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ABOUT US

The Southwest Chicago Post is an independent news service delivering news and opinion to the people of Chicago's Southwest Side.

We promote prosperity, progress and peace in the neighborhoods we serve.

We intend to champion homeowners, locally owned and operated small businesses and professional practices, schools, libraries, parks, houses of worship and more.

We also strongly support efforts to prevent crime and make our neighborhoods safer.

We cheerfully assist and promote members of our business and professional community, particularly those that are independent, locally owned and which hire local residents.

This online news service is owned and operated by lifelong Southwest Siders Joan Hadac (Editor and Publisher) and Tim Hadac (Managing Editor), both of whom have worked as local newspaper reporters and editors for over 25 years each.

Do you have a news tip, big or small? A letter to the editor? Want us to come out and cover your event? Let us know: editor@swchicagopost.com.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2018

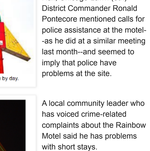
# City Officials Want No More 'Naps' Offered at the Rainbow Motel

***'Naps' Are Legal, Rainbow's Attorney Says; Neighbors Say 'Naps' May Open the Door for Hookers***

*By Tim Hadac*
*Managing Editor*
*Southwest Chicago Post*

City officials are pressuring a Garfield Ridge motel to end its practice of offering "nap rate" short stays—but the owners appear to be pushing back.

The disagreement surfaced again at a City Hall meeting late last week, convened by the Chicago Department of Business Affairs to check on progress made with a honey-do list they gave the Rainbow Motel, 7050 W. Archer, a month ago.



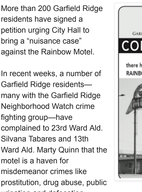

City law says hotels may offer short stays only if they are located within three miles of an airport. The Rainbow appears to fall within that protected area, but the law also outlines conditions under which a hotel could be declared a nuisance--especially if police document that criminal activity occurs there with knowledge of hotel management.

If a hotel is declared a nuisance by City officials, it could be the first step to license revocation.



The colorful, kitschy Rainbow sign by day.

At last week's meeting in City Hall, Chicago Lawn (8th) District Commander Ronald Pontecore mentioned calls for police assistance at the motel--as he did at a similar meeting last month--and seemed to imply that police have problems at the site.



...and by night. Most of its colorful lights long ago burned out.

A local community leader who has voiced crime-related complaints about the Rainbow Motel said he has problems with short stays.

"For the motel's attorney (Adeena J. Weiss-Ortiz) to push back against the City on this, is essentially pushing back against the wishes of community," said Garfield Ridge Neighborhood Watch President Al Cacciottolo. "I think that by offering these four-hour naps, the Rainbow Motel is leaving the door open for prostitution and possibly other illegal activity. That's not what we want in Garfield Ridge."

In response to a request for comment, Weiss-Ortiz said, "Rainbow Hotel's representatives and I appeared at the follow-up meeting at City Hall. It was a pleasure to advise all those present that Rainbow had complied with all of the City's requests. The City did inquire as to hourly room rentals. It should be noted that the City ordinance on point states that motels located within a three-mile radius from Midway Airport may, in fact, rent rooms on an hourly basis. Rainbow is located within said perimeter and thus is compliant with all relevant ordinances.

"Despite the odd undercurrent at the meetings, Rainbow remains glad to comply with all applicable City requests," she added.

Weiss-Ortiz did not elaborate on what she meant by "odd undercurrent."

BACP officials said they will convene another meeting with Rainbow representatives, as well as other interested parties, at 1 p.m. Nov. 13 in Room 805 of City Hall.

## Background

More than 200 Garfield Ridge residents have signed a petition urging City Hall to bring a "nuisance case" against the Rainbow Motel.




In recent weeks, a number of Garfield Ridge residents—many with the Garfield Ridge Neighborhood Watch crime fighting group—have complained to 23rd Ward Ald. Silvana Tabares and 13th Ward Ald. Marty Quinn that the motel is a haven for misdemeanor crimes like prostitution, drug abuse, public urination and defecation, harassment of local school children and more.

Those with questions about the petition are invited to call Tabares' office at (773) 582-4444.

At both City Hall meetings thus far were Tabares and Quinn, as well as Chicago Lawn (8th) Distict Police Commander Ronald Pontecore and senior staff, as well as several representatives from the GRNW—in addition to Rainbow owners, management and their attorney.

To address concerns by neighbors, BACP last month made a list of suggestions to Rainbow officials:

• Keep a log of registered guests and visitors, and make that available to BACP, to ensure that no more than two people are in any room at any given time.
• Maintain a cleaning log showing that both the inside and outside of the premises are cleaned twice daily.
• Keep a log of calls made by motel employees to 911, reporting suspected criminal activity.
• Link their security cameras to the Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communications.
• Increase the hours of their security staff from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. Friday and Saturdays to 3 p.m. to 6 a.m.
• Reach out to the community to address concerns, by attending CAPS Beat 811 meetings, as well as GRNW gatherings.

Cacciottolo said that as best he can tell, Rainbow officials have made significant progress in implementing the suggestions.




"But that four-nap thing—that's the sticking point right now," he said. "That's not something that the community is comfortable with, in my opinion."

The Rainbow Motel has been around since 1954. Its tall sign was reportedly erected in the early 1960s so that motorists on the new Southwest Expressway (which opened in 1964 and was later renamed the Stevenson).

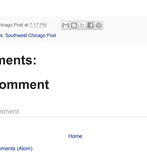
The Rainbow expanded in the 1970s when it absorbed what had been a fast-food restaurant, according to a WBEZ-FM report last year that quoted manager Sagar Patel.

Over the years, its imaginative and occasionally outlandish "theme rooms" have included a pink palace, a space-walk room, Valentine's suite, a Las Vegas room, a "night in Paris" room and more.

Its promotional video describes the Rainbow as "one of Chicago's hottest spots for romantic getaways."

Currently, a four-hour nap can be had for as little as $70. Overnight stays start at $110.

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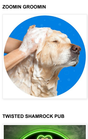
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