

## **A public safety matter**

### **Our view: Fight over Baltimore liquor store needs speedy result**

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Despite repeated complaints about a North Avenue liquor store, a closure notice by Baltimore's liquor board and a weekend homicide at the establishment, Linden Bar and Liquors remained open for business yesterday. That's infuriating, especially after the fatal shooting there Saturday night, which underscored area residents' concerns about safety and the city liquor board's inability to make stick its decision to shutter the place.

Citizens and the police strongly opposed a renewal of Linden's liquor license in April and the liquor board agreed. But they can thank Circuit Judge Alfred Nance for keeping the business open while store owner Chang K. Yim appealed the board's refusal to renew his license. The judge went on to postpone a June hearing in the case until September for the flimsy and too-often-asserted claim that the store's lawyer hadn't had enough time to prepare for the case.

Residents of nearby Reservoir Hill, with the help of Councilman William H. Cole IV and Council President Stephanie C. Rawlings-Blake, have been trying for a year to get the store owner to take seriously their concerns that the store is a magnet for drug dealing and violence. Mr. Yim installed better lighting and closed 45 minutes earlier, but wouldn't commit to hiring a security guard. On Saturday night, a 35-year-old Baltimore man was shot in the head at the store after he and another man argued.

Mr. Yim is entitled to fight the liquor board's ruling, but when a business has become a public nuisance, a swift resolution of the matter should be a priority for the courts