

NEWS

TOWNSHIP OF WOODBRIDGE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Oct. 10, 2007

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WOODBIDGE PD & BUILDING INSPECTORS SHUT DOWN ILLEGAL AND DANGEROUS PUBLIC EVENT AT FORMER CAMEO NIGHTCLUB...

Ariana's Grand of Woodbridge Allows Under Construction Facility to be Leased to Bridal Expo w/o Occupancy Permits and in Violation of Fire, Safety and Building Codes... Police & Fire Officials Evacuate Building...

WOODBIDGE – Continuing Township-wide efforts to crack down on illegal and dangerous night clubs and private facilities rented for public events, Woodbridge Mayor John E. McCormac announced that a bridal expo at the former Cameo Banquet Facility – now Ariana's Grand of Woodbridge – was shut down and the building evacuated last night (Tues., Oct. 9) at 7:10 p.m. when Woodbridge police and fire officers, along with Township building inspectors, determined that the banquet hall was out-of-compliance with fire, safety and building codes and that occupancy of the under-construction facility posed a significant and dangerous threat to the public.

“The message is clear. The operation of illegal, out-of-compliance and dangerous night clubs and/or banquet facilities that pose a threat to public safety will be swiftly shut-down and appropriate legal actions taken to keep them closed until they comply with all ordinances, regulations and codes,” Mayor McCormac said. “I must reiterate that this Administration, in concert with the Township Council and its authority to oversee licensure, will not tolerate the continued and flagrant operation of private facilities or nightclubs that operate outside the law and which pose a significant threat to the public safety.”

According to Mayor McCormac, the Woodbridge Police Department, Office of Emergency Management and code inspectors from the Woodbridge Township Department of Planning and Development responded to reports that a large number of vehicles, limousines and members of the public were entering the former Cameo night club and banquet facility located at 800 Rahway Ave. in Woodbridge – currently operating as Ariana's Grand of Woodbridge under the proprietorship of Frank Dimattina, 40, Staten Island, NY.

In arriving at Ariana's, Woodbridge police officers immediately determined that the circumstances of the public gathering were suspect as the building is under construction and requested assistance from the Township Office of Emergency Management, Woodbridge Fire Department and Township building

inspectors. A review of permits and records determined that the former Cameo closed and ceased operations on Dec. 14, 2006.

On May 10, 2007, Ariana's Grand of Woodbridge and Dimattina of Staten Island, NY, secured a lease of the facility and obtained building and construction permits to renovate the interior and exterior of the building. The use of the building for any public or private event is prohibited during construction and until a valid Certificate of Occupancy and related fire and safety permits are obtained from the Township and local fire department.

An emergency, on-site inspection of the facility by the Woodbridge Fire Department and Township building inspectors uncovered that power to the building was supplied by outside generators with extension cords and spliced wires running to various lights and equipment throughout the building – at one point during the inspection, all power and lights to the building went out. Inspectors observed that there was no fire safety equipment available in the building and that several emergency exit doors were chained from the outside, preventing emergency entrance or exit. Additionally, extensive construction debris in the parking lot and surrounding the building prevented vehicles from entering and exiting the area causing traffic congestion on Rahway Avenue. As a result of the inspections, Township building inspectors today issued a Notice of Violation to the owner of record for the building for allowing the building to be occupied without a valid Certificate of Occupancy – the violation carries a fine of up to \$2,000. Ariana's Grand of Woodbridge and Dimattina as lessee of the facility must correct the violations and obtain a Certificate of Occupancy prior to any future public accommodation.

“Unlicensed banquet halls, nightclubs, bars and entertainment facilities are subject to very stringent regulations. Illegal and overcrowded conditions, combined with unruly patrons engaged in disorderly behavior, represent a real danger to the public health and safety and stands as a significant quality of life issue,” Mayor McCormac said. “We will continue to respond to complaints and to closely and thoroughly inspect all public facilities to make certain they are operating within the law and that the public is safe and secure when they attend public events at private facilities.”

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