

May 14, 2023

New Orleans City Planning Commission
1300 Perdido St.
New Orleans, LA 70112

Zoning Docket 038/23

Dear Commissioners,

You are being asked to grant three different Conditional Uses for a new rum distillery at the old Frankie & Johnny's at 2600 St Claude. The FMIA, as well as nearby residents, attended an NPP on March 30 in which the developer laid out their plans. The neighbors were in favor of these plans, as presented, and ask that the Conditional Uses be contingent upon the proposed business remaining in place (a distillery with a bar and tasting room containing live music), and not evolving into a large music club and bar. The neighbors feel this is crucial to allowing the business to operate as proposed, while also limiting the impact of this large business on the nearby Residences:

- 1) Front door- The zoning principles of the Marigny allow the most commercial uses in HMC-2 properties (traditionally in the exterior of the neighborhood), in order to limit impact on the Residences. The current plans have the front door on Franklin Avenue, in front of people's homes, instead of St Claude (a state highway). This was a major concern of the neighbors, and took up a large part of the conversation at the NPP. The developers are discussing plans currently to create an entrance on St Claude, and we urge you to limit the Franklin Avenue entrance to a Fire Exit or Employees Entrance, eliminating the noise and gathering crowds that occur at a main entrance.
- 2) Live Music (Secondary Use) Conditional Use- At the NPP, the developer and his team described live music as being contained to the bar area, and only occurring on the weekends. The neighbors were amenable to that plan. However, they want to assure that this remains the plan. Since Conditional uses stay with the property, the concern is what becomes of the property if the distillery goes out of business, or moves to another location. In order to prevent the



developer's proposal from morphing into a Live Music club, we ask for you to attach a proviso to rescind this Conditional Use if the distillery is no longer in operation, We also ask that you limit the Live Music to the bar area, as well as limiting it to Friday and Saturday nights, as represented in the original plans, and ending at 9 PM. This would allow the owner to execute his business plan, and also give the residents peace of mind that the property will remain compatible with the neighborhood.

- 3) Alcohol Conditional Use- The applicant is asking to sell alcohol made off site alongside the rum made onsite. Just like the concerns mentioned above regarding Live Entertainment, we ask that the Alcohol permit be rescinded if the distillery is no longer in business there. Just like mentioned above, the owner could still operate his business plan as he described it on March 30, the neighbors could have confidence that a Live Music club with full bar service doesn't develop where a distillery was intended.
- 4) Soundproofing-This seems to be self explanatory. Where a Live Entertainment (Secondary Use) permit is requested adjacent to and across the street from Residential properties, soundproofing of the facility is understandable, and probably should be required.

We believe that these provisos will allow the applicant to bring this property back into commerce, while also allowing the applicant to execute his original business plan presented on March 30 and give confidence to the neighbors that the property will exist in a way that allows them to have Quality of Life protections for their Residences. We appreciate your careful consideration.

Sincerely,
Allen Johnson
President