

# Lawmakers deny local liquor control

By JACKIE KLEIN

Southfield officials are miffed because a provision giving local government the final say in issuing liquor licenses was deleted from new state legislation.

The house of representatives bill, designed to increase liquor license fees, included a stipulation that would return local control over the issuance of SDD (package liquor) and SDM (beer and wine) sales licenses. The measure, soon to be signed by Gov. William G. Milliken, was recalled and amended by the senate. The house concurred with the senate action.

Mayor Donald Fracassi, annoyed by the deletion, said he would like SDD and SDM license applications filed at Southfield City Hall.

"Local government is best qualified to evaluate the effect issuing liquor licenses will have on the area and the entire community," Fracassi said. "The city should have input from the

health, building and police departments and attach riders to each application."

Flannery maintained the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (LCC) generally fails to notify the city of SDD and SDM license applications. But the agency claims Southfield police to check on applicants, the clerk commented.

"THE LEGISLATURE gives us liquor license control and then takes it away," Flannery said. "It's like holding a carrot in front of a donkey." The measure gives a \$3.5 million hike in liquor license fees earmarked for the LCC licensing and enforcement division. Percentage of license fees allocated to local governments, under the law, is cut from 85 to 80 percent. With the increased fee structure, however, cities will get about the same money returned. Funds are earmarked for local law enforcement of liquor licenses.

City officials claim the state should assure there'll be no loss of revenues to local communities and all mandated costs should be reimbursed. Southfield has 41,000 persons of drinking age and should have enough money to properly enforce liquor laws, officials note.

During a recent legislative breakfast meeting in Southfield, Rep. Sandy Brotherton (R-Farmington) said he would look into the Senate's action in recalling the bill. He said Southfield might join the Michigan Municipal League to keep the city informed on the numerous bills in the legislature.

FLANNERY HOLDS little hope for the provision deleted from the legislation to be restored. The Senate was the "stumbling block," he claimed, and was influenced by lobbyists to recall the bill.

The former policy of the LCC was to refuse to issue SDD and SDM licenses if the legislative body of the municipality objected. But a few years ago, the courts ruled denial of applications based on unfavorable recommendations from local officials is illegal.

As a result, LCC indicated it would no longer accept municipal recommendations as binding. Southfield City Council sent a resolution to the state legislature asking that the LCC's former policy be reinstated to best serve the public interest.

"The municipality is the governmental unit required to cope with all the problems resulting from the sale of alcoholic beverages within its boundaries," the resolution stated. "The state statute should be amended to provide municipalities with the same approval power they were granted before the law was altered."

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# Greened setting stimulates folk duo

By JOSEPH McCauley

When you've got 11 cats to provide for and a house with 125 plants, your creative juices either flow or are overwhelmed.

Fortunately for Redford Township residents Mike and Barbara Smith, they admit being stimulated by their home environment.

The Smiths, both 35, have worked together for nine years singing and playing folk music with varying amounts of success. Both believe they're due for a hit song in the wake of another personal fulfillment.

"We hold the record for the longest running show in Detroit," said Smith. "Our show, 'Personals' ran for 1 1/2 years at Mercy College's dinner theatre."

Smith wrote four songs for the show and has had several of his 10 songs recorded by other performers.

"The Four Freshmen, Spanky and Our Gang, Tom Rush, Josh White, and Steve Goodman, who wrote 'The City of New Orleans,' have recorded my songs," explained Smith.

"I've had 'The Dutchman' recorded 10 different times by various artists, and it may turn out to be a song like

'Mr. Bojangles.' We followed that song's progress for several years, and it was recorded by many people before it caught on."

"We hope that this happens with 'The Dutchman' too," Smith added. "AFTER SPENDING many years on the road, the Smiths settled in Redford two years ago, explaining that they originally came to Detroit because it was a good area for folk-singing."

"The area isn't as good as it once was for playing folk," explained Barbara Smith. "Sometimes we might only work three times a week which is nice, but you only get paid half as much as a whole week."

Currently, the Smiths, who have recorded two albums, are performing through Sunday at the Raven Gallery on Greenfield, north of Twelve Mile in Southfield. Although they would prefer to work six nights a week the year round, they realize it isn't always possible.

Being selective in where they play is also a factor in how much work they get. However, the Smiths have learned through experience why one has to be choosy.

"Keeping your confidence up is the hardest thing as an entertainer," said Smith. "If you play in the wrong places, it can really hurt you."

"When you play acoustic guitars, a noisy audience really bothers you. If you have electric instruments at least you can drown the audience out. We don't so we play in listening rooms," Mrs. Smith explained.

The Raven Gallery is a good example of a place they prefer, according to Smith.

"You get a better listening audience there and a lot of peer approval. There's also an interest in words at places like the Raven," he continued. "AFTER THEIR engagement at the Raven, the Smiths will play in the Chicago area. They hope that 'Personals' may be revived so they can stay in one place for another long run. Mrs. Smith was encouraged by a visitor to one of the last performances last year."

"The producer of 'Bye Bye Birdie' saw the show and was impressed," she said enthusiastically. "He went

back to New York to get backers for an off-Broadway production, but the show closed before he could get anyone to see it."

However, an idea to start it up again is still in the talking stages, she added.

In addition to "The Dutchman," which Smith wrote about his sister and a Dutch childhood friend, the Smiths sing songs about such topics as a man's need for booze in a dry county and fires in cars at drive-ins.

A native of New Jersey, Smith plays acoustic guitar and excels with slide guitar numbers. Mrs. Smith, originally from Florida, also plays guitar and piano. They both share vocals and have been together and with other musicians for nine years.

"Being married makes things easier since we both have the same goals," said Smith.

Traveling and singing together is what they want to do. Although they admit their music has limited appeal, they've stuck by their convictions and hope it will pay off.

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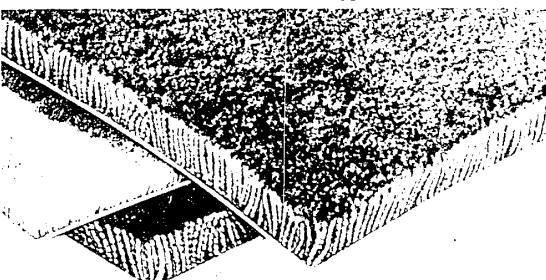
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