



HEY NONNY

LIVE MUSIC + LOCAL KITCHEN

May 4, 2021

Mayor Thomas Hayes
Village Trustees
Randall Recklaus, Village Manager

Re: Arlington Alfresco and Taste of Arlington

Mr. Mayor, Trustees, and Mr. Recklaus:

We heard a couple of weeks ago that our Chamber of Commerce had submitted to the Village a proposal for (a) ending Arlington Alfresco at the beginning of September and (b) holding a Taste of Arlington/Mane Event-type street festival immediately thereafter. That was a surprise, and adopting that proposal would be horrible for Hey Nonny (Alfresco was very good last fall; the Taste effectively closes Hey Nonny). So we (a) scheduled a meeting of downtown hospitality businesses for April 28, and (b) called Jon Ridler to express our concerns and learn some background. He reported that the proposal was sent at the Village's request. We haven't seen the proposal, so it is quite possible that we've got it wrong. But we wanted to report to you the bare outlines of our hospitality group meeting last week. Our group is happy to discuss this further with you or to present views at a Village Board meeting.

1. Closing Date for Arlington Alfresco. Fifteen businesses were represented at the meeting or gave comments. Of those, thirteen expressed a strong desire that Arlington Alfresco *not* end in early September, but rather to go as late in the fall as is feasible. These include Scratchboard Kitchen, CoCo & Blu, Armand's, Passero, Bottle & Bottega, Hey Nonny, Peggy Kinnane's, Cortland's Garage, Shakou, Salsa 17, Metropolis PAC, La Tasca and Beer On The Wall. The other two (Kilwins, Metropolis Ballroom) were not strongly opposed to that result, but had legitimate concerns that we can and will address.

2. Taste of Arlington. For most of our downtown businesses, the Taste is an expensive and inefficient relic of the pre-Alfresco era. From the standpoint many of our businesses, the Taste should be replaced by more frequent, less expensive, events that are designed to drive pedestrian traffic downtown when it is otherwise light. As Derek Hanley put it, "the Taste is every day now in downtown Arlington Heights. We don't need it and it is time for it to go away." Our group recognizes that there are other interests at stake. Our group is working on how the Chamber can play an important role in (and earn revenues from) the more frequent events in our downtown, and also how some events can provide visibility opportunities for businesses outside of our downtown. Our group will assemble and submit to you and the Chamber some ideas on events.

3. The Future of Our Downtown. Our group is highly enthusiastic about the future of our downtown, and eager to invest time, effort and money to further its development and to market it as a regional dining and entertainment attraction. We intend to work together to develop the outline of a plan for all that, and then to work with the Village to hone and implement it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chip Brooks', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chip Brooks
Hey Nonny

cc: Downtown Hospitality Group