

Austin Neighborhoods Council

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October 29, 2008

To Members of the Live Music Task Force:

The Austin Neighborhoods Council is an umbrella organization for neighborhood associations in Austin and currently has 85 member associations from throughout the city. Our membership voted unanimously at our October 22 general membership meeting to express concerns relating to the Live Music Task Force recommendations. Specifically of issue is that the recommendations do not include provisions that address compatibility between outdoor amplified live music and residential areas.

The recommendations speak to requiring the employment of sound engineers and moving enforcement to PACE rather than APD and those are positive steps in dealing with enforcement of the current noise ordinance. However, the recommendations do not provide for an enforceable means to deal with the existing compatibility issue between live music venues and nearby residences. It simply is not compatible to have outdoor music venues which can play music at 85dB until midnight on weekends and 10:30pm or 11pm on weekdays when those venues can be right next door to residences. As such, the recommendations do not, as Council directed, provide clear policies that not only address the concerns of those whose livelihoods depend on live music but also the concerns of those affected by the output of live music.

Furthermore, expanding music venues and entertainment districts throughout Austin as an allowed use in commercial zoning with nothing in place that is enforceable and addresses compatibility with nearby residences will exacerbate current issues, increase the number of households/families who are affected and be extremely problematic for most all neighborhoods. This issue goes straight to quality of life and the right of citizens to have peace and quiet in their own homes.

There are some positive recommendations in the LMTF report. Things like promoting affordable housing and health care for musicians as well as other means to help musicians are laudable goals. The Austin Neighborhoods Council supports working together to make positive changes which help musicians and also provide protection for neighborhoods in order for us all to co-exist peacefully.

In closing, we thank you all for your service to the community in participating on this task force. We realize what a huge time commitment that entails.

Thank you,



Danette Chimenti
Austin Neighborhoods Council President