

Licensing Committee
Thursday, November 12, 2020, 6:30 PM
***** Minutes *****

Present: Isidro Medina (Chair), Cindy Matos, Robin Cruz, Waldys Cruz, Gerard Dengel, Ashley Fernández, Leo Jiménez, Ángel Vásquez, Marielle Ali

Excused: Gerard Dengel

Board Members: Elizabeth Ritter

Guests: 33rd Precinct: Lieutenant Adam Concepcion, Miguel Acosta, Jason Minter, Nehal Trivedi, Esq, Demetrio Rodriguez, Thomas Bosco, Michael Kelly, Narvilas Kalkin, Arelia Tavares, David Thom, Gabriel Dominguez, Christian Abreu, Carlos Duarte, Altagracia Abreu, Berks Rivera, Maria (Taino Restaurant), Niall Henry, Wendy Hernandez, Jennifer Bristol, Maxelline Compton, Cheryl Miller, Jerry Culligan Jennifer Sanchez, Katherine O'Sullivan, Nancy Preston, Matthew Wemple, Jitlada Solpetch, Thomas Bosco, Carlos Duarte

A. Welcome & Opening Remarks –

Committee Chair Isidro Medina called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm when the quorum was met. Isidro distributed tasks amongst committee members and asked for all members to introduce themselves. He clarified that the decisions made on this committee are suggestions and the final vote lies with the board. Isidro then took a roll call of all restaurants.

Board Member Liz Ritter wanted to urge the committee to include reasons why the committee would oppose or support an application to give the board a more informed reason for their vote.

B. State Liquor Authority Renewal Licenses:

On-Premise Liquor License

1. Saggio Restaurant Inc. dba Saggio – 829 W 181st Street (btw Cabrini Boulevard & Pinehurst Avenue

Merchant: absent

34th Precinct: absent

Public: Board Member Liz Ritter wanted to express her support for this business as they run a good business, keep a clean sidewalk, act as a good neighbor, and encouraged the committee to vote in support of this license.

Committee: No commentary

Vote: passed unanimously

2. 4199 Crystal II Restaurant Corp. dba Guadalupe Bar& Grill – 597 W 207th street (btw Vermilyea Avenue & Broadway)

Merchant: Altagracia Abreu, the owner of Guadalupe, was there to present.

34th Precinct: absent

Public: No commentary

Committee: Isidro mentioned that the 34th Precinct has had no issue with this restaurant in the past and shared that he has had great experiences with this establishment. Angel Vazquez also expressed his support for this restaurant.

Vote: passed unanimously

3. Hudson Fulton Corp. dba Indian Road Café – 600 W 218th street (at the corner of W 218th Street)
 - Merchant:** Jason Minter, the owner, was there to represent this establishment
 - Committee:** No commentary.
 - 34th Precinct:** absent
 - Public:** David Smith, a resident from 218th street, wanted to express his strong support for this restaurant along with Board Member Liz Ritter.
 - Committee:** No Commentary
 - Vote: passed unanimously**

4. 4740 Broadway Restaurant LLC dba Tryon Public House – 4740 Broadway (at the corner of Thayer Street)
 - Merchant:** Owner Niall Henry was there to represent this establishment.
 - 34th Precinct:** absent
 - Public:** Liz Ritter expressed support for this establishment, stating they run a clean business, and if there is noise, they quickly remedy the issue. Nancy Preston voiced her support for this establishment and said they are very good with the neighborhood and units in her complex.
 - Committee:** Isidro encouraged Niall to begin celebrating Latin Heritage events as well as other cultural events (i.e., Dominican Independence Day)
 - Vote: passed unanimously**

5. Punto de Sabor Inc – 1464 Saint Nicholas Avenue (btw W 183rd & W 184th Streets)
 - Merchant:** Nehal Trivedi, Esq is the representative; however, the business was not present. Nehal was unaware of the health code violations
 - 34th Precinct:** Absent
 - Public:** No commentary
 - Committee:** Isidro shared no behavior issues; however, there are several health code violations from June 6, 2018, to the present; there are 8 violations. Evidence of mice, toxic chemicals improperly labeled.
 - Vote: 0-6-2(RP&AV abstained)**

6. Up Thai Corp dba Tung Thong 181 – 812 W181st Street (btw Pinehurst & Ft. Washington Avenues)
 - Merchant:** Jitlada Soipetch is the partner of Tung Thong.
 - 34th Precinct:** absent
 - Public:** Board member Liz Ritter had no objections but just wanted to see the better spacing of tables and sidewalk to make it easier passage.
 - Committee:** Isidro read the resolution from November of 2018 in which the committee had no objections
 - Vote: passed unanimously**

7. Pipo Pool Inc. – 582 W 183rd Street (at the corner of W 183rd Street)
 - Merchant:** Berkis Rivera, the representative for Pipo Pool, was present
 - 34th Precinct:** Absent
 - Public:** No commentary
 - Committee:** The last time this restaurant came to the board, there was no objection
 - Vote: passed unanimously**

C. Renewal of Taxi and Limousine Commission Livery Base License:

8. New Haven Radio Dispatch Corp – 1059 Saint Nicholas Avenue (at the corner of 163rd Street)

Merchant: Demetrio Rodriguez and Donald Amado, President and Manager of New Haven Dispatch, respectively. They've been in business since 2011.

33rd Precinct: No Commentary

Public: No commentary

Committee: No commentary

Vote: passed unanimously

D. State Liquor Authority Method of Operation Change License:

To add DJ

9. Café Mathias Inc. dba Havana Tacos – 210 220 Nagle Avenue (at the corner of Academy Street)

Merchant: Miguel Acosta, the representative of Café Mathias, was present to represent this establishment. Under the previous business, this client was told they could not have a DJ present for at least a year. The client has done so without complaints, 311 calls, or 911 calls, and due to previous stipulations, are petitioning to add a DJ based on their previous good behavior.

Precinct: Not present

Public: Board Member Liz Ritter mentioned that this is an excellent example for establishing themselves as a good business, and it would be appropriate to grant them this next step.

Committee: Isidro went down the Method of Operation questionnaire during the meeting. Isidro shared that there were no issues from the 34th Precinct in previous resolutions.

Vote: passed unanimously

D. State Liquor Authority Corporate Change License

10. Hudson Fulton Corp. dba Indian Road Café –600 W 218th Street (at the corner of W 218th street)

Merchant: Jason Minter, present. This item was discussed and voted on with agenda item #3. He would like to remove Jason Bonter from the license as he has passed away.

34th Precinct: Not present.

Public: No commentary

Committee: No commentary

Vote: passed unanimously

11. Vida Mexicana Inc. dba Papisito Mexican Grill & Agave Bar – 223 Dyckman (btw Seaman Avenue & Broadway)

Merchant: Wendy Hernandez is one of the owners of this establishment (85% ownership). Stela Mateo no longer owns her 50% share. Wendy has been affiliated with the business for 13 years. They have implemented a new security system, hired new managers, and have replaced the staff. They have removed hookah and a DJ that was bringing an unwanted crowd before the COVID-19 shutdown. Since the shutdown, they have complied with the new rules doing their best to serve their clientele safely.

Regarding the 2019 Dyckman shooting, Wendy mentioned that it happened on Broadway, around the Starbucks corner. Still, the incident report has Papisito

responsible for it, as Wendy was the one who called 911 despite the fight being a block away. In response to hookah being witnessed at Papisito, Wendy says it comes from surrounding establishments, namely Tabu and Dyckman Bar. Wendy also mentioned that he is happy to share his camera footage with anyone who wants to see it to prove he does not have hookah.

34th Precinct: Not present

Public: Jennifer Bristol, a community member from the area, shared that Papisito does have hookah as she witnessed it. Wendy later corrected herself and said after watching her video again, it is on the restaurants' border and could be the neighbors' establishment. David Smith asked if there is dancing, live entertainment, and cover charges. Board member Liz Ritter shared her thoughts on this conversation's scope as the application is for a corporate change and not a renewal in the license or a new license or a method of operation change.

Committee: Isidro shared several incidents of fights and wanted further context. Leo shared that he recently visited the establishment and said they had enforced time limits, and social distancing restrictions have been upheld.

Vote: *passed unanimously*

12. D&C Restaurant Bar & Grill Corp. dba La Esquina de Nagua Restaurant – 2244 Amsterdam Avenue (at the corner of W 172nd street)

Merchant: Carlos Duarte wants to sell his shares to another member of the organization, Christian Abreu. Christian Abreu was present and introduced himself. He has been affiliated with the restaurant since 2015 though he started working there full time in September 2020. He joined the Marine Core, but he worked in the restaurant industry when he was not deployed. He worked at The Pier House as a bartender for 6 months in New Jersey but has not been trained and licensed with New York State. Carlos wanted to address the board after the concerns were raised. The noise complaints are from people from the neighborhood who stay outside of the restaurant, and they have stayed in contact with Officer Valentin from the 33rd Precinct. Because of the pandemic, the establishment could not be fumigated per the rules of the pandemic. He also said sanitation is not cooperating with them, the court is closed, and he tried to visit.

33rd Precinct: Lt. Concepcion noted that they tried to make another change, 41 noise complaints in October, when in 2019 they only received 44 total for the year.

Public: No commentary

Committee: Marielle called out the numerous health concerns and violations, food not being kept at the right temperature, sightings of rodents and roaches. Isidro expressed his concern about the increasing noise complaints and health concerns as being an unwise decision. Angel asked if they have been fumigated now, and if they were to open tomorrow, they would pass a sanitation test. Leo suggested they withdraw their application, take a few months to fix the sanitation and noise concerns, and come back and have a better chance at getting your application passed. Marielle echoed Leo's statements and encouraged him to get training as well. Rosy expressed that this is a tough one as it's not a license approval; it's a change in ownership, thus prompting her to vote in favor of this item.

Vote: 1-0-6 (RP voted Yes)

13. Hallacas Corp dba Juniors Tacos – 253-257 Sherman Avenue (at the corner Isham Street)

Merchant: Miguel Acosta is the representative for Junior Tacos. Scarlet Rosa is now 100% owner. She was previously 25%, Danny Tavares is selling his 25% to Scarlet, which makes her now 100% owner. Miguel Acosta mentioned that Danny and Maria Tavares were operating the establishment at the time of those incidents and were not in the restaurant to provide oversight.

34th Precinct: absent

Public: No commentary

Committee: Isidro cited that there have been a few violations of an underage sale, which Miguel clarified in the statements above.

Vote: *passes unanimously*

F. State Liquor Authority Alteration License

Addition of the adjacent storefront to enlarge space

14. 839 W 181 Food Inc dba Le Cheile – 830 W 181st Street (at the corner of Pinehurst Avenue)

Merchant: Claire Donnelly, manager at Le Cheile, wants to expand the establishment into the adjacent space to get more tables and chairs and room at the bar for bar stools.

34th Precinct: no comment

Public: no comment

Committee: Robin Cruz shared that he has frequented Le Cheile, and they take temperature, have good service, and are enforcing social distancing requirements. Isidro and Angel echoed his sentiments.

Vote: *passed unanimously*

G. State Liquor Authority New Licenses

On-Premise Liquor License

15. Mama Taco LLC dba Mama Taco – 5025 Broadway (at the corner of W215th Street)

Merchant: Rose Rodriguez, part-owner of Mama Taco and Nathaniel Valerio, the other 50%. Rose is a lifelong resident of CB12, has worked in the restaurant industry for a long time, and wants to start at 11 am instead of 12 pm due to COVID restrictions. They emphasized that this is supposed to be a family environment. Nathaniel

34th Precinct: not present

Public: Martin Collins sent in his concerns on the time of operations with the establishment. This is in a 7 story building, and to have music until 2 am can cause some challenges with residents. Nancy Preston asked if they wanted to create a family environment why they don't apply for a wine and beer license than just a full license, to which Nathaniel responded. David Tom wanted to clarify that there is no connection between Mamajuana to Mama Sushi. Historically, there have been issues with this business no matter the restaurant and encouraged them to consider closing earlier as this is a residential area. Maxine Palanti, another resident, believes that 1 is on a weeknight is too late to stay open to, and there was no response from the owners.

Committee: Isidro recommended that they alter the hours and not stay open so late on the weekdays. He suggested 11 am-1 am on Sundays thru Thursdays and 11 am-2 pm on Fridays and Saturdays. He also wanted to add that they put an excellent neighbor sign and a phone number for supervising the business. Leo recommended they get a sound limiter, and Isidro asked they provide proof of purchase by 11/20 by 5 pm to the Community Board. Robin Cruz suggested the business owners do a 7 days a week 1 am closing time, whereas Rosy believed

that 2 am was an appropriate time to close for a weekend and 12 am closing time on weekdays.

Vote: Passed unanimously

16. Jarabacoa Restaurant LLC dba El Nuevo Taino – 2228 Amsterdam Avenue (btw W 170th & W 171st Streets)

Merchant: Maria Rivera, the owner, was present to represent this business. She is looking to transfer the license from the old owner to her name. Maria will have ownership of the license but has no experience serving alcohol. She is keeping the bartending staff who have permits to operate.

33rd Precinct: Lt. Concepcion expressed no issues with this business. There are 10 noise complaints from the area a year.

Public: no comment

Committee: Isidro walked through their questionnaire to verify all the information was correct.

Vote: passed unanimously

17. Nava Seafood Corp – 366 Audubon Ave (btw W 183rd & W 184th Streets)

Merchant: Miguel Acosta was present to represent this establishment.

34th Precinct: not present

Public: no comment

Committee: no comment

Vote: passed unanimously

18. La Cantina Heights Eatery Group dba La Cantina Heights – 4460 Broadway (at the corner of Fairview Avenue)

Merchant: Miguel Acosta, representative, and Angel Tejada, current operator, were present for this call. In the last renewal, Angel had had no issues or complaints. He worked during the pandemic and remained in compliance with COVID-19 regulations. Angel has to sell his license because he has suffered greatly by the pandemic as far as financials go. He was denied the SBA loan and received no other funding. Angel's peer will be taking over the license contingent upon Angel continuing to manage the business' day to day operations. Joshua Sanchez will be the new owner, but he was not online at this agenda item.

34th Precinct: not present

Public: No commentary

Committee: No commentary

Vote: passed unanimously

19. KOKO Seafood Salad Grill, Inc – 92 Nagle Avenue (btw Ellwood Street & Sickles Street)

Merchant: Arelia Tavares was present to represent this establishment. They are looking to renew their wine and beer license and re-certify their 30 day notice per the State Liquor Authority. This application was presented last year, and there was no objection. The sound limiter has been properly installed, no third party promotion, and no live music. Hours of operation are M-F 7 am-2 am with a capacity of 74. They have had no incidents at the location since the events in 2018.

34th Precinct: not present; reports from previous years indicated a few altercations

Public: not present

Committee: Leo Jimenez expressed his support of this business as he lives nearby and confirms it is a family run business with good service.

Vote: passed unanimously

20. La Base Sports Grill Inc. dba El Conaco Restaurant – 65 Sherman Avenue (at the corner of Thayer Street)
Withdrawn at meeting

21. Arthur Café and Billiard Room Inc – 90 Nagle Avenue (btw Ellwood & Sickles Street)
Merchant: Arelia Tavares was present to represent this establishment for their wine and beer license. They will have a jukebox, DJ and has appropriately been soundproofed. There will be no third party promotion and no security personnel with a capacity of 74.
34th Precinct: not present
Public: no commentary
Committee: no commentary
Vote: *passed unanimously*

H. New Business/Adjournment