



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013

Allan H. Kittleman
Howard County Executive
akittleman@howardcountymd.gov

www.howardcountymd.gov
FAX 410-313-3051
TDD 410-313-2323

July 14, 2015

Stu Kohn
Howard County Citizens Association
P.O. Box 89
Ellicott City, Maryland 21041

Dear Mr. Kohn:

Stu:

Thank you for reaching out to share some of the concerns that residents and members of HCCA have shared with you regarding sound emanating from Merriweather Post Pavilion during the Sweetlife Festival on May 30-31st. Merriweather is one of Howard County's gems and a tremendous economic development asset, particularly as we look towards the future of Downtown Columbia. However, being an outdoor venue does bring challenges.

As a result of the noise violations on May 30 and 31, the County's Department of Health issued two citations - one for exceeding the noise levels and another for going past the prescribed time limit of 11:00pm. An inspector from the Department of Health was on site at Merriweather during the Sweetlife Festival noting the violations, and will continue monitoring the sound level at all concerts at Merriweather for the remainder of the season. In addition, the Health Department has set up a phone number for residents to report sound complaints. You can call 410-313-1773 during business hours or call the police non-emergency number 410-313-2200 on nights and weekends.

I have also directed the Howard County Police Department to work more closely with the Department of Health to ensure that complaints received through the County's 911 and non-emergency call center are handled in a timely manner.

Merriweather has a long, rich history in Howard County and has always strived to be a good neighbor. As Downtown Columbia Redevelopment get underway and improvements are made at Merriweather, the management at Merriweather Post Pavilion has committed to ensuring that they are not only compliant with the 2013 noise ordinance but also to making certain changes that will help control the sound level at its shows. I wanted to share the following information from the management at Merriweather regarding their plans to control sound level at their shows:

- The lawn sound system, which is owned by Merriweather, will be monitored and volume levels reduced.

- Contractually we will make it clear that there are fines associated with excessive sound levels.
- When there are any additional stages, we will be more focused on the direction of sound propagation from these stages so it will not go directly out into the community.
- We will be limiting the number of speaker cabinets placed directly on the concrete to reduce reverberation.
- We will be angling the raised speakers downward, toward the audiences versus emanating straight out over the lawn and into the community – note that the new raised roof which is part of the next construction phase will help to facilitate this change.
- We are implementing sound cancelling technologies and keeping up to speed on other emerging technologies.
- We will continue to remind the Artists' production personnel about the show decibel levels throughout the day and evening as needed.

You had also raised concerns regarding the planned construction of the Inner Arbor. I reached out to the Inner Arbor Trust and have received their commitment that "the Trust will comply with all ordinances and sound regulations" and an assurance that "the Trust, and any entity with whom the Trust has or will contract to operate events, will comply with the law, and be a good neighbor."

Community engagement, as you know, is critical. I look forward to continued dialogue on this issue, and I encourage you to keep in touch with my office should concerns arise in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Allan H. Kittleman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Allan H. Kittleman
County Executive