



WHEATON LOCAL LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

WHEATON CITY HALL, 303 W WESLEY STREET, WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60187

May 13, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL VOTE

Chair Taylor called the May 13, 2021 meeting of the Local Liquor Control Commission to order at 7:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers of the Wheaton City Hall, 303 West Wesley Street and via Zoom.

Upon roll call, the following were present: Commissioner Brown, Chair Taylor, Commissioner Pearse, Commissioner Sender. Absent: Commissioner Wolgemuth. City Staff Present: James P. Kozik, Director of Planning and Economic Development.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 8, 2021

Commissioner Pearse moved and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2021 Local Liquor Control Commission meeting as submitted. On a voice vote, all voted aye.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Application for a Class I Liquor License – Front Street Grill, LLC – Mike Ditka’s Chicago, LLC DBA Front Street Grill – 225 W. Front Street

Mr. Paul Woodard, Vice President of Hospitality Operations and Partner of Ditka’s Restaurants Group was in attendance to present an application for a Class I Liquor License for Front Street Grill, a proposed restaurant to be located at 225 W. Front Street to the Commission.

Mr. Woodard stated that the proposed restaurant, in what was formerly a branch bank facility for Bank of America, will have 164 seats and a patio for outdoor dining.

Mr. Woodard stated that Ditka’s Restaurants Group, who will own the proposed restaurant, currently operates three other restaurants: two under the Ditka’s name in Oak Brook Terrace and Pittsburgh and one under the Grill 89 name in Westmont.

Mr. Woodard stated that in the 26 years the restaurant group has been in business they have only had two minor Liquor License infractions. Mr. Woodard stated that any staff involved in the sale or handling of alcohol will be BASSET trained.

When questioned about an opening date, Mr. Woodard stated they hope to be open in late September or early October.

Hearing no further questions or comments, Commissioner Pearse moved and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to recommend approval of a Class I Liquor License for Front Street Grill, LLC – Mike Ditka’s Chicago, LLC DBA Front Street Grill. On a roll call vote, all voted aye.

Amendment to Sec. 6-87.5 of the Wheaton City Code - Outdoor Special Event Liquor License / Application for an Outdoor Special Event Liquor License - Downtown Wheaton Association – Margarita Crawl

Ms. Elle Withall, Executive Director of the Downtown Wheaton Association was in attendance via Zoom to present an amendment to Sec. 6-87.5 of the Wheaton City Code pertaining to the types of alcohol allowed at outdoor special events and the issuance of Outdoor Special Event Liquor Licenses in connection with two events to be held by the Downtown Wheaton Association (DWA) on June 4, 2021 and July 9, 2021 from 6-9pm to the Liquor Commission.

Ms. Withall stated that the two DWA fundraising events are planned as ticketed margarita tastings. The DWA will sell tasting tickets in advance (\$40 for 12 tastings) to the public on-line. All ticket holders will check in at a location to be determined to be carded and receive a wristband (must be 21 years or older); receive their tasting tickets, souvenir glass, and a walking map of the 12 tasting locations.

Ms. Withall stated that the tasting locations will be inside participating restaurants and selected retailers. The DWA will be purchasing the product and distributing it to the tasting locations. Each location will have a Basset trained person (21 years or older) as the server of the measured tastings. The server will also be responsible for collecting the participant’s tasting ticket.

All tastings will be consumed inside the business premises. Signs will be posted inside the doorways noting that all tastings must be finished inside - no alcohol is allowed outside. At each tasting station, a tray of appetizers will be available to participants to enjoy.

The DWA we will be providing “Call a lift” information and mentioning Uber, Lyft any other ride share programs in their advertising to encourage people to be responsible.

Ms. Withall stated that the in order to accommodate the tastings of the beverage being contemplated, the DWA is proposing an amendment to Section 6-87.5 of the Wheaton City Code pertaining to Outdoor Special Event Liquor Licenses to permit the sale of *alcoholic liquor* (a defined term in the City Code) in lieu of only beer and wine.

The proposed amendment also requires Commission and City Council review and approval of the specific product being offered for sale at an Outdoor Special Event.

In their discussion of the proposed amendment, the Commission suggested adding the words “and quantity” to Subsection (e) of Section 6-87.5 when describing the type of alcoholic liquor to be permitted as a method of placing additional controls in place regarding the sale of alcohol.

Chair Taylor stated that even with such additional language, he would be voting against the proposed amendment.

Hearing no further questions or comments, Commissioner Pearse moved and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to recommend approval of the proposed amendment subject to adding the words “and quantity” to Subsection (e) of Section 6-87.5 when describing the type of alcoholic liquor to be

permitted. On a roll call vote, Chair Taylor voted nay, Commissioners Brown, Pearse and Sender voted aye. The motion was approved 3-1.

Commissioner Brown then moved and Commissioner Sender seconded a motion to recommend approval of the proposed Outdoor Special Event Liquor Licenses as proposed. On a roll call vote, Chair Taylor voted nay, Commissioners Brown, Pearse and Sender voted aye. The motion was approved 3-1.

V. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

There was no miscellaneous business.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:26P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

James P. Kozik, AICP
Director of Planning and Economic Development