

July 5, 2017

To: Ann Arbor Planning Commission
From: Peter Sparling
Re: Distillery Co. as Arts Venue

Dear Planning Commission Members,

As a longstanding community artist and citizen, I urge you to allow the Distilling Co. to be used as a venue rental for special events and stage production. Having been an active member of the Ann Arbor community art scene as Artistic Director of Dance Gallery/Peter Sparling Dance Company, recipient of the 1998 Governor's Michigan Artist Award, and as a professor and mentor to countless students and U-M alumni who have chosen to extend their creative endeavors into the broader Ann Arbor community, I have a long history witnessing the increasing indifference, hypocrisy and lack of accessibility demonstrated by the City Council and the local community for its local arts.

I am appalled by the lip service given to the arts and community support while there is so little to show for it. Our city is losing its young, vital arts scene to surrounding communities as the city is gentrified beyond recognition.

Please consider giving a nod to the local arts and the young performers who are so desperate to share their work with local audiences. Demonstrate your civic pride. Vote to allow the Distillery Co. to serve as one of the few precious remaining venues for small-scale arts presentations.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Peter Sparling
Rudolf Arnheim Distinguished University Professor of Dance
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor of Dance