

Karen L. Wassell
5 Pineview Drive
Vernon, CT 06066

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Dear Vernon Zoning Commission:

I live approximately 1/3 of a mile from the proposed concert venue. I think this application should be denied because it does not meet the criteria for a special permit under Zoning Regulations:

1. Sec. 17.3.1.1 – It shall not create a hazardous condition relative to public health and safety.
 - a. Approval of TicketNetwork Forest Summer Concert Series will create a hazardous condition relative to public health and safety.
2. Sec 17.3.1.2 - It shall be compatible with neighboring uses
 - a. TicketNetwork Forest Summer Concert Series is not compatible with neighboring uses.
3. Sec 17.3.1.3 - It shall not create a nuisance
 - a. TicketNetwork Forest Summer Concert Series will create a nuisance.
4. Sec 4.9.4.11 – Sell or servicer of alcoholic beverages
 - a. Approval of the special permit will create a hazardous condition relative to public health and safety.
5. Sec 17.3.1.4 - It shall not hinder the future sound development of the community
 - a. TicketNetwork Forest Summer Concert Series will hinder the future sound development of this community.
6. Sec 20 – Aquifer Protection
 - a. This proposal will threaten an aquifer and town water supplies.
 - b. 20.1 In establishing these regulations, the Town recognizes that:
 - 20.1.1 The groundwater underlying this town is a significant source of its present and future and drinking water supply; and
 - 20.1.2 The groundwater aquifers are integrally connected with, and flow into, the surface waters, lakes, and streams which constitute significant recreational and economic resources of the Town; and
 - 20.1.3 Spills and discharges of petroleum products and other toxic and hazardous materials and discharge of sewage have threatened the quality of such ground water supplies and related water resources throughout Connecticut and elsewhere, posing potential public health and safety hazards and threatening economic losses to the affected communities; and
 - 20.1.4 Sections 8-2 and 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes require consideration of protecting existing and future public water supplies.

Concerns:

Wildlife:

- Each day I wake up in anticipation of watching the wildlife in my back yard. Deer come with their fawns in the Spring, and in the Fall they come morning and night to eat the apples from my trees. I also have the pleasure of hosting wild turkeys, hawks, raccoons, a red fox, a family of foxes and a woodchuck who has lived in my backyard for three years.
- The noise, traffic, pollution, litter and constant activity will clearly create devastation to wildlife as well as the natural beauty of our fields and woods.

Property:

- Personal property will decrease approximately 20%. Based on a recent real estate review, I stand to lose a minimum of \$60K if the venue is approved.
- Within 3000' of the site (.56) mile, there are 346 homes paying a total of \$1,720,582 in taxes. Within 8000' of the site (1.51 mile) there are 3,120 homes paying \$14,873,888 in taxes. Based on conversations with multiple real estate agents, this venue will create a corresponding decrease in demand and a decline in property values of at least 20%. This means the Town will also suffer a corresponding loss of revenue. Based on 70% assessed value, and a mill rate of .033677593, the Town will lose between \$344,000 - \$2,975,000 ANNUALLY. How will the Town recoup this loss? There are 8,751 residential owners in Vernon – the Town will have to increase the taxes of the other homes by \$41 - \$528 per household per year.
- Everyday I pick up litter on my property: beer and soda cans/bottles, McDonald's and Burger King wrappers and bags, cigarette packs, Dunkin Donut Cups, etc. Litter will surely increase. Will the Town of Vernon pick-up after every concert? If so, are they using my tax dollar?
- It took 15+ years to pave Bolton Road and with my tax dollars. Increased traffic will create wear and tear necessitating repairs and repaving; again with my tax dollars.

Safety:

- Hundreds of people will be on and around my property greatly increasing crime.
- Pineview Drive, the Industrial Park, Bread and Milk, Bamforth and other local roads will undoubtedly be used for parking and tailgating. Who will police and ensure citizen safety?
- There are 27 weekends between May and October. While the applicant's testimony states only 20 concerts will be held during this timeframe, what legal ruling keeps him from holding more?
- 20 weekends of concerts is equal to 40 summer and fall weekend nights of noise, pollution, litter, traffic and drunk drivers on our roads as well as drunk people walking around and through our property.
- We have already heard testimony that the Vernon Police cannot support the concerts. On a normal Friday and Saturday during May and October, the calls to the Vernon PD averaged around 70 per day. How will Vernon protect and respond to citizen emergencies when there are 2000+ people and 800 cars descending on our town potentially every weekend for a period of 9 hours each day?

Traffic:

- The applicant defined “events” as rock and country concerts and states he will only hold 20 concerts during May and October. However, TicketNetwork’s website is advertising other events such as graduation ceremonies and parking lot activities during off-season. If this application is approved, the applicant can hold any event, for any length of time, at any time of day. This will double and triple traffic (making concerns even more critical). If the special permit is granted to serve alcohol the consequences will be devastating.
- Bolton and Tunnel roads already have a high level of traffic, most traveling at speeds of 45 to 55 mph – try walking, riding a bike or just working on your property if you live on one of these roads – you are taking your life in your own hands.
- The additional traffic will also increase travel time to and from work for me and my family as well as interfere with family gatherings and weekend activities.

Noise:

- Vernon has not adopted a Noise Ordinance. However, noise is noise. There will be a minimum of 4 hours of noise from the music and the crowd which is non-directional. There will also be noise from traffic, from people walking up and down the streets and from music blaring in cars as they arrive and leave the concert.
- Per CT General Statute Chapter 442: Noise Pollution Control: 1) Excessive noise is a serious hazard to the health, welfare and quality of life of the citizens of the state of CT 2) exposure to certain levels of noise can result in physiological, psychological and economic damage 3) a substantial body of science and technology exists by which excessive noise may be substantially abated 4) the primary responsibility for control of noise rests with the state and political subdivisions thereof 5) each person has a right to an environment free from noise that may jeopardize this health, safety or welfare.
- My family and I will be affected by this noise. How will I sit in my backyard or quietly sit in my house to read a book? How will my husband sleep when he needs to get up every Saturday morning at 5 a.m. to work.

It is obvious based on the public outcry that we have seen, that the majority of the families do NOT want to live near an outdoor concert venue serving alcohol, interrupting every summer and fall week-end and drastically affecting our way of living, bringing traffic, noise, pollution, trash, crime, devastation to wildlife and reduced property values.

As our representatives in keeping and preserving the beauty of Vernon and safety of its citizens, I ask you give the utmost consideration to denying this application.

Respectfully,

Karen L. Wassell