

# Sixth Street residents complain of late-night noise

*No solution — 2nd meeting with Club Six scheduled*

BY JOHN GOINS

Sixth Street has become the place to be — at night, especially on weekends, if you're young and want to party.

And the most happening place is Club Six at the corner of Stevenson. It's owned by Angel Cruz, who says he bought the place in 2001 and has invested \$1 million in the club, including \$110,000 worth of soundproofing to tone down the 12-speaker sound system that booms out of the basement.

Open every night from 9 p.m. to about 3 a.m., Club Six offers a variety of music from house bands to reggae, with DJs and live performances, plus fashion shows and other hip events. An upstairs lounge has

## SOUTHSIDE

high ceilings and sofas, and in the basement is a dance floor. Capacity: 494.

It's great for young out-of-towners who crowd the place on weekends and spill out on to the sidewalk out front.

But for the residents of nearby SROs, the club is loud and noisy. They say they can't sleep. One of them complained to the police, and others contacted the Central City SRO Collaborative. On Nov. 21, a group met at Club Six with owner Cruz and Capt. Denis O'Leary of Southern Station to air the complaints. About two dozen people were at the meeting.

"My room faces away from the club," said Rick Cleveland, who lives at the 200-room Seneca Hotel across the alley. "I can hear boom! boom! boom! and every lyric they play."

"Buddy, you want to know what it's like? You come here at 3 in the morning," said David Riley, a tenant of the Baldwin House hotel, a few doors down from the Seneca. "It might sound like a lot of fun, but let's face it, you wouldn't want to be here."

Riley carried a petition that included complaints from residents of the Seneca, Hillsdale, Lawrence and Baldwin House hotels.

"I've installed \$110,000 of soundproofing," Cruz said at the meeting, and it included layers of sheet rock for the walls and vinyl curtains for all of the doors.

"At 11 o'clock at night those walls vibrate," said one tenant. "I've called the police several times. Cruz has never been cited."

O'Leary said in a telephone interview there had been only one complaint about noise lodged against Club Six in the last three months.

"We've received 50 to 100 complaints in the last two years," Dwight Saunders, an outreach specialist of the SRO Collaborative, said, adding that about six tenants won a court settlement against Cruz this year because of the noise, he said.

"He's absolutely wrong," Cruz said. "There was no settlement involving half a dozen

people. One person took me to Small Claims Court for a few hundred dollars.

"Club Six gets music lovers. We get a lot of artists and performers. You'll find that Chico's Pizza does a lot of business because of us," Cruz said. "I care about the neighborhood. We respect the residents here. I was born in Harlem — born and raised in the projects. I know what it's like."

Cruz, a board member of the nonprofit Urban Solutions, an organization working to improve the area, also mentioned other businesses in the neighborhood such as the new Mythic Pizza, a storefront in the Seneca across Stevenson alley from Club Six, that benefit from the club's presence.

"Your clientele look like people from suburbia. We don't need people like that coming here — people smoking dope in Jessie Street, people revving their motorcycles," Cleveland said.

"We don't get dopers here," Cruz said. "In five years, we've never had a stabbing, shooting or drug overdose here."

Tenants also complained about the crowded sidewalk in front of the club at night, particularly on weekends.

"If I had the crowds you folks say I have, this place would be a gold mine. And believe me, this place is not a gold mine," Cruz said.

Charles Faison, head of security at the club, said guards constantly patrol Sixth Street to make sure the sidewalk is clear. "If there's a large line in front of the club, we'll move the crowd into Jessie Street," he said.

"To be quite frank, this club has not been a good neighbor," the SRO Collaborative's Saunders said. "These complaints are ongoing. Regulations need to be enforced. You need to do business in a way that's quite different from the way it's been done before. You should be going out of your way to accommodate the neighbors."

Safety Network Organizer Lisa Block, who facilitated the meeting, said the use of sound limiters for the club's music system might address some of the community's concerns.


"A sound limiter puts a ceiling on the output of a sound system so that the overall sound doesn't go above or below a certain level," said Vajra Granelli, the sound inspector for the Entertainment Commission, who also attended the meeting.

Cruz said his club has sound limiters. In an interview after the meeting, Cruz said he didn't think the meeting was fair.

"We bring in a number of people on the weekends who would never make it to Sixth Street. I have the right to run my business as I choose. Club Six has helped to make this neighborhood safe," he said.

There was no clear resolution to the tenants' complaints.

A follow-up meeting will be held at Club Six on Jan. 30 at 7 p.m. ■



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**Health Promotion Forum**  
Topic: Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Speaker: To be decided  
Date/Time: January 10, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

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Topic: Street Drugs and HIV Meds  
Speaker: Jay Fournier, Abbott Labs  
Date/Time: January 24, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

**Client Advisory Panel**  
Come talk with Tenderloin Health's Executive Director and program managers about plans for Tenderloin Health. Also provide input on new services and how we can improve.  
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Stop in/call Emilie (415) 934-1792.

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