



Brett Stanciu, Zoning Administrator

March 18, 2022

Dear Brett,

On behalf of Highland Center for the Arts, I am writing to request a temporary reprieve to Condition #5 from HCA's conditional use permit to allow for limited amplified sound for summer 2022. Condition #5 provides that "performances and events conducted on the site will not utilize amplified sound outside of the structure."

The DRB previously granted a reprieve of Condition #5 for HCA's last summer season. We believe that no grievances in connection with HCA performances were filed with the Town of Greensboro. In light of the continuing and unpredictable circumstances surrounding Covid-19 and the desire and enjoyment by the community for outside performances, we are asking the DRB to allow HCA the opportunity to present outdoor performances.

Mitigation of sound disturbance is of the utmost importance to HCA. Recently we have been working with the sound engineering program at Northern Vermont University, and through this partnership a stage design was created that would greatly aid in containing and directing sound to a limited space on the HCA grounds. A dedicated staff member will be monitoring and recording decibel levels for each event. HCA will pay particular attention to the sound levels at the edge of HCA's property, with a goal of not exceeding the ambient sound by ten decibels. The stage would continue to be located on the northwest-side (slightly to the right of last summer's location) of the property, with guests gathering on the patio and surrounding lawn. This configuration will be the primary location for the majority of events and was specifically chosen as it directs the speakers away from the nearest houses.

The proposed schedule of events is similar to last summer and includes one musical performance in May, June, and July respectively and two musical performances in August. Additional programs include events that require very minimal sound amplification to include three poetry readings (in the tent), two weekends of the HCA produced play Little Women, a children's circus show and an artisan market. Events would start at 6:30pm (or earlier) and last no longer than two hours in duration with the exception of the artisan market closing at 9PM with a four hour duration. Sound would be intermittent during this time and conclude at 8:30PM. Performances will be concentrated on weekends (Friday/Saturday evenings and Sunday matinees). Based on our experience last year, conversations with neighbors and community members, and our sound level research, we believe these plans would be responsive to the needs of the community and would not cause undue or adverse levels of noise or any undue effect on the character of the area. Caspian Monday Music has asked HCA for use of outdoor space to host three classical programs on Monday evenings and could possibly require the use of amplified sound. Due to the nature of the instrumentation, we estimate sound bleed to be minimal.

HCA aims to provide immersive art experiences for people of all ages, foster a renewed sense of community during this difficult time, and provide vital support to artists from the region. We also strive to be good neighbors and community members. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this proposal with the DRB and HCA abutters.

Thank you,

Keisha Luce  
Executive Director

