

## City Council Outline

### Intro

Hello Mayor, Counsellors, Chief O'Meara and Bob Kendrick, For those I have not met, I'm Mike Szelong, the new owner of the IPub Ashland, located at 137 E. Main Street.

To remove any confusion that may exist, I would like to establish that this is a different business and under different ownership than the Vinyl Club which is located in below us.

### History

After purchasing the bar, I became acutely aware of a long history of complaints from Bob to the Ashland PD, Mayor and City council members. These materialized since the construction of the dual use (commercial/residential) building that is located approximately 25 feet across the Will Doge Way Alley from the Vinyl Club and our rear deck and entrance.

As a new owner and with the intent of being a good neighbor, I approached the situation and to think creatively how we could address it.

I met with Ashland PD several times and most of the city councilors to understand the concerns and issues from their perspective.

I then met with Bob several times, thanks to Counselor Rich Rosenthal for putting us touch with each other.

The first meeting I came to understand Bob's frustration, his perception that nothing was happening and the ill that he felt that was being perpetrated against him, his tenants and his building.

I feel he viewed the problem monolithically, meaning that all the issues stemmed from bad behavior from the bar patrons across the street.

In my experience, the best way to approach complex problems is to break them down, understand the factors contributing to the situation and address the most significant ones to have the maximum impact.

My response to Bob was to explain that as I see it, this is a confluence of many factors, with the three biggest being:

1. Noise from Vinyl Club due to open doors, queuing in the alley etc.

2. IPub patrons congregating outside the bar to smoke.
3. Ill behaved transients/travellers (that purchase alcohol from the local stop and shop and consume it in the alley)

#### Proposed Solution.

Our objective is to offer a safe, inviting and fun place, to be the best bar in Ashland. So, lets me move on to the solution and what the IPub has been doing to try to be a better neighbor and improve the situation.

- We installed an LED floodlight on the back deck for better lighting
  
- We put in 8 very high resolution video cameras and unlike the previous owners, we have a good relationship with APD and have shared recordings with the PD without requiring a subpoena. We have just ordered additional system with 4 additional cameras.
  
- We installed a new air conditioning system with a larger capacity that we hope will allow us to keep the doors closed during the summer as well as the winter.
  
- We built a stage for music at the very front of the bar, the furthest possible point away from the building.
  
- In addition we have done improvements inside the bar. We have put new lighting etc inside the bar to make it more inviting

So now to our proposal:

Make an amendment to change the 20 foot Ashland smoking ordinance back to the State 10 foot after retail businesses close (9PM -3PM or so). The folks that go out back to smoke would then be able to go out front and not be close to Bob.

In closing, we should not be adding to the problem: residential development and the additions of Bars/restaurants in the proximity of this area will only contribute to the issues we are trying to solve.