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City Shuts Down Violence-Plagued Nightclub

East Side bar had history of shootings, assaults, violence against women

COLUMBUS, OH—A troubled nightclub that has prompted 135 police runs since 2016 is being boarded up this afternoon after City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr. secured an emergency restraining order against the business deemed to be operating in a manner that “substantially interfere[s] with the public decency, sobriety, peace, and good order” of the city during an *ex parte* hearing in the Franklin County Environmental Court earlier today.

Chronic violence at Lounge 13 ([1320 Beechwood Road](#)), including crimes both perpetrated by and against employees of the nightclub, has resulted in a drain on police resources and prompted at least six community groups to support city efforts to block the owner/operators from renewing their liquor permit for the premises, according to court documents released today.

Columbus City Council did, in fact, take such action, as members voted unanimously on December 5, 2016 to object to the renewal of the liquor permit for Lounge 13. The city’s objection remains pending before the Ohio Division of Liquor Control.

“This is the latest example of our office working with the Columbus Police Division to address community concerns about nuisance establishments,” said Columbus City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr.

According to court documents, Columbus Police were dispatched to the premises on January 31, 2016 on a report of a violent confrontation. Upon arrival, officers found two victims who stated they were punched and robbed of their wallets after several men confronted them in the Lounge 13 parking lot.

On March 6, 2016, police responded to a report of a man seeking medical treatment at Mount Carmel East Hospital. The victim stated he had been at Lounge 13 when a security guard refused to return his ID to him. The security guard then struck the victim in the face repeatedly with a baton. The victim lost consciousness and was transported to the hospital for treatment.

On April 15, 2016, police received a tip that a wanted fugitive was inside Lounge 13. Officers found the man inside the premises and placed him under arrest. The man had a “bag of cocaine” in his pocket.

On May 2, 2016, police were dispatched to the premises on report of a person with a knife. A witness told officers that the individual with the knife had slashed her tires and fled the scene prior to their arrival.

On May 13, 2016, police responded to a report of an assault at the premises and found a female victim who stated that she was “repeatedly struck in the face in a surprise attack.”

On June 26, 2016, police responded to a report of an assault at the premises and found a female victim who stated she was assaulted by four individuals inside Lounge 13. Security guards then escorted them outside the bar, where the assault continued. The victim suffered multiple strikes from a crowbar and had lacerations on her face and body. She was transported to Grant Hospital for medical treatment.

On July 31, 2016, officers were dispatched to the premises on report of an assault and found a female victim who stated that her boyfriend had “punched her in the mouth and broke the driver side mirror off her car.”

Also that same evening, police responded to a second report of an assault and found a female victim who stated that a security guard working at Lounge 13 “punched her in the mouth” after she got into an argument with him.

On August 20, 2016, police officers were flagged down at the premises by an individual who reported he had just been robbed at gunpoint behind Lounge 13.

On October 29, 2016, police responded to the premises on report of a fight and found a female victim who stated that she worked at Lounge 13 and had just been assaulted by a group of females there.

On February 5, 2017, police officers on patrol heard gunshots from the premises. Officers interviewed Lounge 13 security guards who stated that “a group of women had been fighting in the parking lot when a man fired a shot into the air.” Security guards had attempted to detain the man, who physically resisted.

On March 16, 2017, police officers approached two men seated in a car in the Lounge 13 parking lot. When one of the men rolled down the window, officers immediately smelled the odor of burning marijuana. The man stated that he was “an armed security guard at Lounge 13.” He had marijuana and two knives in his pocket. He also had a stolen handgun in his vehicle.

On May 6, 2017, police were dispatched to the premises and took a report from an intoxicated female victim who stated she was “attacked, beaten and tasered” by an unknown female assailant at Lounge 13.

On May 22, 2017, police took a report from a victim of domestic violence who stated she had been leaving Lounge 13 when her ex-boyfriend grabbed her by the neck and threw her to ground. He then kicked her multiple times in the head and torso. The victim believed she may have lost consciousness. The victim sought treatment at a hospital and was diagnosed with a broken collar bone.

On July 29, 2017, officers investigating a shooting at the premises spoke to two victims who had been inside Lounge 13 when an argument broke out. The victims reported that they were not involved in the argument, which resulted in an unknown man shooting a firearm. One victim was shot in the stomach and the other shot in the leg.

On August 15, 2017, officers took a report from a victim who stated he was assaulted while working at Lounge 13 the prior week, but his managers didn’t call 911 during the assault “because they didn’t want a negative report against their establishment.” The victim spent a week in the hospital receiving treatment for head trauma suffered during the assault.

On September 15, 2017, police were dispatched to Grant Medical Center where they took a report from a victim who stated he had been shot in the forearm while at Lounge 13.

On September 18, 2017, vice detectives, utilizing a confidential informant, purchased illegal narcotics inside Lounge 13.

The following evening, vice detectives, once again utilizing a confidential informant, purchased illegal narcotics in the parking lot of Lounge 13.

“We appreciate the community members and police officers who have worked with our office in building a strong case against Lounge 13,” said Assistant City Attorney Steve Dunbar. “Hopefully, today’s court order provides a measure of relief to those who have been forced to endure violence in and around this establishment.”

A follow-up hearing for a preliminary and permanent injunction against the owners of Lounge 13 is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on October 2, 2017.

If the property is ultimately declared to be a statutorily defined public nuisance, state law grants the court authority to order the premises shut down for up to one year. The owners also would be permanently enjoined from “conducting, maintaining, using, occupying, or in any way permitting” a public nuisance anywhere else in Franklin County, Ohio.

In order to secure closure of the business, Dunbar, who is the Zone Initiative Attorney assigned to the Far East area of Columbus, is seeking to prove that the owners are guilty of maintaining a nuisance by establishing that they, as owners of the premises, “knew of, participated in, or acquiesced to the activity which constituted the nuisance” as prescribed by [Chapter 3767](#) of the Ohio Revised Code.

Copies of the city’s [complaint](#) and the [court’s order](#) are available online.