

Minutes
Alcoholic Beverage Licensing (ABL) Committee
Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 6A
November 20, 2018

Pursuant to notice duly given, a meeting of the Alcoholic Beverage Licensing Committee (“Committee”) of ANC 6A was held commencing at 7:00 pm on October 16, 2018 at Sherwood Recreation Center, 640 Tenth (10th) Street NE, Washington, DC 20002.

Committee Members Present: Jay Williams (Co-Chair), Roger Caruth, and Michael Herman.

Committee Members Absent: Christopher Seagle (Co-Chair), Mark Samburg, and Justin Rzepka.

Commissioners Present: None.

Community Members Present: Harkesh Manocha (Cheers DC!), Vic Ketso (Cheers DC!), and Pankaj Bhatia (Cheers DC!).

I. Call to Order

Mr. Williams called the meeting to order at 7:35pm (due to confusion with representatives of Cheers DC! regarding the start time of the meeting. The meeting proceeded with a quorum present.

II. Community Comment

None.

III. Old Business

None.

IV. New Business

A. Discussion of new license application of S-Square, LLC t/a Cheers DC! at 1402 H Street, NE (ABRA # 111599) (Retailer Class A Liquor Store).

- Mr. Bhatia stated that the main focus of the business partners was to get into a neighborhood to bring a new, supportive business to the community. The owners are excited about coming onto H Street and serving the neighborhood.
- Mr. Bhatia stated that they have opened similar businesses in other neighborhoods that would be considered “up and coming.”
- Mr. Bhatia stated that he, Mr. Ketso, and Mr. Manocha are friends and business partners. Mr. Bhatia has some experience in IT, and this is not his primary business. The focus of the business will be on serving the community.
- The owners stated that they are part of six (6) locations in the DC area, and that Mr. Ketso has more than 20 years’ experience running this type of business.
- Mr. Ketso stated that he intends for the location to be a clean, well-kept, uncluttered space.
- Mr. Manocha said that while they plan to offer quality products, they expect to keep the prices reasonable.
- Mr. Williams asked what other locations they had in DC. Mr. Bhatia said that they have a location at 9th Street and Kennedy Street NW, and other locations in Prince Georges County.
- Mr. Herman noted that in a handout, there was an illustration of outdoor seating, and asked if they planned to utilize it. Mr. Ketso stated that the mockup is from when the building owner was pitching the space as a restaurant. The

establishment will not use the outdoor space; it may be used if a restaurant adjacent to them opens.

- Mr. Williams asked what the expected timeline was. Mr. Ketso said he hoped to be open as soon as they complete a buildout, which will take approximately two months from receiving the license.
- Mr. Williams asked the owners if they would be willing to discuss a settlement agreement. Mr. Bhatia stated that they would and would also be open to addressing issues if they come up in real time.
- Mr. Caruth asked who would be responsible for running the establishment on a day-to-day basis. Mr. Manocha said that he would.
- Mr. Bhatia stated that if you want to get a sense of what type of neighbor they are, look at what the area was like at their other DC location before they came in, and then after. He stated that there was a lot of improvement. Mr. Manocha stated that they have been recognized in the past by ABRA for running a good business.

Mr. Williams moved/seconded by Mr. Herman, to recommend that the ANC protest the license application of Cheers DC! at 1402 H Street, NE (ABRA # 111599) unless a signed settlement agreement is submitted prior to the protest date. The motion passed 3-0.

V. Adjourn

The Committee adjourned at 7:41 pm.