

All,

Thanks to Delegates Terri Hill and Eric Ebersole the Howard County Citizens Association (HCCA) wants to take this time to unequivocally state our appreciation to them for introducing and amending House Bill 677 regarding the Howard County – Noise Control – Outdoor Concert Venues Ho. Co 18-17. The Bill which was passed by our Howard County Delegation can be found at <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2017RS/bills/hb/hb0677F.pdf>. The Bill is a result of three years of endless complaints of excessive sound and vibrations emitting from Merriweather Post Pavilion (MPP). HCCA and those directly involved with the nightmare on the invasion of their quality of life thank the efforts of our Delegates. I want to specifically thank Senator Guzzone for working with us by conducting a meeting with all the Delegates on Sept 20, 2016 held at the George Howard Building with concerned citizens and MPP personnel. We also need to thank the Columbia Association and the Villages in fully supporting their residents. In addition there were separate meetings with Delegates Atterbeary, Lam, and Senator Kasemeyer which further helped in defining the problem and perhaps getting in resolved.

Some highlights of the Bill are as follows:

1. The limit of 85 decibels within 1/4 mi. is half as loud as 95 decibels, which will have a positive domino effect beyond 1/4 mi.
2. It appears that almost all existing homes in Town Center, all homes in Wilde Lake, and all homes beyond will have the pre-2013 limit of 65 decibels.

You will see on page 5 of the Bill on Lines 17 and 18 that the effective date states “October 1, 2017.” We have spoken to Delegate Hill’s office and this date will be amended. We obviously want the effective date to be as close to the start of the MPP 2017 season not at the end. Three years of misery experienced by the community is long enough.

The good news is that in this case the Howard County Delegates not only heard us, but acted accordingly to optimistically bring back the peace and harmony that their constituents enjoyed prior to 2013 when the decibel ratings were changed. Hopefully this Bill will be the catalyst of people once again enjoying life in their neighborhood. The biggest factor when the Bill becomes the law will be for the County to enforce the requirements and ensure penalties are levied when appropriate. We will see if complaints are reduced when MPP starts in 2017. If not, then we would have solid grounds to ask for further tightening of the standards in 2018 such as a 10 pm time limit, and account for bass noise, etc. Only time will tell, but THANKS to our Delegates they saw that the time was right to do something positive now and in the future for all concerned about the problem.

Sincerely,

Stu Kohn
HCCA, President