

## **Mount Vernon club to be padlocked today by police: Bealefeld shuts Suite Ultralounge for year after business declared 'public nuisance'**

*The Baltimore Sun - McClatchy-Tribune Information Services via COMTEX, Nov 25, 2009*

Police Commissioner Frederick H. Bealefeld III decided to shut down the club for a year after several violent incidents in and around the bar over the past 18 months, a spokesman for the department said. A written report released last week by the administrative officer found the club guilty of providing an unsafe environment, clearing the way for Bealefeld to shutter the business.

Armed robberies, fights, stabbings and a shooting last year outside the club sparked an outcry from residents and businesses in the Mid-town Belvedere and Mount Vernon neighborhoods, according to police.

"We've gotten tremendous support and feedback from the community, the residents, the City Council and the businesses," police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said. "[Bealefeld] basically had no choice."

The club's lawyer, Peter A. Prevas, could not be reached for comment. The law provided Suite Ultralounge an opportunity to submit a "public safety plan" to police, but Guglielmi said the club did not send any proposals.

Police have used the nuisance ordinance to shut down three businesses, two of which have reopened after submitting a public safety plan. One of them, Club 410, remains closed.

Police have highlighted several incidents they say helped contribute to the decision. In October 2008, a person was stabbed and two people were shot outside the club on Chase Street after a teen night. And in January, a 17-year-old patron was held up at gunpoint outside the club, beaten and robbed of money and a cell phone.

Suite Ultralounge is a "bottle club," to which patrons bring their own alcohol. The designation was believed to have fallen under the authority of the city liquor board, which attempted to revoke the club's license last year. But the board's decision was overturned by a Circuit Court judge, citing newly devised rules governing bottle clubs that needed to be clarified and revised.

"We're very supportive of the commissioner's work in this regard," liquor board Chairman Stephan Fogleman said. "This will give the legislature time to address some issues relevant to bottle clubs that will also allow the liquor board to revisit the registration relative to Suite."

City Councilman William H. Cole IV, whose district includes the Belvedere, has said that his office received more complaints about Suite Ultralounge than any other business.

"I'm obviously very pleased but it's also a shame for the community that it took so long," Cole said. "It would have been nice to have this neighborhood nuisance resolved a long time ago, but that's not the Police Department's fault. That establishment has been a problem for a couple of years and really has hurt Mount Vernon in a couple of ways. Thankfully, we can rest a little bit easier."