

Ms Mary Porter AM MLA,
Chair,
Standing Committee on Planning, Public Works,
And Territory and Municipal Services,
Civic Square,
London Circuit,
Canberra ACT 2600

I have been a Canberra citizen for most of my life, and in my time here I have regularly enjoyed and celebrated the diverse range of arts and cultural events located in our capital. Increasingly, however, finding smaller, community driven events has become difficult. Although Canberra rightly prides itself on its numerous, large scale cultural institutions; venues catering to small scale, burgeoning talent is ever more difficult to find and retain. Examples of this include the loss of the Trinity Block party, Gypsy Bar, Toast bar and the ever increasing restrictions placed on Transit bar. Creating a thriving arts culture in the capital requires more than large cultural institutions, but an active arts community from the ground up, with support for diverse ranges of musicians, theatre and the visual arts. To achieve this, the government needs to support the small, innovative and dedicated people and venues that promote new and lesser known talent and stop allowing them to be restricted to the point of closure.

In reference to the complaints made by the Waldorf management and residents there are a number of issues that I believe need to be addressed. Although I understand and respect the fact that several residents find the noise emitted by local venues to be problematic, the onus for rectifying this problem should not reasonably fall upon venue owners. Given that the Transit bar, in particular, existed *prior* to the establishment of the Waldorf Apartments, it is reasonable to expect that residents chose to move to the location in the *full knowledge* of its presence, as well as the presence of other bars, restaurants and traffic that characterise the central location. As such, these residents should reasonably expect a greater level of noise than that found in suburban areas. Given this, the responsibility for ensuring the comfort of residents should not fall upon pre-existing venues who may not have the finances or capacity to comply, but to the residents and developers who knowingly *choose* to live and build in an area of greater convenience, and greater noise. The many passionate patrons, musicians and venue managers should not be made to suffer due to the misguided lifestyle choices of a few disgruntled residents.

I recommend that in future residential developments, noise issues should be addressed equally to other environmental concerns to ensure the harmonious relationship between inner city residents and the surrounding business’.

Thank you for your time,

Lauren Cunningham