

PS agenda

Level 2 Bar



Causeway Bay Hotels
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LANSING CITY COUNCIL

Monday, February 14, 2011

A'Lynne Robinson, President
Lansing City Counsel
10th floor, City Hall
124 W. Mich. Ave
Lansing, MI 48933

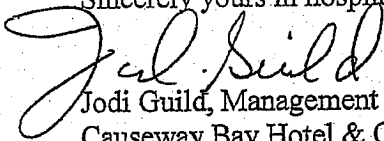
Dear Ms. Robinson:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Causeway Bay Hotel & Convention Center (Formerly the Holiday Inn South), to express my deepest concerns regarding the numerous violent incidents that have taken place at our neighboring business, currently known as "Level II Nightclub" formerly "The Venue Nightclub". I am sure you are already aware of some of the violent events that have taken place over the past two years, but you may not be aware that some of the crime's such as shootings, stabbings, as well as riots that often take place, have created a devastating negative image for our Hotel/Convention property. On several occasions our hotel has experienced a large outpour of their patrons running into our lobby after 2am, to wait for the chaos from the nightclub to calm down. There have also been a couple incidents where a suspect was being chased through our property. We have also experienced several cars racing through our driveways and parking lots, blocking fire exits, and also deterring our in-house guests from entering or exiting the hotel's premises. One particular incident took place where a patron leaving the Level 2 ran his car into the AT&T electrical box, causing our hotel to be without any phone service for almost two days. During this time we were unable to receive any reservations or event bookings and our guests were unable to utilize the phones provided in their guest rooms. I'm sure you can see where this created a loss in revenue for us.

Most importantly, these unfortunate events have posed a fear / threat to our regular clientele, as well as many prospective clients that our sales staff works diligently to generate. Many clients would love to hold a business meeting, wedding, or formal dinner in our brand new million dollar ballroom, or take advantage of an overnight stay in one of our newly remodeled sleeping rooms; however they are simply too nervous or scared due to the media attention that revolves around our neighbors unfortunate events. Due to the above mentioned acts of violence, our competitors are now armed with the tools they need to contact / inform our current and potential guests of what may be viewed as an unsafe environment, and they are taking every opportunity to use this against us. In the past six months alone, we have lost contracts with two very lucrative clients (an annual loss of \$324,699.00 in revenue) that have booked with us for several years previous until now. The reason they gave for not re-booking with us is due to the frequent violence that the Level 2 brings to our community. They fear that one of their innocent attendees would fall victim to such acts, they stated that they cannot and will not take such a risk.

Causeway Bay Hotels Group purchased this hotel in December, 2008 and has since invested \$8.5 million dollars into South Lansing with our renovations and upgrades. Since the nightclub next door has opened it has stalled our ability to rebuild the confidence of our guests and show what excellence South Lansing has to offer. Unfortunately the inability to build consumer confidence is highly impacting our ability to achieve a return on our investment. These impacts are causing our owner to have second thoughts and he is becoming hesitant of making additional investments at this time. Our owners are looking at alternative measures to take legal action against those responsible for their loss in revenue. We are proud to maintain a safe and secure environment for our guests and neighboring community, however having no control over the activities occurring adjacent to our property, we are hereby asking for your assistance with these matters. We are not looking to hinder our neighbors operations in anyway, we are simply looking for some clarification and confidence that these events will be addressed and resolved so that we can move forward with our efforts of rebuilding South Lansing's positive economic impact.

Sincerely yours in hospitality,



Jodi Guild, Management
Causeway Bay Hotel & Convention Center

Cc:

Kathy Dunbar, Vice President Lansing City Council
Virg Bernero, Lansing Mayor
Teresa Szymanski, Lansing Chief of Police
Philip Sabon, South Lansing Fire Marshal

LANSING -- The owner of Level II has decided to close the south Lansing nightclub after several attempts to curb violence at the spot were unsuccessful.

The club at 6810 S. Cedar St. has been shut down since the end of February.

Owner Germaine Redding said he tried to clean up the club's image. He changed its name from the Venue last spring after several fights, shootings and other incidents. He diversified the music offerings and beefed up security, but that didn't stop the problems.

Management from neighboring Causeway Bay Hotel & Convention Center sent a letter Feb. 14 to the Lansing City Council requesting officials to do something about the violence.

Redding said he's considering renewing the building lease but does not want to open another nightclub.

"I want to do something that's going to benefit the community," Redding said. "The nightclub is not a good business to have because of what's going on."

About a dozen part-time employees worked at the club. Redding said the closure was his decision and he was not forced out of business.

The city council's public safety committee planned to meet Thursday to discuss the hotel's concerns, said Carol Wood, committee chairwoman. The committee was going to consider options such as recommending the state deny the club's liquor license, which would have been up for renewal soon, she said.

In March 2010, city council passed a cabaret license ordinance amendment that requires nightclub owners to pay for the cost of police services used to handle disturbances on their premises if they receive more than two warnings within 180 days.

Wood said she would have looked into how many, if any, warnings the club had received.

She said she supports Redding's desire to open a business that benefits the community.

"That's what we're all looking for, is something that will enhance that area of the city and will not end up using an inordinate amount of city services to continue to function," she said.

Jodi Guild, assistant manager of Causeway Bay Hotel & Convention Center, wrote in her letter to the city council that incidents at the club "have created a devastating negative image" for the hotel.

"On several occasions our hotel has experienced a large out pour of their patrons running into our lobby after 2 a.m., to wait for the chaos from the nightclub to calm down," Guild wrote. "There have also been a couple incidents where a suspect was being chased through our property."

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The hotel contends it lost contracts worth about \$24,000 with clients who cited the violence at the club as their reason for not re-booking, according to the letter.