



ARLINGTON CINEMA 'N' DRAFTHOUSE

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Live Entertainment Use Permit Request for the Arlington Cinema 'N' Draffthouse

The Arlington Cinema 'N' Draffthouse ("Theater") requests a use permit for live entertainment. The Theater is located at 2903 Columbia Pike on the corner of Columbia Pike and Walter Reed, in the heart of the Columbia Pike Revitalization District's "Town Center" (as designated in the Columbia Pike Revitalization Plan and the Form Based Code).

For over 20 years, the Theater has been offering full restaurant fare, tableside service, and entertainment to its loyal patrons of both Arlington and the surrounding DC Metro area. The Theater specializes in top box office movies, televised events and private events. Although these events have helped the Theater achieve iconic status in the DC Metro area, we recognize that the community requires a more diverse catalog of entertainment as movie viewing audiences have dwindled. Although top box office movies will continue to be the primary source of entertainment, we also plan to host a wide variety of social/cultural live-entertainment events. These events will provide the necessary energy and infusion of new patrons to help revitalize the Theater as well as the community.

The plan to host live-entertainment events is consistent both with the intent of the Columbia Pike Revitalization Plan as well as the Historic usage of the theater. The "Town Center" segment of the Revitalization District and Form Based Code is planned to be the most cosmopolitan of all the segments along the Pike. The Theater is optimally located to assist in bringing this about. Historically, the theater was built to host live-entertainment events including a large stage and a green-room/backstage area.

The live-entertainment events will take place anywhere between the hours of 11:00AM – 2:00AM, Monday through Sunday. Any live entertainment events on Sunday will not last much longer than midnight unless the next day is a holiday. It is important to note once again that top box office movies will continue as the primary form of entertainment; however, as a small theater venue it is important that we maintain the flexibility to offer a wide variety of entertainment at all hours of operation. The number of live entertainment events will vary depending on the week but typically there will be between 1 - 4 public live-entertainment events per week, while at the same time trying not to interrupt the existing movie schedules. The average number of live-entertainment events will likely be 2 per week.

Included is a list of events that we intend to host as part of our live-entertainment plan:

Comedians / Magicians / Entertainers: These events would include individuals with specific entertaining skills to entertain all types of potential customers. Events for families would likely be positioned during the day (11:00AM – 4:00PM) or early evening hours (4:00PM – 6:00PM). Events for adults would be positioned during the prime evening (6:00PM – 10:00PM) or late evening hours (10:00PM – 2:00AM). The average event length for this type of entertainment will likely be 2 hours long during any of the above mentioned time blocks.

Bands: These events would include groups of entertainers entertaining with live music. Types of bands include Acoustic Bands, Rock Bands, Jazz Bands, Children's Music Groups, Orchestra/Concert Bands, Marching Bands, and Swing Bands. Most Band live-entertainment events will be held in the prime evening (6:00PM – 10:00PM) or late evening hours (10:00PM – 2:00AM). However, there will be some events held during daytime hours (11:00AM – 4:00PM) for Children's Music Groups or Teenage Band Events (as requested by Arlington's Department of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Office for Teens). The average event length for this type of entertainment will likely be 2-3 hours long during any of the above mentioned time blocks.

Live Theater: These events would include professional theater groups, local community theater groups, local school theater clubs and interactive/murder mystery theater groups. Events for families would likely be positioned during the day (11:00AM – 4:00PM) or evening hours (4:00PM – 10:00PM). Events for adults would be positioned during the prime evening (6:00PM – 10:00PM) or late evening hours (10:00PM – 2:00AM). The average event length for this type of entertainment will likely be 2-3 hours long during any of the above mentioned time blocks.

Karaoke / DJs: These events would include individual disc jockeys or Karaoke machines to entertain guest with pre-recorded music. Most events of this type will occur during early evening hours (4:00PM – 7:00PM) to entertain guests prior to the start of a Movie. The entertainment prior to a movie beginning will likely be from 1 – 2 hours long during the above mentioned time block. However the use of a Karaoke machine or DJ would also be used for more rare special events like providing background music for a New Year's event or during major sporting or TV events.

Speakers / Educators / Trainers: These events would include individuals with specific experience, training skills or motivational skills. Events targeted to businesses would likely be positioned during the day (11:00AM – 4:00PM). Events for adults and families would be positioned during the prime evening (6:00PM – 10:00PM) or weekend matinee hours (11:00AM – 6:00PM). The average event length for this type of entertainment will likely be 1-2 hours long during any of the above mentioned time blocks.

Children Entertainers / Characters: These events would include individuals in costumes or children specific entertainers. Events would include "character" meals or themed children's movies with "character" entertainment as part of the fare. Events targeted to families with young children would likely be positioned during the day (11:00AM – 5:00PM).

Amateur Artist / Open-Mic Events / Talent Shows: These events would allow patrons to attend and provide entertainment for the audience. Events for families would likely be positioned during the day (11:00AM – 4:00PM) or early evening hours (4:00PM – 6:00PM). Events for adults would be positioned during the prime evening (6:00PM – 10:00PM) or late evening hours (10:00PM – 2:00AM). The average event length for this type of entertainment will likely be 1-3 hours long during any of the above mentioned time blocks.

The Theater is a venue built for, experienced with and positioned for live entertainment. Not only was the theater originally built in 1939 with a large stage and greenroom/backstage area, but during it's long history, the Theater has hosted many live entertainment events as part of it's private event offering.

The Theater is already soundproofed and acoustically designed so that noise outside the theater is nearly eliminated so as to not disturb the many restaurants and stores physically located adjacent to the Theater. Not only is the noise disturbance eliminated during movie or televised events, but also during live-entertainment private events featuring bands or loud music.

As for parking for these events, we will handle parking in much the same way as we have handled event parking over the last 20 years of experience with events near or at capacity.

We are aware that there may be concerns about some of the above mentioned live-entertainment events and the behavior of those who may attend those events. Specifically, there are concerns about the level of drinking that can occur at these events and the level to which this disturbs or endangers the surrounding neighborhood. We will continue, as we have in the past, to make the greatest effort to help our patrons make the right choices for themselves. We also plan to hire increased security for events where increased security is warranted.

It is important to note that it is not our intention to turn the Theater into a nightclub. It is also important to note that the theater does not have the capacity to host any large-scale high-energy events that often lead to problems. We are an entertainment venue that offers full restaurant service – one event at a time. We plan to continue to provide entertainment on a per event basis, with most events lasting only 1- 3 hours. We offer shows – not a “club” environment. In contrast to our operation, a typical “bar” or “nightclub” will open for business at or around 5:00PM and close sometime well after 1:30AM. We, in contrast, typically operate 3-4 different events during this same time frame, with each event having a beginning and an end. We close out patron’s bills typically ½ hour prior to each event’s end, allowing us to transition to the next event and helping us to control excess drinking.

As mentioned above, the Theater is a venue built for, experienced with and positioned for live entertainment. As is evident by the diversity of live entertainment events mentioned in this request, we are excited and hope to have the opportunity to serve the local Arlington community as well as the DC Metro area with a more diverse catalog of entertainment, including live-entertainment.

Thank You,

Gregory Godbout (President)
Arlington Cinema, Inc