



MEETING MINUTES

Liquor Control Board

Wednesday, February 1, 2017 11:30 a.m.

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, Room 2750

Members Present: Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl; Marion Macbeth; Byron Wilson; Dick Peach

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Mario Treto, Theresa Whittington

Others Present: Ramakant Kharel (Red Hot chili Pepper); Peter O'Malley (Class A Amendment); Brian O'Malley (Class A Amendment); Rob Spengler (Little Beans); Sandeep Ghaey

Presiding Member: Local Liquor Control Commissioner Elizabeth Tisdahl/Mayor

CALL TO ORDER

The Local Liquor Control Commissioner Elizabeth Tisdahl called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Little Beans Café Evanston, LLC, Db a Little Beans Café, 430 Asbury Avenue, Evanston, IL 60202

Rob Spengler (RS,) co-owner of Little Beans, requested approval for a Class W liquor license (Indoor Recreation/beer-wine). RS explained that there has been demand from his customers for alcohol, especially for birthday parties. They have turned down customer requests for BYOB. They've discussed obtaining one day liquor licenses for special events but when they heard about the new Class W, they decided an annual would make more sense for a recreational facility like Little Beans. RS stated at present the plan would be to offer alcohol after 3 pm on Fridays, after 11 am Saturdays and after Noon on Sundays. The business closes at 7pm and special events sometimes go as late as 9pm. He is also in favor of a two drink maximum per customer. RS has plans to partner with Temperance Beer to provide beer for Little Beans. Dick Peach likened the scenario to Chuckie Cheese and the fights that have occurred at certain facilities. Rob Spengler responded that the two drink maximum should avoid problems arising from over consumption. Dick Peach then asked if alcohol will be served at the drive-through. RS responded that the drive-through has not been very successful and he has plans to fence it off and convert the drive-through area into an outdoor seating area.

Board members reviewed the application in advance of the meeting and found it all in order. The Local Liquor Control Commissioner asked the members if there were any concerns over the request. None were voiced. The Board recommended issuing a Liquor License to be introduced at the City Council meeting on February 27, 2017.

RHCP Group, LLC Db a Red Hot Chili Pepper Restaurant, 500 Davis Street, #102, Evanston, IL 60201

Ramakant Kharel (RK), owner, requested approval for a Class D liquor license (Restaurant/liquor). RK has owned Mt. Everest restaurant in downtown Evanston for the past 17 years. RK explained that he is opening a second restaurant that focuses on Indo-Chinese fusion cuisine. This cuisine is very popular in India. RK believes it will be a great addition to the Evanston dining scene. The restaurant will have a bar area and an enclosed patio.

Mayor Tisdahl asked about the status of his food license. RK responded that he has not yet applied for the license as the restaurant is still under construction. He anticipates construction to be complete in about 2.5 months. He will apply closer to the end of construction.

Board members reviewed the application in advance of the meeting and found it all in order. The Local Liquor Control Commissioner asked the members if there were any concerns over the request. None were voiced. The Board recommended issuing a Liquor License to be introduced at the City Council meeting on February 27, 2017.

Peter O'Malley (The Second Bottle)

Peter O'Malley (PM) and Brian O'Malley (BM) requested an amendment to Class A liquor license (Restaurant/Beer & Wine Shop/off-site only) to allow for sale and consumption both offsite and onsite for a craft beer specialty shop.

PM described his business as primarily a retail craft beer space. The city code does not appear to have a liquor license that the business would fit into. His son, Brian O'Malley (BO) is a hobby craft brewer and craft brew enthusiast. BO would run the business. BO is a resident of Evanston.

PM acknowledged the great breweries and wine tasting shops in Evanston but feels there is a need for a craft beer specialty shop. PM stated that the craft beer market has increased over 13%. The store would mostly feature craft beer but also sell craft wine, cider and mead. He also wants to allow onsite consumption of the products so customers could try before they buy. He is open to limiting the amount of alcohol that a customer could consume on site. PM thinks it will fill a need of the city and appeal to young professionals.

Marion Macbeth asked about the location. PM explained that they do not yet have a location. They are first addressing an amendment to insure that a license class exists to accommodate the business model. Finding a location, registering a corporation etc. will occur once a viable license class is established.

Dick Peach (DP) asked how this business model is different from a bar. PM responded that the intent is for a customer to taste product and enjoy 1-2 drinks while they shop. Customers will not be encouraged to come to the shop just to stay and drink. There will not be an actual bar, no TV's. BO stated the focus is retail sale. Dick Peach questioned the location of the business. He foresees an issue should it be located in the downtown core area. DP thinks that other Class C and C-1 restaurants might take issue with PM's business being allowed to offer onsite consumption without the requirement to have a kitchen and offer a full menu. Class C/C-1 businesses carry a lot of overhead related to the kitchen requirement. PM stated that they will have snack food. PM stated that the

other distinction is that his is primarily a retail store. DP responded that the proposal is requesting permission for onsite consumption and that other existing core-area business might take issue with that aspect of the business model. Mayor Tisdahl asked if there is a way to write the ordinance so that it addresses these concerns. Mario Treto (MT) responded that it could be written to exclude the downtown core area.

Sandeep Ghaey (SG), owner of Vinic Wine (Class K), asked what the difference is between Class A and Class K and why the business doesn't fit into the Class K license definition. SG noted that Class K already allows for sale of beer and has provisions for tastings/onsite consumption as well. MT highlighted some of the distinctions: Class K has square footage percentages that limit retail sale of beer to only 10% of total square footage; sale hours are 8 am to Midnight; 5,000 sq. ft. maximum and there is not a core-area exclusion. Dick Peach stated that the Class K seems a lot easier to adapt than the Class A. DP thinks all that would need to be altered on the Class K is the square footage allocations for different types of alcohols.

Marion Macbeth stated that she is not in support of excluding certain types of businesses from the downtown core-area. Dick Peach responded that Class C/C-1, are currently restricted to the core-area, and are required to carry extra overhead associated with running full kitchens. Marion Macbeth doesn't think PM's business model truly compares to a Class C or C-1 business.

Mayor Tisdahl directed Mario Treto to draft 1-2 ordinances to be presented and discussed at the next liquor board meeting.

Sandeep Ghaey stated that the class K currently limits the total number of drink for onsite consumption to two. He stated that maintaining this limit might pre-empt any concerns from existing core-area restaurants.

This matter is continued to the subsequent liquor board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by the Local Liquor Control Commissioner Elizabeth Tisdahl, Mayor at 12:02 p.m. February 1, 2017.

Respectfully Submitted,

Theresa Whittington
Liquor Licensing Manager, Legal Department