



October 26, 2016

Dr. Eric Barron, President
The Pennsylvania State University
201 Old Main
University Park, PA 16802

Dear Dr. Barron:

The Highlands is one of the oldest neighborhoods in State College, representing a town-and-gown collaboration that reflects the long history of Penn State. As the location of most Penn State fraternities and significant off-campus student housing, it has a longstanding relationship with students. However, that relationship and the quality of life in this historic neighborhood have been challenged in recent years by the increasing number of students who live off-campus and their associated behavior.

Many homeowners, including long-time residents, have seen their daily lives disrupted by large groups of students moving through the neighborhood creating excessive noise and leaving trash and vandalism in their wake. During the first two weeks of the semester, as an example, neighbors reported incidents of trespassing, public urination, under-age drinking, drug use, lewd behavior, and vandalism, as well as noise.

Neighborhood concerns reached a new high this past weekend, as thousands of Penn State students and football fans flooded Beaver Avenue downtown and Garner Street in the Highlands after the football game. One Highlands neighbor described her experience this way:

The riot was the culmination of everything that happened all day long yesterday. Yesterday was one of the worst days ever in our corner of the neighborhood. I still have a terrible headache this morning... Extremely loud music with obscene lyrics was pounding through our double glassed windows since 10 am. Crowds of young males and females in their PSU football jerseys were loitering and littering without any regard for private property. One group came into our yard and were passing around a few joints (obviously, that was not tobacco sharing) apparently planning on starting a party here. Extremely loud shrieking, shouting, banging, striking, paired with running, non-stop doors slamming, etc. long before the game began, let alone when it was over.

As President of the Highlands Civic Association, I am writing to you on behalf of our Highlands neighbors to request that Penn State take swift action against this type of off-campus behavior and work to restore a productive town-gown relationship. There are several approaches we ask that you consider:

- Treat inappropriate student behavior in the neighborhood as if it were on-campus and vigorously enforce the off-campus misconduct policy.
- Include information about the residential community that surrounds campus in new student recruitment and orientation.
- Coordinate with the State College Borough for increased utilization of University Park police in the Neighborhood during weeknights to address student parties, disruptive behavior, and underage drinking

- Coordinate with the State College Borough for the use of University Police in the Neighborhood after games and other major University-sponsored or University venue events (including non-collegiate events).
- Maintain a cadre of part-time University police officers to relieve State College Borough from having to provide police support on campus around games and other campus events.
- Provide additional on-campus parking to accommodate crowds at University-sponsored events.
- Organize post-game rallies on campus in coordination with the Athletics Department to keep students engaged.
- Provide sufficient and affordable on-campus housing for undergraduate students.

I and other members of the Highlands Civic Association Board would be happy to meet with you and your staff to discuss how we can work together to improve the current situation.

Best Regards,



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