

Concert prompts complaints

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range as a measure. Although considered by the city's planning commission last year, that decibel level was not adopted and is not an official limit or listed in any city ordinance.

An ordinance under consideration by the city uses a limit of 55 decibels at nighttime and 45 decibels during the daytime as maximums in residential areas — and residents are using that in making their complaints. City officials say they are unsure when that will be considered, and say the entire city — not just the Community Center — will be taken into account when it is discussed.

City attorney John Donohue said he has asked that all complaints about the Community Center be directed to his office for review. He has also asked that police write no tickets unless they have heard the decibel levels themselves and could testify to that.

"If we make a decision there's been an ordinance violation, we will issue a complaint and warrant," he said. "We will carefully review it for prosecution."

As of last week, Donohue said he had not yet seen the police report and so could not comment on the specific complaint.

MEANWHILE, SHORTT has drafted a letter to Deputy Police Chief Mirl Spencer regarding the complaint, reiterating his request that the center be charged with disturbing the peace. "What would your reaction be if your next door neighbor called in a jazz group, set up amplifiers in his back yard, invited in a dozen screaming, yelling, whistling fans and proceeded to rattle your eardrums for two hours?" he asked.

City Councilman Jon Grant said he is concerned about the Community Center situation but is also concerned that any ordinance be fair to other residents of the city. "I'm not going to support this ordinance because of the situation which has gone on at the Community Center," he said. "I am not in favor of putting an



Sue Benette (above, left) of Dearborn came to Wednesday's Community Center concert with Edith Robinette of Westland, mother of band member Chuck Robinette. Playing bass in the Chuck Robinette Trio was Paul Keller (below) of Ypsilanti. The trio played Wednesday night at the Community Center Amphitheatre.

ordinance on the books to deal with one problem we have. I look at this ordinance as totally separate."

Grant said he hoped to attend one of the August Community Center concerts and also take decibel readings around the city with a meter before considering any change to the city laws.

The Community Center faced a one-year ban of speakers and microphones in November of 1989, after the first summer of concerts prompted the first round of complaints by residents. Complaints have continued since that time.

Community Center officials have been upset because the city approved construction of the \$60,000 amphitheater on the grounds, which they said was meant to enhance summer entertainment for the community.

Marks said the center will continue to try and make the outdoor concerts work, despite the adversity.

"We're going to try — it will be extremely hard to build up the patronage again," he said. "We're going to continue trying to do the things we do there. Whatever's good for the community, I will fight for."



SHARON LAMUELL/staff photographer

Bank again seeks to help homeless

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"You could probably house somebody there year-round, truly," planning commission chairwoman Joanne Smith said, referring to the amenities of the facility.

BEFORE THE no more than 30 homeless people are housed to a site — such as the bank — they are screened by SOS staff for drunkenness, drug use and any other problems that may not be appropriate for the program.

Homeless clients are provided dinner, sleeping quarters, breakfast and a bag lunch at each site for seven days.

Security guards would be on hand — as they were last year — as well as employees, the majority of whom would remain through dinner. After dinner, no traffic is expected because only four or five employees would remain with program participants through the night, Symula-Nahlikian said.

Program participants would be transported from the Royal Oak facility to the bank. At the bank, participants would be escorted to the area where they would stay. Employees would also carry walkie-talkies, Symula-Nahlikian said.

Though critics of the program have called it a "temporary fix," it's a fix that works, the attorney said.

"The guests we helped were very appreciative. It did help those people," she said. "Something needs to be done and we're doing something."

The planning commission's recommendation Thursday on the temporary use request is an advisory vote. It is the ZBA that makes the final decision on whether the bank in an office district can be temporarily used to house the homeless, which is a residential use.

Last year, however, the ZBA is where bank employees met opposition. Some residents in the nearby Forestbrook-Pebblebrook subdivision, just north of the bank, opposed the bank's temporary use request. Some residents were concerned about traffic, safety and giving homeless people something that won't help improve their lives.

BUT OTHERS have supported the program and said that it can't just be churches and other charitable organizations that take in the homeless.

At the first crack, the ZBA cast a tie vote, which is a denial of the bank's request. The bank followed with a scheduled appeal in Oakland County Circuit Court. Finally, bank employees changed their request by reducing the days the homeless would be at the bank to six nights and five days, and got a successful second hearing.

Thursday night the planning commission not only recommended approval for temporary use but agreed to allow the planning department to notify commissioners in the future of the bank's expected annual request. If circumstances in the request are not changed from one year to another, commissioners said they would automatically pass it on to the ZBA.

obituaries

GEORGE THOMAS

Mr. Thomas, 84, of Farmington died Aug. 6 in Botsford Hospital, Farmington Hills.

Born in Hancock, Mich., Mr. Thomas was an inspector for Chrysler Corp. He was an Army veteran serving with the 20th Airborne. Survivors include his wife, Eileen; sister, Gladys Harris.

Services were Aug. 9 at the Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington.

ELLEN (PEGGY) LEHTO

Mrs. Lehto, 81, of Livonia died Aug. 6 in Providence Hospital, Southfield.

Born in Ruyard, Mich., Mrs. Lehto was a retired secretary.

Survivors include her son, Alan; sister, Irene Koponen of Farmington; brother, Wayne Mayry; three grandchildren.

Services were Aug. 9 at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Southfield, with the Rev. Roland Trykoff officiating. Burial was in Glen Eden Cemetery, Livonia.

Memorials may be made to Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 23425 Lahser Road, Southfield. Arrangements were made by the Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington.

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