

# Brookhaven Goes to Court To Close VIP Lounge in Patchogue

posted on 11/10/2016 4:58:00 PM

## ***Romaine, Foley, Work with Residents to Close Illegal Night Club Where Three Shootings Have Occurred in Less Than Three Months; Senator Croci and Assemblyman Graf, Garbarino Move to Have SLA Revoke License***

**Farmingville, NY** – Brookhaven Town Supervisor Ed Romaine announced today that the Town has obtained a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) under the Public Nuisance Law in Supreme Court in an effort to close the VIP Lounge in North Patchogue. The VIP Lounge has been the source of a number of neighborhood complaints and has been the scene of at least three shootings within the last six months.

Town officials also sought the assistance of New York State Senator Tom Croci and Assemblymen Al Graf and Andrew Garbarino, who contacted the New York State Liquor Authority to revoke the liquor license for the illegal night club.

In court, the Town included affidavits of complaint from Suffolk County Police, neighbors in the area of the Waverly Avenue business, a trustee of the Patchogue-Medford Board of Education and the owner of the building where the illegal night club is located.

"I am pleased that the court agreed with the Town and issued a TRO to close the VIP Lounge which has been operating as an illegal night club," said Supervisor Romaine. "Brookhaven is committed to permanently closing this business to send a clear message that the Town will not tolerate any illegal businesses that threaten the health and safety of our residents. I commend our Law Department for taking swift action in this case."

Councilman Foley said, "Since they opened their doors, the VIP Lounge has been a constant source of complaints because people are fed up with the noise and violent incidents. Our Law Department does a great job and this is another example of how we are working to protect residents from unscrupulous business owners who disregard our Town Codes."

"Establishments like this, that bring crime, drugs or bad elements to our neighborhoods, have no place in our community" said New York State Senator Tom Croci. "The VIP Lounge has broken their obligations to this community and I implore the New York State Liquor Authority to take away their liquor license to prevent further violence in our community."

Assemblyman Al Graf said, "We have had three shootings, an armed robbery, and numerous fights at this location in the last several months. Residents fear for the safety of their families and law enforcement officers have expressed the danger this location poses to our town. I want to thank the Town of Brookhaven for taking action to prevent any future tragedies in our community. I have joined with Senator Tom Croci and Assemblyman Andrew Garbarino in calling on the New York State Liquor Authority to shut this establishment down immediately."

Assemblyman Andrew Garbarino said, "The VIP Lounge has consistently caused problems within the community, and it is clear that these issues will only continue if no long-term action is taken. I am calling on the New York State Liquor Authority to revoke the establishment's liquor license to ensure the safety and security of the neighborhood."

The VIP Lounge, located at 620 Waverly Avenue, is approved for use as a pool hall by the Town of Brookhaven, but has been operating and advertising itself as a night club. In the order, the Town stated that the "continued operation of the business adversely affects the safety of numerous Town residents. In light of the continued violence and use of firearms on the property of the VIP Lounge, the entity must be closed down ..."

The latest shooting occurred in the early morning hours of October 30, when three men were shot and wounded outside of the business. An earlier shooting occurred on October 15, when a Medford man was shot outside of the building. On May 27, a rapper was shot shortly after performing at the nightclub.

The Town provided evidence to the court that the VIP Lounge does not have Town of Brookhaven Planning Department approval or the appropriate certificate of occupancy for use as a lounge/night club, because the operator

of the business had been denied this requested use. Instead, the premises was approved for use as a pool/billiard hall, which is not how the facility is being operated.

Brookhaven Town Law Department investigators, Fire Marshalls and building inspectors have been dispatched to the business numerous times in response to complaints from residents living in the area.

**Division of Public Information \* Office of the Supervisor**

One Independence Hill • Farmingville • NY 11738 • Phone 631-451-6595