



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

Kavanagh, Colleagues, Urge NYPD to Partner with Community to Mitigate Quality of Life Issues caused by Street Parties

BRIAN KAVANAGH September 29, 2021

| ISSUE: **NYPD, POLICE, COVID-19, NOISE COMPLAINTS, QUALITY OF LIFE**



September 29, 2021

Dermott Shea, Commissioner

New York City Police Department

1 Police Plaza

New York, NY 10038

Dear Commissioner Shea:

We write to request immediate support to mitigate quality of life issues impacting residents in the Lower East Side. In the summer months, our offices received numerous complaints about neighborhood disturbances that happen overnight, involving loud music, street crowding, and illegal outdoor drinking. These activities tend to occur very late at night when bars and clubs close and large numbers of people assemble in the streets. Even as we transition to autumn we know this problem will persist and we feel it is imperative that the New York City Police Department (NYPD) maintain enforcement in and around these hot spots to curb crowding and illegal sound amplification.

Such impromptu “street parties” proliferated throughout the Lower East Side during the summer, and they will continue unless NYPD reinstitutes a dedicated Lower East Side cabaret unit or deploys other NYPD officers to these problem areas. In one example, our offices received complaints about crowds of over 100 people on the corner of Stanton and Ludlow Streets. The group played music that was amplified over a car stereo system. It is our understanding that police officers were called to the scene and addressed this matter around 3:00 a.m. According to the 7th Precinct, the responding officers had to call for a Level 1 Mobilization, which allowed for up to 8 other officers to arrive at the scene to help disperse the crowd and confiscate the speakers. In other instances, the Amphitheater in East River Park has been the site of unpermitted loud parties and DJ concerts on various weekdays and weekends, as well as a known destination for sporadic and illegal fireworks shows which have contributed to deleterious conditions in the neighborhood.

Our offices convened two meetings (on July 15 and August 2) to identify ways to address these issues, with representatives of local elected officials, the 7th Precinct, the New York City Departments of Transportation, Parks and Recreation, and Environmental Protection, Community Board 3, and our constituents. During both meetings, the 7th Precinct expressed their need for more police resources, especially since the precinct's Cabaret Unit, which was designed to provide enforcement in areas with a concentration of bars and nightclubs, was discontinued at the height of the pandemic as governmental mandates largely halted nightlife throughout the city. Unfortunately, the Unit has yet to be reinstated.

Additionally, it was noted that the 5th and 9th Precincts were experiencing similar issues and also have a need for Cabaret Units.

We are aware that the NYPD has been called upon to respond to a general increase in crime in the area, and in other neighborhoods as well. Since the meetings, the precincts have focused greater attention on addressing these incidents by allocating more police resources to the area during the weekends for the past month.

It is our understanding that the allocation of police resources is made on an ad hoc basis, depending on the availability of other officers from within Patrol Borough Manhattan South. We are concerned that in the future if other precincts are not able to provide additional officers, overnight disturbances will go unaddressed and public safety will be jeopardized.

Therefore, we are requesting that the Cabaret Unit be reinstated immediately so that its success can continue on a permanent basis.. This type of police presence is extremely effective in curbing illegal "street parties" and preventing illegal alcohol consumption outside of a licensed establishment, which often creates horrible accumulations of trash and debris for residents the next day. We commend the leadership of our local precincts, especially the

7th Precinct's Captain Luis Barcia, for their efforts, but limited resources can only be stretched so far; there must be additional long-term enforcement to address uncontrollable sound amplification and illegal street activity taking place throughout the Lower East Side. Manhattan Community Board 3, another organization that has received complaints from its constituency in the Lower East Side, sent a letter (see attached) addressed to Mayor Bill de Blasio requesting that several measures be implemented to mitigate these concerns. We strongly agree with their requests, the most important of which, we believe, is the reinstatement of the Cabaret Units.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your response. If you or your staff have any questions or if you would like to discuss this matter further, please feel free to contact any of us directly or via Kana Ervin, Deputy Chief of Staff in the office of Council Member Chin, at kervin@council.nyc.gov.

Sincerely,

Council Member Margaret Chin, District 1

Senator Brian Kavanagh, Senate District 26

Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, New York 7th District

cc: Captain Luis Barcia, Commanding Officer, NYPD 7th Precinct

Tim Laughlin, President, Lower East Side Partnership

Susan Stetzer, District Manager, Manhattan Community Board 3

Juan Martinez, Senior Advisor, Mayor's Office of State Legislative Affairs

Stephen Hughes, Assistant Chief, Commanding Officer of Patrol Borough Manhattan

South

Latia Mitchell, Mayor's Office NYPD Liaison