023-00040, [99 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria, VA 22314](#)

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposal to expand the existing Bike Club. The proposal to increase the hours and days of the week that the Bike Club can operate will have significant unacceptable impacts on residents in the vicinity. The noise and the hours of operation are not compatible with a residential neighborhood or the office park and will adversely impact those of us whom work and live in North Old Town. One of the primary reasons we invested nearly \$1 million in our condominium was the uncrowded, peace, and quiet afforded us by this neighborhood, away from the loud noise, partying, and congestion of downtown Alexandria along King Street. The Events at Canal Center including the Bike Club's existing offerings are unobtrusive and less impactful. To increase noise and activities 7 days a week and well past 10 pm is not in the public interest. The expanded hours and the additional trailers will harm the aesthetics we enjoy. The anticipated outdoor lighting and noise cannot be mitigated and will harm those of us who live near the proposed establishment and negatively impact our quality of life.

Because of these concerns I ask that you reject this proposal in its entirety or significantly modify the hours and days of operation so that residents are not adversely impacted. I look forward to your written reply. If you have any questions, please contact me at 571-585-2966 or [meggy261128@gmail.com](mailto:meggy261128@gmail.com)

Sincerely,

Meg Smith

[925 N. Fairfax St., #304](#)

Alexandria, VA 22314



Dear Ms. Mavis Stanfield and Ms. Ann Horowitz,

I am writing to express overwhelming support and approval to approve the special use permit for the Bike Club at Canal Center. I live in the Venue condominium complex and **I am currently pregnant with our first child. I love that there will be food and entertainment so close by as we welcome a little one into our community.** This will be so convenient for busy parents and their families! We chose to raise our baby in Old Town North at the Venue Condominiums because of the culture, arts scene, and fun family friendly events. I understand that there are a small number of people in our building writing in opposition. Please do not let a small vocal minority change your view on this issue. I urge you to please consider what is best for the whole old town north community as we work together to create a positive, beautiful, fun place to live and raise our families.

Thank you for your consideration,

Amy Kroll  
925 N Fairfax St  
Unit 406  
Alexandria, VA 22314

PS: I would love it if Bike Club did some family friendly events too and if they had some great healthy food options, please pass the message to the owners. :)



Good afternoon, my name is Alena. My husband, Thomas Volk, and I live at 210 Canal Center Plaza and received a notification to your planning commission meeting tomorrow in regard to the special use permit for 99 Canal Center Plaza. Unfortunately, we won't be able to attend tomorrow evening, but would like to relay a few thoughts, especially as we are the townhome immediately in front of this space. First, we're excited for new life and dining options in our neighborhood, and this one in particular, as it brings together the bike path community. We'd only ask that any live music be kept at a reasonable level with the bass low, and during the week at least, ending no later than 9pm as music in the plaza is often audible even with the windows closed. But we are excited to see the space put to use and appreciate the notification. Thanks for the inclusion.

Very respectfully,  
Alena Taylor and Thomas Volk



Joan M. Walsh  
925 N. Fairfax Street, #604  
Alexandria, VA 22314

June 20, 2023

Planning Commission  
Alexandria City Hall  
301 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: Special Use Permit 2023-00040, 99 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Commissioners,

I recently moved to Alexandria from San Diego, California and currently reside at the Venue condominiums.

A neighbor recently notified me of a hearing regarding the application of a special use permit by the City of Alexandria to allow a 60-seat outdoor restaurant and music venue in front of 99 Canal Center Plaza. I did not receive any notice of this proposed special use permit which I would have thought would have been required as it would impact not only the surrounding townhouses but also the condominium tower building.

My concern is that this venue would operate from 8 am to 10 pm Monday through Thursday and from 10 am until 12 am Friday through Sunday.

I have several concerns about this proposed special use permit and would respectfully request that the Planning Commission would carefully consider these items.

First, parking is at a premium at this location. There is no guest parking for either the townhouses or the tower condominiums at the Venue. In addition, Café 44/Jula's on the Potomac restaurant is already expanding its restaurant and outdoor serving area which is located in the adjacent building at 44 Canal Street.

To allow a live outdoor entertainment venue to operate 7 days per week which will undoubtedly affect all of the current residents in the area seems excessive. I resided in downtown San Diego for 20 years prior to moving here 2 months ago. We had similar outdoor entertainment venues in my neighborhood which over time created a number of nuisances issues ranging from an increase in criminal activity, robberies, car thefts and vandalism. Fortunately, those venues were only allowed to operate infrequently, generally not more than one weekend per month. However, when those did operate, the loud music and pounding of the amplifiers could be heard for several blocks surrounding the outdoor area; and, it was very difficult for the City of San Diego to invoice the noise ordinances. Although I did not reside here last summer when this Bike Club was permitted to



operate an outdoor entertainment area, I am doubtful that the proposed live music venue will not become increasingly louder over time as the location gains popularity.

Will the operator of this venue be required to provide private security? As with most large cities these days, I presume that Alexandria's Police Department does not have the resources to afford routine patrols of this area not only for the purpose of monitoring any potential criminal activity but also for enforcement of other City ordinances.

The one advantage that the City of San Diego had was to authorize merchant districts to have maintenance crews to come in immediately after an event to thoroughly clean the site. How will this site be monitored? I am aware that a number of condominium and apartment buildings along the waterfront in Alexandria have had issues with mice, rats and other vermin. Who will monitor the pest control issues and refuse disposal?

I realize that several of the surrounding office buildings have space available for lease. Have other sites been considered such as the plaza one block down on North Fairfax which is also part of the Trans Potomac Plaza Center?

What happens when the theater at the Venue is completed and Metro Stage commences their performances? I would think that having to live performance locations within 2 blocks of one another will present many issues associated with that anticipated density, parking and security particularly since this special use permit is for a 2-year period of time.

Has a liquor license been applied for and granted to the Bike Club of the LLC applying for this permit?

I respectfully request that the Planning Commission carefully consider this application and the problems which are likely to arise if the special use permit is granted. For these reasons I am expressing my opposition to this lengthy special use permit.

Sincerely,



Joan M. Walsh



Hi All,

I never heard back from anyone by email or phone call today regarding the noticing situation.

The code clearly says that the notice must be sent to the President of the Board - but there is no Board and there is no President. As a result, none of us received notice.

*Recipients of written notice.* Written notice shall be sent to the owner of the subject property, if different from the applicant, and to the owners of all abutting property. In the case of a condominium, written notice may be sent to the president of the board of the unit owners' association instead of to each individual unit owner.

It seems to me that this hearing should be postponed until all Venue owners receive notice. I will pursue to the best of my ability tomorrow.

Best Regards,

Lisa Clough



Hi Samantha,

Thank you for your email. Unfortunately this information was never relayed to the unit owners until Friday 6/16/23. We received very little (and incomplete) information in a column of the weekly email newsletter from the Property Manager this past Friday evening (newsletter attached). This gave us less than a week before the hearing to respond.

Also we have no Board or Board President as the Developer still controls the Association. DO you know who received the notice in place of the Board President?

Would you please have someone call me this morning if possible?

Thank you,

Lisa



To All Concerned,

I am formally requesting that the above hearing be postponed until a later date in order to officially notify all property owners at the Venue.

To the best of my knowledge, the Venue property owners were never notified of the SUP application or the hearing. According to City code, the property owners must be notified individually or in the case of a condominium, the Board President can be notified instead.

I asked many times on Tuesday 6/20 and Wednesday 6/21 (today) to discuss this matter with the Planning Commission but I was refused. My question was simple - who did the attorney of record send the certified notice to? Now there are approximately 24 hours left until the hearing and I am still without an answer. I am left with no other alternative but to ask for a postponement.

On my own, I was able to verify that the Venue property manager (Mandy Parenteau) received a certified notice from Kenneth Wire, Esq. dated 6/8/2023. However, since I was never able to speak with the Planning Commission, I can only assume that Austin Flajser of Carr Companies (the Developer) was not notified. Austin Flajser is currently serving in place of a Board President (we have not transitioned yet).

Thank you for your understanding.

Best Regards,

Lisa Clough



Hi again,

After speaking with Nancy Williams a few minutes ago, my understanding is that the applicant was not obligated to notify the Venue property since our property does not abut theirs. In between our two properties, there is an abandoned railroad track/bike path owned by Norfolk (not sure of the rest of the name). Therefore, I am withdrawing my request for a postponement.

Please understand that the reason I was assuming otherwise was largely due to an email I received from Samantha Lockwood at 8:42 am on 6/20/23. Here is the text of that email (copied and pasted). However, from my phone call with Nancy, I am now being told that none of the below was applicable to this situation since the notice was not required.



Hi again,

After speaking with Nancy Williams a few minutes ago, my understanding is that the applicant was not obligated to notify the Venue property since our property does not abut theirs. In between our two properties, there is an abandoned railroad track/bike path owned by Norfolk (not sure of the rest of the name). Therefore, I am withdrawing my request for a postponement.

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June , 2023

Planning Commission  
Alexandria City Hall  
301 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: Special Use Permit 2023-00040, 99 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria, VA 22314

To Whom It May Concern:

The undersigned Unit Owners of the Venue Condominiums and Townhomes are submitting this letter collectively in opposition to the above-referenced application for a Special Permit.

In purchasing residential real estate in this location, the possibility of an outdoor restaurant and bar with music and entertainment was never anticipated. This addition to our immediate surroundings will result in constant noise that will interfere with the peaceful and quiet enjoyment of our homes. The noise will be generated not only from music, DJs, and other outdoor activities (with or without amplified sound), but also from the mere gathering of the general public in our "backyard." This is especially true for the units that face in the direction of the Canal Center, regardless of the volume of such noise. If this outdoor establishment had existed prior to the construction of the Venue, many of us would never have purchased here.

In addition to noise, the other issues of concern are smells emanating from outdoor cooking, the presence of food and trash attracting rats, racoons and other animals, late night loitering, the general degradation of the peaceful atmosphere of the neighborhood, and the unsightly appearance of two 20-foot trailers parked directly in our line of view and immediately outside our doors (there is only a narrow bike path that separates our property from the proposed location of this establishment).







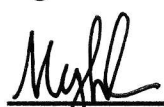

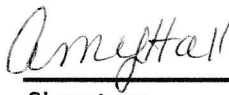
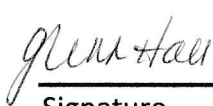
The reference to City Ordinances in the Staff Report does little to reassure. If violations occur, one wonders if there will be City resources available to address such matters. Last summer there were outdoor events in this exact location with amplified music that was audible inside the units facing the Canal Center Plaza, even with all doors and windows closed. Unfortunately, it was next to impossible to reach anyone at the City to file a complaint. Even when the complaint was finally heard, the response was dismissive, citing the fact that a permit had already been issued and resources to address this kind of complaint were limited. Understandably, this is not high on the list of City concerns.



In light of the above concerns, we are asking that this application be rejected in its entirety. In its place we would recommend that the applicant pursue a permit for a location inside one of the Canal Center buildings.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this matter.

Signed by:

	Lisa Clough	925 N Fairfax St #602	lgclough4@gmail.com
Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
	Yvonne Medina	925 N. Fairfax St Unit 1204	Yrmedina@comcast.net
Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
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Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
	Aaron Ellison	925 N. FAIRFAX ST UNIT 1010	AARON.ELLISON@GMAIL.COM
Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
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Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)
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Signature	Printed Name	Address	Email Address (optional)



925 N Fairfax St, #405

Angelica Escalona

amescalona@aol.com

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Email Address (optional)

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Ann,

I realize I am a little late writing this email in support of the Bike Club's application for two temporary trailers and live entertainment, but I only yesterday found out there is opposition from residents of Venue, new to Old Town North and perhaps not aware of our planned future as an Arts and Cultural district that will include indoor and outdoor performances, music, and entertainment. This was a quiet neighborhood at one point, but that is not what the people who worked on the Old Town North Small Area Plan (SAP) wanted for their future. Vibrancy centered around the visual and performing arts is a central goal of the SAP. The activities at Canal Center are helping move us in the right direction.

I am a long-time resident of Old Town North, and live in Rivergate, directly adjacent to Canal Center. I've been very happy with the success Cafe 44 has had, and was thrilled last summer when Canal Center started having events with live music, food trucks, and art vendors; and held events like Yoga on the Plaza and salsa classes. I believe this entertainment is entirely appropriate to this magnificent setting -- the glass office buildings, the sculptured plaza, and the river all make this a beautiful destination for residents and visitors alike. It has been underutilized in the past, but is now beginning to fulfill its potential.

The Bike Club is a small venue with modest entertainment goals. I would like to see us welcome their economic activity and the benefits they bring to the neighborhood in vibrancy and "something to do". I say economic activity because making Canal Center an attractive destination or place to work is essential to filling the office buildings which have experienced a high vacancy rate in recent years. To ensure better maintenance of the complex and its riverfront walk, this has to be a complex with a high occupancy rate, which will be driven by the availability of restaurants and entertainment, since it is not adjacent to Metro.

Please forward this email to the Planning Commission and your colleagues on the City Staff. Thank you.

Agnès Artemel

120 Madison Place (Rivergate townhouses)

703-944-2113



Good afternoon Ann. I am writing to you in regard to the above special use permit for Canal Place. I am in opposition of this special permit. There is a hearing tonight that unfortunately, I am unable to attend. My husband and I live in the Venue Condominiums. We specifically chose this residence because of it's location. It's in a quiet part of North Old Town. This was a major factor for us. We didn't want to be near all of the noise and activity of Old Town near King Street. We are strongly opposed to the proposal for the special use permit from the Bike Club. The noise level this will provide will be a huge disturbance to all residents of the Venue condominiums and townhomes. Even with our windows closed, the noise will enter our homes. There will be noise from excessive people and music not to mention the trash trucks and delivery trucks. I believe the proposal said there wouldn't be any noise from 12 to 7 am. Thus, a seven hour window of quiet. This is not acceptable. We are taxpayers in Alexandria that would like to maintain the peace and quiet of the area. There was an event in the courtyard there last month that made it hard just to hear the TV and go to sleep that night. I can't imagine that every night. Please take into consideration the residents of North Old Town and the Venue. Again, we stand in strong opposition to this.

Thank you for your consideration,

Stacey English

925 N Fairfax St #1208



Good afternoon,

I am the husband of Stacy english. My name is Matthew Witmer. I am also in opposition and stand by her previous email.

Thank you for your consideration

Matthew Witmer