ORGANIZATION/PARTNERSHIP INFORMATION

The Citrus Heights Police Department  
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PROJECT INFORMATION

It started with a noise complaint...

Inferno Sports Bar & Grill

July 2014 – February 2016

The City of Citrus Heights, Citrus Heights Police Department, Camden Place HOA, Department of Justice and Alcohol Beverage Control

1. The Citrus Heights Problem Oriented Policing Unit received a call from concerned citizens of the Camden Place housing complex regarding continual loud noise levels coming from the nearby Inferno Sports Bar & Grill. Music levels were affecting the quality of lives for many of the residents living in Camden Place and had been for a long period of time. Inferno was located in a strip mall directly west of the Camden Place housing complex and was separated by a small greenbelt area.

Camden Place is a residential subdivision of 66 detached singles and semi-attached (halfplex) homes. The residences have two to three bedrooms and range from approximately 1,000 to 1,800 sq ft of interior living space.

CHPD’s objectives were to work with management and the owner of Inferno’s along with residents of Camden place to resolve this ongoing issue. CHPD Pop officers intended to do this
by assuring the business was in compliance with their licensing, use permits and city municipal codes.

2. Initially, CHPD POP officers worked with Camden Place Homeowners Association (HOA) in order to attempt to resolve this ongoing noise concern. Residents reported over the past several months loud music and bass levels which were rattling walls and windows and negatively affecting the quality of life for those living there. Complaints ranged from lack of sleep in adults resulting in a negative work environment the following morning to lack of sleep in children and teenagers resulting in negative performance in schools.

Inferno was not receptive to police contact or contact with Camden Place HOA in regards to a good neighbor meeting. Multiple requests to turn the music down or off were ignored and the negative quality of life continued for Camden Place residents. One of the original reporting parties sold her residence as her solution to the ongoing noise concerns.

The City of Citrus Heights licensing was contacted and a review of the ABC license, use permit and business license were looked at. POP officers were educated on the terms of Inferno’s use permit and found the business was to adhere to the Citrus Heights Municipal Codes (CHMC) regarding noise ordinances. The owner of Inferno’s was notified of repeated calls for service and possible compliance concerns. We were not able to gain compliance from the owner and noise levels continued. It was later discovered the CHMC did not cover bass levels and the city has since begun the process to amend the ordinance to include bass levels.

POP officers reviewed Inferno’s ABC license and found, based on calls for service, they were out of compliance regarding live performances at the facility. CHPD POP officers met with ABC in order to research the business collectively and determine if they were out of compliance with
their alcohol/liquor license. A member of ABC was also part of a specialized task force with the Department of Justice and observed other violations while conducting undercover surveillance.

ABC and DOJ continued to conduct under cover operations in which they were successful in purchasing narcotics from employees inside the Inferno. ABC and DOJ obtained a search warrant for the business and arrest warrants for employees. CHPD, along with CHPD Special Investigations Unit, ABC and DOJ collaboratively served the search warrant and arrest warrants for the Inferno and employees. Immediately preceding, The City of Citrus Heights revoked Inferno’s business license and effectively closed the business down as of February 2016.

3. In January 2014, it was documented that new ownership of the Inferno was obtained. The business was sold to the current owner at that time. Prior to January of 2014, there were no music related calls for service in our databases. The noise complaints for the Inferno bar began in July of 2014.

From July 2014 until February 2016, the Citrus Heights Police Department received 56 calls for service related solely to music and bass levels coming from the Inferno. POP Officers contacted each reporting party and were advised that of the incoming calls regarding music and noise at the Inferno there were additional calls which were not made. Former reporting parties stated they had not wanted to call every night due to the understanding of higher priority calls. In addition, there were residents of Camden Place who simply never called in but found the music was also negatively affecting their quality of life.

In addition to noise complaints, the Inferno was also the location of other crimes; DUI, public intoxication, assaults, assaults with a deadly weapon, brandishing of weapons and a firearm, and unlawful panhandling.
After revoking the business license for the Inferno, all crimes went down substantially in and around the immediate area. The Inferno is one suite in a strip mall consisting of several other businesses including a business next door which is not part of the strip mall.

A records check of the strip mall shows one code enforcement call for service and one public intoxication call for service since the closing of Inferno to present day. I conducted a count of all calls for service, which excludes proactive stops and contacts, and found there were 71 calls for service to the strip mall where the Inferno was located.

I was able to re-contact the original reporting parties of the noise complaints along with one subject who had sold her home due to the ongoing noise coming from Inferno. Residents noted the immediate improvement in their quality of life and were in close contact with each other, their HOA and the City of Citrus Heights in order to attend the public hearing for the Planning Commission which would determine the status of the Inferno business license. This hearing is set to take place in June 2016.

4. The Citrus Heights Problem Oriented Policing unit and our partnership with outside agencies and the community exemplifies the overall ability to impact and improve the well-being of a neighborhood by actively and consistently involving each component to the fullest. We maintain open and frequent communication to make sure details are not missed and our actions accurately and positively affect the needs of the community. The CHPD POP unit very quickly recognized the quality of life concern regarding on going noise and the nearby residents. We attempted to find simple resolutions early on by involving the residents, the management for Inferno and the homeowner’s association. By doing this we were able to find out the important details regarding when the music was happening and what could be done.
The Inferno agreed to meetings with the police department but was not able to facilitate a good neighbor meeting with the residents or their HOA. CHPD POP maintained communication on both ends and were able to encourage residents to continue to call in each and every noise concern in order to document day and time. We were able to document and show that the problem was ongoing and unresolvable at that time. Having active members of the community keeping the police department up to date also allowed us to show the consistency in non-compliance.

CHPD POP recognized the business’ noncompliance as a potential long term concern. Officer enlisted the assistance of City Hall in order to review licensing and compliance. During this time, an ABC license was discovered and they were also integrated along with DOJ.

Key Project Team Members:

Officer Felicia Taylor

Officer James Garing

Sgt. Jason Baldwin

Lt. Michael Wells

Lt. Jason Russo

ABC Officer Kathryn Sandberg

ABC/DOJ Officer Matt Moore
Email from a citizen:

Hi, my name is Samantha and I live in Camden Place. I have had so many noise complaints called in on that bar over a 7-8 month period. I am hoping that their license stays revoked. I have had city decibel readers out on my property 2-3 times doing notice readings. They have used our private parking for there parking as well has having their drunk customers yelling and making noise while walking back to their cars. They have let empty alcohol bottles on our sidewalks and we have also has to have a private security officer hired to limit access to our community when they have had live performs there. They have been asked and been given plenty of chances to work with us by just being respectful of the time of day and the level of the music. They don’t care. I have had a neighbor sell her house because she couldn’t deal with them anymore.... This is just a small sample of the ongoing weekly issue that we have had with them. If you need anything else please let me know.

Thank you so much.

Samantha

Sent from my iPhone