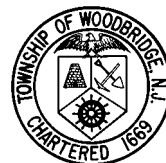


NEWS

TOWNSHIP OF WOODBRIDGE



MAYOR JOHN E. McCORMAC
1 Main Street, Woodbridge, NJ 07095

Phone: (732) 634-4500 ♦ Fax: (732) 602-6016

Web: <http://www.twp.woodbridge.nj.us>

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

John R. Hagerty

Mayor's Office of Communications

(732) 602-6039

WOODBIDGE OFFICIALS MOVE TO CLOSE OPERATION OF ILLEGAL CLUB IN AFTERMATH OF DISTURBANCES REQUIRING STEPPED-UP POLICE ACTION

Township Files Motion in Superior Court to Close Studio 9... Prior Complaints Subject of Hearings before Municipal Council...

WOODBIDGE – Woodbridge Mayor John E. McCormac today announced that the Township has filed a motion in Middlesex County Superior Court seeking the immediate closure of the illegal Studio 9 nightclub after two nights of public disturbances and disorderly behavior that resulted in the Woodbridge Police Department and police officers from surrounding communities responding to quell the near-riot.

“This Administration through the police department and authorized municipal agencies, in concert with Township Council and its authority to oversee ABC licensure, is moving swiftly to curtail the illegal and dangerous activities allegedly occurring at Studio 9. The Administration will continue to investigate and take all appropriate action under its authority to protect the public safety and curtail the use of this facility as a nightclub and gathering place that spawns illegal and dangerous behavior,” Mayor McCormac said.

According to Mayor McCormac, the Township has filed a second motion in Middlesex County Superior Court in New Brunswick (the initial Motion to close the facility was filed late last Friday) seeking the issuance of an Order to permanently close Studio 9 and prevent the nightclub and bar from continued operation. The Motion charges that Studio 9 is operating as an illegal nightclub and the continued operation poses a threat to the public safety. Additionally, the Township alleges that owners and operators of the facility have continually disregarded Township ordinances, regulations and building codes and that the facility does not comply with approved plans.

Woodbridge Police Chief William Trenery, Woodbridge police officers responded to a series of incidents at Studio 9, 503-507 King Georges Road, Woodbridge, in the early morning hours of Friday (Aug. 24) and Sunday (Aug. 26). In arriving at the nightclub on both dates, Woodbridge police observed hundreds of Studio 9 patrons engaged in disorderly behavior and fights which required mutual aid from the Old Bridge, Edison, South Amboy, Carteret, Perth Amboy, Sayreville and Metuchen police departments. The two nights of disturbance resulted in the arrest of numerous individuals on charges of rioting, disorderly conduct,

criminal mischief and related ABC violations. The Woodbridge Police Department continues to investigate alleged illegal activities involving Studio 9's operation.

Township records report that Studio 9, owned by George Forakis and Ariston Enterprises, Inc., was approved by Woodbridge Township Council Resolution on June 25, 2003 as an upscale restaurant/cocktail lounge (no club). Since Sept. 21, 2006, the Township has filed Notices of Violation against Studio 9 charging that the continued use of the building as a non-permitted, non-approved night club is a violation of the Planning Board's site plan approval. The Building and Construction Department has issued stop work notices and levied fines in excess of [\\$354,000 for failure to comply with Township regulations and ordinances](#).

"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. "I have instructed the Township attorney, the Woodbridge Police Department and Township inspectors to take whatever actions are necessary to eliminate the illegal activities and to close Studio 9 permanently."

Township Council President Brenda Velasco noted that the Township Council serves as the Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Governing Board and acts as fact-finder involving ABC-related violations. "It is the intention of the Council to respond immediately to any situation involving ABC licensure and to conduct fair and impartial hearings regarding the facts surrounding any alleged violations," said Council President Velasco.

A hearing involving the renewal of the Studio 9 ABC license is scheduled before the Township Council on Tues., Aug. 28 after the 7:00 p.m. Council meeting. An additional hearing involving six previously cited ABC violations is scheduled for Sept. 25.

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