

Licensing Committee
Wednesday, March 10th, 2021, 6:30 PM
Board Office
***** Minutes *****

Present: Isidro Medina (Chair), Gerald Dengel (Asst. Chair), Marielle Ali, Robin Cruz, Waldys Cruz, Ashley Fernandez, Leo Jimenez, Rosie Perez, Angel Vasquez, Cindy Matos

Absent: None

Translator: Oswaldo Coello

Other Board Members: Gabriela Estrella

CB12 Staff Present: Shinelle Paniagua

Guests: **33rd Precinct:** P.O. Brown, P.O. Farley. **34th Precinct:** Lt. Taveras & P.O. Ames. Owner of AC Weirton: Andrew Castelli. Owner of Taco Inn: Margarita Ortes. Arelia Taveras and Owner of Budda Corp: Guillermo Gonzalez. Residents: Mary. Eileen King. Yubi, Debra Klaber, Ada Graciano, Elena S. Davila, Tara W. Peata, Sandy Mendosa, Kevin Shum, Jerry Culligan, OmDigna Mola, Maria Boustead, Cheryl Miller.

A. Welcome & Opening Remarks –

Committee Chair Isidro Medina called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM. Isidro reminded attendees that translation services are available and introduced the translator, Jerry. He also discussed the NY State's allowance of indoor dining at 50% capacity for restaurants citywide and reiterated the importance of social distancing and wearing masks so that we can continue moving in the right direction. He then distributed tasks amongst committee members and asked for all members to introduce themselves.

B. State Liquor Authority Renewal Licenses:

On-Premise Liquor License

1. Yudit Restaurant Inc. dba Lulo Restaurant – 1626 Saint Nicholas Avenue (bte W. 191st & 192nd Street). NY, NY 10033.

Withdrew prior to the meeting

2. AC Weirton 137 LLC dba Penny Jo's. – 3898 Broadway, store #1 (at the corner of 163rd Street) NY, NY 10032

Owner: Andrew Castelli introduces himself. Isidro Medina confirms applicant has submitted a complete application to the board. AC Weirton 137 LLC also has an "A" Grade from the Health Inspection. The Community Board on their last renewal approved the applicant on June 27th, 2017. 0 employees infected by Covid-19. Owner is still waiting for the certificate from the SLA.

33rd Precinct: Officer Brown stated they have no issues or complaints with AC Warton 137 LLC and that this is a model establishment with no complaints

Residents: none

Committee Members: Marielle Ali echoed the 33rd 's precinct compliments on the establishment. Also thanked the owner for properly displaying the 30 day notice.

Committee Vote:

Yes: *IM,*

No: -

Abstain: -

TOTAL: *7-0-0*

C. State Liquor Authority Class Change License:

On-Premise Liquor License

3. Taco Inn Corp, dba Taco Inn – 1495 Saint Nicholas Avenue (at the corner of 185th Street) NY, NY 10033.

Committee Members: Isidro Medina comments that the applicant has perhaps the best authentic Mexican restaurant in upper Manhattan, service is second to none and very fair price. The applicant has no prior issues or complaints, provide “great food”, and has an “A Grade” from the Health Inspection.

34th Precinct: Officer Ames states The NYPD has no issues with the applicant since they only received (4) 311 calls complaints about loud music with a DJ.

Residents: none

Committee Members: Isidro Medina reiterates that the establishment has no history of issues or complaints, and they are a good neighbor. Taco Inn also has an “A Grade” from the last Health Inspection. Gerard asked if the business has DJ on their method of operations. Two stipulations: 1) is to display a phone number of a contact/manager in front of establishment in case residents have any concerns. 2) To display a sign of “No Double Parking.” to prevent cars from double parking and noise issues.

Owner: Margarita Ortez indicated that she hopes to open the business soon to service our community to bring a family oriented authentic Mexican restaurant. She stated that the loud noise complaints come from outside of the establishment when cars park around the business with very loud music because the do not have DJ.

Committee Vote:

Yes: *IM, GD, CM, RC, WC, MA, RP, LJ, AV*

No: -

Abstain: -

TOTAL: *9-0-0*

D. State Liquor Authority Alteration License:

On-Premise Liquor License

4. Taco Inn Corp, dba Taco Inn – 1495 Saint Nicholas Avenue (at the corner of

185th Street) NY, NY 10033.

Committee Members: This is a second expansion of the business.

Owner: Margarita Ortiz indicated that she expanded the business and wanted to follow the SLA's requirement to notify the Community Board about the expansion and hopes to have Mariachis band once the pandemic is over. She is happy that she would be able to hire more employees even when lots of people lost their jobs. She started with 3 employees and now has 20 employees and the idea is to provide a better ambiance to the clients.

34th Precinct: Officer Ames states The NYPD has no objections with the applicant

Residents: none

Committee Vote:

Yes: *IM, GD, CM, RC, WC, MA, RP, LJ* (Angel was not present for this vote)

No: -

Abstain: -

TOTAL: 8-0-0

E. State Liquor Authority New License:

On-Premise Liquor License

5. Budda Corp. – 1654 Saint Nicholas Avenue (at the corner of 193rd Street) NY, NY 10033.

Owner/ Representative: Arelia Taveras, representing Budda Bar. Owner: Guillermo Gonzalez. Arelia indicated that she wants to work with the residents and that she would like to meet with Gabriela and residents. Arelia indicated that she collected over 200 signatures from residents in the area. CB12 did not receive copies of the signatures. Arelia stressed the point that if the SLA hears that the residents do not want to meet with the merchant, the SLA might approve the license and the residents would not have a saying on the matter and might not impose any stipulations on the license.

34th Precinct: Officer Ames states that historically 193rd has been a really difficult area with double-parking issue and adding this establishment would exacerbate the problem. Disorderly groups in the area add to the problems around that area and that they oppose this application.

Board members: Gabriella Estrella appreciates the comments from the 34th precinct and she voices her opposition to the establishment to get a liquor license because of double parking, noise, schools nearby and churches that are nearby and is curious as to who signed the petition

Residents: Mary indicated that it was blatantly false of the signature collection and that there was no public sign posted on the front of the establishment as required and opposes the application. Eileen indicated that a letter was circulated to the Board; the committee members did not receive

the letter. Budda has not shown good intentions and that the focus is late entertainment. Deborah also stated her opposition to this application. Yubi, a resident wrote a comment on the chat opposing the application as well. **Committee Members:** Isidro Medina asked Shinelle Paniagua if the staff received the floor plan and the menu and she concurred that they received these documents. The applicant came last month and the committee rejected the application and it was recommended to meet with neighbors to see if there can be a compromise. Marielle Ali pointed out that there are many issues around the area but that an opportunity has to be given to a business that wants to open and prove themselves to be worthy of the liquor license approval and that a better effort had to be made in reaching out to the residents. Gerard echoed Marielle's comments about the lack of reaching out to residents. Robin Cruz stated that we need to look for ways to support businesses and that we cannot prove or disprove the signatures that Arelia speaks about. Angel Vazquez asked if it was within Committee purview to ask for signatures. The representative was asked if they would withdraw and have a conversation with the residents of the building to which she opposed and the committee proceeded to vote on the matter.

Committee Vote:

Yes: RC, RP

No: IM, MA

Abstain: GD, CM, WC, LJ, AV

TOTAL: 2-2-5

Beer & Wine License

6. Fusion Eatery Inc. – 3805 10th Avenue (at the corner of 204th Street). NY, NY 10040.

Withdrew at the meeting

Meeting was adjourned at 8:17 pm. Minutes respectfully submitted by: Isidro Medina.