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Loud and near

The first concerts at Lincoln Financial Field echoed throughout the surrounding neighborhoods. The stadium district is hearing complaints about the noise and traffic, too.

By [R. Jonathan Tuleya](#)
August 14, 2003

Bruce Springsteen treated Chuck Putnam and some friends to a concert last weekend on the deck atop Putnam's home on the 2800 block of South 12th Street.



Only thing is, he never invited The Boss.

Putnam, like thousands of others who live on the cusp of the stadium complex, learned something about the acoustics at the new Lincoln Financial Field -- the stadium can't hold a tune like the Vet.

"It was certainly not deafening because it is far enough away," said Putnam, who lives about a quarter-mile from the Linc. "But it was enough at certain points to drown out the music we had on our deck, which was pretty disturbing."

He and his guests retreated indoors about 10:45 p.m. Saturday, but even his home's brick walls couldn't stop the thumping bass. The low frequencies penetrated his living room as if they were blasted from a car stereo parked outside his front door, said Putnam, 59.

Putnam, who moved to the neighborhood just a few months ago after years of living near St. Agnes Medical Center, said this nuisance is not enough to make him regret relocating.

"I know there's not going to be concerts every night," he said.

Noise was the top complaint among residents -- whether it was coming from the concert or the news helicopters hovering overhead -- during the first week of events at the Linc, said Shawn Jalosinski, executive director of the [Stadium Complex Special Services District](#).

Other than that, he feels the neighborhoods and the city handled inaugural events well. But there is plenty of room for improvement.

"The reality is, it is a learning process for everyone," Jalosinski said, "and I think with time we can minimize community impact while improving the experience for fans attending events."

Mayor John Street promised the Stadium Complex Special Services District to residents during the stadium negotiations three years ago. The body consists of a seven-person board comprised of four community directors and three members representing the Eagles, Phillies and Comcast-Spectacor. The district oversees the blocks between Oregon Avenue and Interstate 95 from Seventh through 20th streets.

After months of delays, the board voted to hire Jalosinski earlier this year. A

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large part of his job is coordinating various city services and other entities involved with events at the arenas so life in the surrounding communities does not become unbearable.

His biggest task is devising ways to manage traffic.

Once a week for the last couple of months, Jalosinski has hosted a meeting attended by representatives from the police and Streets Department, as well as the sports venue and parking operators. Together, they have been working on what Jalosinski calls "event scenarios."

"Every event is going to present a unique traffic situation, which is why it is so difficult on police down there," he said.

One idea that has come out of these meetings is to promote alternate routes to the stadium complex. For example, Jalosinski said, the city will inform those traveling to the arenas from the south that they can exit I-95 North at the Platt Bridge and take Pattison Avenue to avoid the congestion frequently plaguing the Broad Street and Packer Avenue exits.

The stadium district is also helping fund a \$1-million study of ways to improve the signage leading to the stadiums. New "trailblazing signs" will inform spectators of the various ways to travel to and from the arenas, Jalosinski said.

"So if you are going to the sports complex, [these signs] will tell you alternate routes and primary routes on how to get to the complex," he said. "And leaving, it will tell you different routes to get you to your interstate access."

The goal, Jalosinski said, is to keep traffic away from the neighborhoods -- a mission that has been somewhat hindered recently by construction blocking the Broad and Packer ramp onto eastbound I-76.

For the residents of at least one neighborhood, Jalosinski has circulated 4,700 copies of calendars listing the events scheduled at the arenas for August. Each date is coded for neighborhood impact.

Aug. 3, the date of an international soccer match -- the first event at Lincoln Financial Field -- was marked with a star indicating "high impact," or an event with an expected attendance greater than 50,000 people. So was last Friday -- the opening night for Bruce Springsteen at the Linc and the Justin Timberlake and Christina Aguilera concert at the Wachovia Center. Tonight's Phillies game is marked with a circle, indicating "low impact" or fewer than 30,000 people. Tomorrow's game has a square for "medium impact," or between 30,000 and 50,000 spectators.

"What we hope is that neighbors can put the calendar up on their refrigerators," Jalosinski said, "and use it as a quick and valuable reference when they are planning their local travel."

Judy Cerrone, president of the Stadium Community Council and a district director on the stadium district board, said she already has noticed a modest improvement in traffic flow, thanks to Jalosinski.

"It is going to be slow," she said, "but our director is getting everybody together and slowly but surely it is making a big improvement."

Barbara Capozzi, president of the Packer Park Civic Association and another district director, also has faith in the stadium district.

"There are issues that need to be addressed, and the stadium district will help," she said. "Shawn has been fabulous."

Cerrone and Capozzi were both shocked at the noise level of the three Springsteen concerts. Capozzi said "you could hear every word" from 20th and Hartranft streets, and added, "the helicopters are awful. It's more than anyone should have to put up with."