



# THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(301) 952-3887

County Council  
**THOMAS E. DERNOGA**  
Chairman

February 20, 2007

Mr. Franklin D. Jackson, Chairman  
Board of License Commissioners  
County Service Building, Room 204  
Hyattsville, Maryland 20781-2037

*Re: License for J's Sports Café*

Dear Mr. Jackson:

I am writing to you regarding a Class B, Beer and Wine Liquor License currently held by J's Sports Café located at 12617 Laurel Bowie Road in Laurel, Maryland. As you may be aware, J's Sports Café was the site of a recent homicide. According to the County Police, on January 28, 2007 at three o'clock in the morning approximately twenty individuals were involved in a fight in the parking lot of J's Sports Café. This altercation resulted in the shooting death of a male victim. This is the third homicide at J's Sports Café in less than two years, and the sixth incident involving guns. One of these incidents occurred New Year's Eve when Prince George's County Police officers were called to this same establishment for a customer dispute. Upon arrival, the police officers were confronted by a disorderly crowd. The Police officers saw a vehicle stop on Route 197 (Laurel-Bowie Road). An occupant hung out of the window of the vehicle, and twelve shots were fired at the officers.

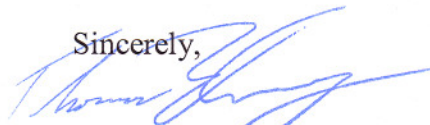
As you are aware, it is the responsibility of the holder of the license to ensure that the activities which take place in the establishment are not harmful the surrounding neighborhood. Clearly, this is a responsibility that the owners of J's Sports Café have not met. The safety and welfare of our community is of paramount importance and it your responsibility to ensure that area businesses meet their obligations, and it is the Board's responsibility to take appropriate action when they do not.

Of additional concern is that upon further review of the approvals for J's Sports Café, we learned that it was operating without a Use & Occupancy Permit. I requested that the Department of Environmental Resources, working with the County Police, take appropriate action. Subsequently, J's Sports Café was required to close pending issuance of a Use & Occupancy Permit. Such a cavalier attitude toward the County permitting process is unacceptable and should be considered by Board.

I request that the Board consider not renewing this license when it is up for renewal. The citizens of Prince George's County deserve better. Allowing J's Sports Café to continue to hold its liquor license and to operate does not conform to the County's Livable Communities Initiative. These incidents of disturbing the peace, crime and violence speak for themselves. On behalf of my constituents, I am requesting that an immediate investigation by the Board of License Commissioners be initiated and that the immediate removal of J's Sports Café license be strongly considered. In addition, on behalf on my constituents, I am also requesting that the renewal of J's Sports Café license not be granted.

Please keep me informed of any developments concerning this matter and any hearings concerning the license. If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 952-3887.

Sincerely,



Thomas E. Dernoga  
District 1

CC: Senator James Rosapepe  
Senator Douglas Peters  
Del. Barbara Frush  
Del. Ben Barnes  
Del. Joseline Peña- Melnyk  
Del. Gerron Levi  
Del. James Hubbard  
Del. Marvin Holmes Jr.  
Montpelier Hills Community Associations  
Montpelier Hills Homeowners Association  
Pheasant Run Homeowners Association  
South Laurel Civic Federation  
Captain Scott Haines  
Karen Coakley, Beltsville Civic Association  
Laurel Leader  
Citizens Advisory Committee - President, Gary Stone