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YOUR VIEWS

Address the parking problems around Napoleon event venue

I am a neighbor of The Josephine. It is a beautiful restoration of the former Lady of Lourdes Church on Napoleon Avenue. My concern is that the venue should not expand at the expense of the people who live nearby.

The Josephine is currently permitted to host weddings, private and corporate events and ticketed nonprofit events — all with alcohol. In theory, a worthy civic asset; in reality, a serious burden on our residential neighborhood.

From the beginning to the end of an event, the surrounding streets are gridlocked with patrons looking for a place to park. Residents without driveways have nowhere to park if they leave their homes during an event.

I bought my home in 1987 and have enjoyed my neighborhood up to this point, but now I feel it is reasonable and frankly essential to ask that The Josephine's existing problems be addressed before any new ordinance and provisos are approved.

Such as: Resolve the traffic and parking failures under the current permit; and evaluate how Trader Joe's is adding to the congestion through a comprehensive traffic study, especially on LaSalle Street.

The employees of The Josephine and now Trader Joe's use the neighborhood for parking, too.

We also need to clarify if the existing ordinance allows for music in the courtyard. The City Council should uphold the City Planning Commission's decision, and not allow the venue to grow its footprint before it fixes the problems it already has.

The neighbors deserve to have The Josephine's developers execute a good neighbor agreement; we deserve that standard.

If they lived in our neighborhood, I'm sure they would feel the same way.

This was and is a residential neighborhood first!

JULIA LITTLEJOHN
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