



GLEN ECHO PARK

Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture

April 26, 2021

Testimony related to Public Hearing Notice on Board of Health Regulation to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Montgomery County and provide guidance on reopening

Dear Councilmembers:

We are writing to you with regard to the proposed amendments to the gathering restrictions related to COVID19 in Montgomery County, which will be reviewed this week by the Council. We are specifically concerned with three items – 1) public gatherings and 2) entertainment venues (theater, dance, music) and 3) amusement rides.

With regard to public gatherings (indoors or outdoors) we support the proposed increases as drafted.

With regard to entertainment venues including live music performances, theater performances, and social dancing, we would suggest that rules similar to those of restaurants be implemented – social distancing of groups (but groups can remain together), masks if not consuming food, and maximum gathering numbers identical to those prescribed under the public gathering regulations. Further, we encourage that the assumption not be made that all performances are a multi-day or multi-week run with the same group of actors or musicians (as in an acting company performing multiple performances) as this may or may not be the case – most musical performances are single, stand-alone events. It should be assumed the performers have been gathering safely for rehearsals and have agreed to perform together. The only requirement for performances should be to keep the public 12 feet distant from the performers. The audience would social distance and mask between each other's attending groups. When we move to fewer limits on gatherings we ask that multiple types of performing arts (and participatory dances) be considered.

Finally the Dentzel Carousel at Glen Echo Park is being recognized for the 100 year anniversary of its installation at the Park. We hope to safely accommodate the public to enjoy the ride this year and ask that amusement rides be included under "other businesses" as proposed to be allowed to have 50% capacity when the population is vaccinated at 50%, and 75% capacity when the public is vaccinated at 60%. This will enable us to offer tickets to a broad sector of our community and earn income to cover our staffing and operational/maintenance costs for the ride.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony. Glen Echo Park has been pleased to provide our outside areas to the public for gathering safely during the pandemic and looks forward to accommodating more people when it is safe to do so. We thank the Council and the County for the public support of arts and entertainment organizations during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

Katey Boerner

Katey Boerner, Executive Director