

# BOULDER POLICE DEPARTMENT

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Molly Winter

FROM: Sgt. Kurt Matthews, BPD

REF: Trip to Burlington, Vermont

DATE: November 7, 2005

On the weekend of October 22-24, 2005 a contingent of Boulder stakeholders attended a conference in Burlington, Vermont. Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI) and the City of Burlington sponsored the conference whose purpose was to bring together cities with similar circumstances to explore means in dealing with hospitality based districts and the potential problems that may arise with divergent crowds, late night revelers, mixed-use space, and business/residential relationships. Representatives from Burlington VT, Edmonton Alberta, Windsor Ontario, Gainesville FL, Athens GA, and other private and public sector stakeholders were present. Representing the City of Boulder were: Jack Stoakes, Council member, Jan Otto, Hill resident, Bob Maust, University of Colorado, Dave Adams, Downtown Boulder, and Kurt Matthews, BPD.

### Background

RHI is a resource designed for networking, facilitating, and providing online assistance to cities seeking to develop or expand dining and entertainment districts. RHI is hosting three seminars, one in Delray Florida, one in Burlington Vermont, and one in Hollywood California focusing on issues surrounding hospitality, residential concerns, safety, and development. Similarly situated communities are attending each session. At the completion of the three seminars, a best practices document will be produced and be available to assist communities in four core areas: a) hospitality, b) residential, c) safety, and d) development. Further information may be found at [www.RHIweb.org](http://www.RHIweb.org).

The City of Boulder was represented at the Burlington seminar by a diverse contingent of stakeholders. There was a representative from the City, from the University, the community, downtown business, and the police department. Consensus from the attendees was that the conference was beneficial. One main theme crossed everyone's mind, Boulder is not unique in its situation and can learn from others as we struggle with issues surrounding the Hill and the Downtown Mall. Although, one major difference is that Boulder's two districts, the Hill and the Pearl Street Mall, produce a unique set of circumstances that the community responds to. The purpose of this document is to outline suggestions and ideas garnered by the attendees at the conference.

## Suggestions

A common understanding that came from this conference was that the young people of today (21-31 yoa) want and need/demand locations to gather and socialize. The problems arise when the hours that this group keeps (generally 10 pm to close) conflicts with the needs/demands of an older generation that lives in and around the hospitality district. Time was spent discussing the needs of what is being called *Bookend Generations*. What this means is, there are generations at either end of the adult age group, and, their needs are generally opposite. The younger end tends to socialize late in the evening into the early morning while the older end tends to be out earlier in the evening. As a part of this seminar, we observed this phenomenon on a first hand basis while visiting Burlington's pedestrian mall one evening. We were able to see the changes in demographics as the night wore on, very similar, if not identical, to the shifting demographics in Boulder. The suggestion is one that seems obvious to identify, yet difficult to handle; but these "bookend" generations are a social reality that must be factored into any planning and solution finding. It is not likely that either group is going to change their needs; solutions must represent, and be cognizant of, divergent desires.

A second common suggestion was to continue the dialogue that is in place in the City of Boulder. This author understands that RHI will be coming to Boulder in the near future to facilitate this process. Finding the appropriate stakeholders to assist, and limiting the number thereof, is vital. Active participation will be very important as steps to improve relationships, while at the same time developing retail and hospitality-based businesses, continues. This Responsible Hospitality Panel (RHP) must be aware of, and focus on, six major issues as identified by RHI. They are: (a) entertainment policing and safety, (b) mixed age entertainment venues, (c) traffic and pedestrian safety, (d) entertainment economic impact assessment, (e) hospitality and diversity, and (f) events and diversity. The RHP must also understand and respond to six identified trends, (a) bookend generations, (b) split-use districts, (c) multi-use sidewalks, (d) displacement, (e) district life cycles, and (f) concierge government. Boulder is already on this path with the implementation of the Alcohol Advisory Group, which has been in place for close to a year now.

### Specific Suggestions

Several specific, short-term suggestions were generated through the conference. These include:

1. Bar close. City employees (specifically the PD) do an excellent job of planning for and controlling special events. Perhaps it is time to recognize that a special event occurs each Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night around 2am. Several thousand people empty from various establishments at the same time, all at some various level of intoxication, and all with nothing to do. City of Boulder representatives should sit down and develop a comprehensive plan

to deal with this “event” and have contingencies in place. Some suggestions include:

- a. Allowing Bars/Restaurants to remain open after 2am. Alcohol sales would cease after 2am; however, establishments could remain open for an extra hour to sell food and non-alcoholic beverages and thus disperse (and sober-up) the crowd.
  - b. Lighting could be configured in a manner to facilitate the movement of the crowd. Thoughts include increasing the brightness of the lights on the Mall to indicate it is time to leave. Lighted corridors could be developed to indicate preferred pathways into the residential areas.
  - c. Provide temporary and removable amenities to the crowd such as porta-potties, dumpsters, and recycle bins.
  - d. Require establishments to provide some type of uniform (t-shirt) that makes safety personnel readily identifiable.
  - e. Last drink data to identify establishments that generate the majority of the problems.
  - f. Recognize the systems effect that any changes may have on the community.
2. Education of business owners and community members on the value of a hospitality zone. Retail, professional, service, and hospitality can all work together in a well-managed district. The domination of any one use can be detrimental to the area and lower property values and lease rates while increasing vacancy rates.
  3. Price competition in the hospitality industry has different consequences than the retail industry, which for the most part are not positive. Drink specials often indicate an establishment that is in trouble, and, have the adverse effect of over indulgence. Collaboration between owners will help curb this type of price war. Community covenants can be created to discourage this type of marketing practice.
  4. A comprehensive economic impact assessment of a hospitality district is important to provide baseline data for development and economic sustainability.
  5. The creation of a joint website between the City of Boulder Housing Authority and CU housing that identifies housing in compliance with community standards that can facilitate rentals, provide an economic incentive, and improve neighborhood relations.
  6. Increased and consistent training of servers, with an emphasis on indicia of over consumption vs. legal issues.

### Summary

Five representatives from the City of Boulder attended a three-day conference hosted by Responsible Hospitality Institute in Burlington, Vermont on October 22-24, 2005. Representatives attended this conference from cities across the United States and Canada that are facing similar hospitality zones issues. Several common themes were discovered between the cities, as well as a few new ideas enumerated above. Attendees learned that

there is no one solution; while there is a commonality of problems, each community is faced with the development of their own unique solution. Law enforcement has a role, responsible business has a role, municipal government has a role, the university has a role and the neighbors and residents have a role in reaching consensus.

RHI is currently in contact with the City of Boulder to complete a hospitality zone assessment and the attending stakeholders endorse that effort. Boulder is not unique, and can and should, learn from communities facing similar problems. To meet this goal, committee members should remember the five “C’s” of networking: Communication, Cooperation, Consensus, Commitment, and Collaboration.