

Neighbors lament Point After locale

By Tom Prentiss

The Point After's attempt to change ownership of its 2440 "O" St. location was blocked Monday night by the City Council.

The council voted 6-0 to deny the application of The Exchange to take over the building ownership from The Point After. The Point After used to be called Uncle Sam's.

The council heard testimony from several businesses in the area who complained about vandalism, litter, theft and inadequate parking because of the establishment.

Neighborhood businessmen blamed the problems on liquor sales there which they said should be stopped.

James S. Watson, speaking for Capitol Tire Co., 2400 O St., said management is not a problem, but the location of the establishment is. The capacity of The Point After is 512 persons, which he said expands the problem that started with Uncle Sam's liquor license.

"Good management will fill it every night," Watson said. "That's what they're supposed to do."

But when that many people from the college age group are in a bar, "things happen," he added.

Parking shortage

He said there is inadequate parking for patrons of Point After. He and The Point After management agreed on parking stalls for 512 people.

The excess runs onto neighboring property, which causes problems for the owners, he added. Watson said when The Point After is at capacity, "not even excessive carpooling could solve the problem."

Retailers in the area agreed. Steve Ihrle of Hinky Dinky, 2535 O St., said his employees would spend an hour every Saturday and Sunday morning cleaning beer cans, bottles and other litter from the parking lot.

Gene Leach, owner of Act Furniture-TV Inc., 2429 O St., said his store has been broken into and he blames this on liquor's influence on The Point After patrons.

Disturbances

Lt. Don Wilkins of the Lincoln Police Department Liquor and Vice Division, said in the two and a half years Uncle Sam's was open, the police received over 660 service calls for various disturbances.

Wilkins said that there were probably over 800 calls, but about four months of records were misplaced when the division moved.

He listed over 157 identification checks, 128 disturbances, 63 larcenies and seven hit and runs among the violations.

Wilkins said the "intolerable situation" would almost necessitate a full-time police officer to keep order.

Councilman Leo Scherer expressed concern over the inadequate parking and asked what the new management would do about it.

Ron Rocker, current Point After manager, said if needed, he would try to lease areas to relieve the parking problem. Rocker said he was not aware before this of how much the parking problem bothered people.

Location problem

Councilman Bob Jeambey and Councilwoman Arlyss Brown both stated that they thought the main problem was the location. New management was not at issue they said.

"Two wrongs don't make a right," Scherer said, agreeing. "This is not a good license location."

Jeambey said the problem could be alleviated if Point After, or whoever owned the property, could buy up the surrounding property. Jeambey admitted he didn't think this was possible.

Councilman Joe Hampton amended his motion to

allow a 90-day review of The Point After. If problems still exist, the council could decide what to do when the business's license comes up for renewal in November.

Teen-age disco

Point After has been operating as a non-alcoholic teen-age disco. Herb Friedman, representing Lincoln Entertainment Inc., which operates The Point After, said this was to resolve current financial problems.

Watson questioned the usefulness of turning teen-agers away from one of the few places that serve their interests.

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