



Chairperson, Martha Taylor

The City of New York
Borough of Queens

Community Board 8

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District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

Liquor License Committee Meeting

Date: Tuesday, January 10, 2017
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Community Board 8 Office
197-15 Hillside Avenue
Hollis, NY 11423

Michael Hannibal, *Liquor License Committee Chair*

Board Members: Dr. Allen Bennett, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, James Gallagher Jr., Robert Harris, Michael Hannibal, Tami Hirsch, Frank Magri, Tammy Osherov, Steven Sadofsky, Harbachan Singh, Martha Taylor.

Also in attendance: Blossom Ho, Applicant Representative – Bar Mayflower
Shengming Shi, Esq., Applicant Attorney – Bar Mayflower
David Noh representing Assembly Member Barry Grodenchik
Michael Favilla representing NY State Senator Toby Ann Stavisky
Jackson Wessells representing Senator Tony Avella
Marie Adam-Ovide, Community Board 8 District Manager
Jatna Reyes, Community Board 8 Staff

Liquor License Committee Chair Michael Hannibal called this meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. This was followed by self-introductions of all Board Members, staff and others present.

Purpose:

This is to introduce the applicants to the Community Board to make them aware of the expectations of the Board for businesses with on-premises liquor licenses. This establishment is applying for a full liquor license for a Hotel/Restaurant.

I. Bar Mayflower
61-27 186th Street, Fresh Meadows, NY 11365

Michael Hannibal –

What type of establishment will this be?

Answer: [Blossom Ho] – This establishment will be a hotel.

Do you have a Certificate of Occupancy?

Answer: [Blossom Ho] – Yes. I have copies. (Copies of the C of O were distributed)

What is the maximum occupancy for the hotel?

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – One-hundred and fifty-nine (159) persons permitted.

Then you will need an Assembly Permit.

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – As far as I know, we will not need an Assembly Permit because the occupancy for the bar is under 75.

So the one-hundred and fifty-nine (159) persons permitted is not for the bar?

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – No, it is for the rooms.

What will be the hours of operation for the bar?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – From 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. This will be for our hotel guests only.

So outsiders cannot walk-in and ask for drinks at the bar?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – For now yes, for in-house guests only.

When you say for now, what do you mean by that? Can you clarify that?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – We are planning to have it for in-house guests only. If the business goes well and we have external inquiries from the neighborhood we will reconsider it. The franchise standard is for in-house only.

How do you intend to prevent underage drinking?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – The lobby and the front desk are an open space. We will put a sign in the bar area that will state that only people over 21 years of age are allowed. Photo ID will be required at all times to confirm age.

Since the bar is inside, will smoking be allowed on premises?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – There will be no smoking inside. We have ashtrays outside. We will have the guests who smoke go outside but not too close to the hotel.

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – We will have a no smoking sign in the lobby and we will designate a special area for smoking outside of the hotel.

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – Regarding the cleanliness of the hotel, we will have housekeeping in the morning and afternoon.

Mr. Hannibal opened the meeting for questions from the Board Members. He asked that everyone limit themselves to one question since there were many of them present.

Carolann Foley –

I have a question about the quality of life in Fresh Meadows. You are starting out with less than 75 patrons in the bar. You stated that there is a possibility of opening to the general public. I'm not very happy about that. You don't have adequate security. A cocktail lounge is one thing but a bar in the center of the community just doesn't sit well. I'm all for a hotel and a cocktail lounge so you can continue your business. Without the security and proper training to ID people, it will be difficult to watch over an entire lobby that will not be perfectly closed off. There are a lot of things involved when you say you are going to open it to the public. There are families with children living there. You don't have proper parking available. You didn't bring forth to us the security plans that you might have lined up. I

think a bar/cocktail lounge in a hotel is very appropriate for our community. As far as opening it up to the general public, I think you'll be doing damage to the community.

Michael Hannibal –

Carolann do you have a question?

Answer: *[Carolann Foley]* – No, I am sorry I don't. I just had to say this.

Just a statement. Okay.

Steven Sadofsky –

I wanted to know about the hotel facility, so far we are discussing the bar for the Liquor License. Does the hotel have any other facilities? In other words, would you be able to do weddings or is there a party room?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – For right now, we only have guest rooms.

Is the bar downstairs with the restaurant?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – Right.

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – Let me clarify. The bar is not open to the public. It is only for the guests who stay in the hotel. Outside people cannot walk in and buy a drink and go.

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – If there is a community expectation for no external business then we will emphasize to the franchisee that we want to keep it for the guests only.

Frank Magri – Is the lobby of the hotel open for public access?

Carolann Foley – Do they have security there?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – We have the security. Also, when a guest want to buy a drink from the bartender, we will ask them to show their room key and identification. We will check in the system if the room key matches the guest that is staying in that room.

So you said that the maximum persons allowed in the cellar is one hundred and fifty-nine (159). Does that include staff?

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – Yes.

Only one-hundred and fifty-nine (159) persons are going to be in the hotel?

Answer: *[Steven Sadofsky]* – No, the ground floor only.

Do you own any other establishments?

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – Yes. Mayflower. We have another hotel. It's a Howard Johnson hotel.

Where is that?

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – In Long Island City.

Where in Long Island City?

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – 38-59 12th Street, Long Island City. My client opened this hotel in 2014. It's been operating for over two (2) years now. They have the experience for hotel management. They also have a five-star hotel in China.

Harbachan Singh –

Two part question. What is the relationship of Mayflower Business Group with Wyndham Hotels?

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – Mayflower Business Group is the owner of the hotel. Wyndham is the franchisor. As a franchisee, we pay them loyalty every year and use their system to train our staff and provide other services.

Does it have a termination? The relationship?

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – I think it's long term for at least ten (10) years with a franchise agreement.

Second part of the question. Would you be serving food in the bar? If so, what will be the percentage of the liquor sales?

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – I will say liquor sales would be a very small part. Usually we serve breakfast for the guests.

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – It is also under the franchise standards that we provide breakfast. At the bar it is actually two different areas. The bar is actually at the lobby and the breakfast area is in the basement.

What is the percentages [of revenue through liquor sales]? Did you make an assessment?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – Not right now. The guests will decide whether or not they want to have the breakfast. We haven't gotten into the assessment part yet for the bar because we filed according to the franchise standard. We should have that percentage after we run for a couple of months.

Answer: *[Shengming Shi]* – Roughly I'll say about 10-15%.

James Gallagher Jr. –

We have a lot of concerns in the community. The first concern is that it is not turned into a cabaret later on. Hotels opened in Downtown Flushing turned into cabarets. Will you have a bar on the roof top with all those lights? It looks like something out of Las Vegas. It really doesn't belong in a residential community. We have asked you to sit down with us numerous times and you haven't.

Michael Hannibal –

Jim, excuse me. One question that relates to the bar.

James Gallagher Jr. –

On the first floor, the third floor we were told that was going to be a community facility where we can have our meetings. Now it is going to be a bar on the first floor?

Answer: *[Carolann Foley]* – He is talking about the first and third floor, what floor is he at?

Answer: *[Steven Sadofsky]* – What floor are you talking about?

Okay. If you look at the form right here.

Answer: *[Carolann Foley]* – They are here for a Liquor License.

Answer: *[Steven sadofsky]* – Just the Liquor License that's it.

Well I have a lot of concerns about it.

Michael Hannibal –

Understood, but we don't want to go off track.

Answer: *[James Gallagher Jr.]* – They have so many building violations on this property.

Carolann Foley –

That has nothing to do with the State Liquor Authority (SLA).

Martha Taylor –

Excuse me, I want to make a clarification. All of their building violations have been cured.

Answer: *[James Gallaher Jr.]* – Doesn't show that on the internet.

The people at Department of Buildings have told us that. Whether it is shown on the internet or not, they have paid their fines and all of their violations have been cured.

Carolann Foley –

That's not what we are here for. We are here for a Liquor License.

Steven Sadofsky –

They are here for a Liquor License. None of that matters.

Answer: *[Martha Taylor]* – Correct.

Dr. Allen Bennett –

I came late so I missed all the fun. I'll pass.

Answer: *[Michael Hannibal]* – Okay.

Officer Peter Capozzi – Anything that has to do with a bar we always want to make sure that you have everything correct. You will be tested so make sure you have ID scanners at all times to verify age.

Tami Hirsch –

I wish you good luck! I am just worried. Where are you getting your guests from?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – From the franchise marketing. The Fresh Meadows area has two really good colleges; St. John's University and Queens College. There are a lot of people who come here to do the campus tours so we want to provide a really good environment for the parents. We are also targeting companies that may want to move away from the City. that we can also have them as guests and for the people who are willing to explore more about this area.

Tammy Osherov –

This will not be a dorm, so we don't have to worry about students?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – No.

Answer: *[Steven Sadofsky]* – What does that have to do with the Liquor License?

Answer: *[Tammy Osherov]* – Well if it was it would, so that's fine.

Kevin Forrestal –

Can you describe the bar in more detail? It sounds like an open floor plan without a physical separation. Are you having mini bars in the rooms?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – No. *(Ms. Ho drew a sketch of the lobby and the bar for the Board Members)* Even though it is an open space, I will have a sign as a divider to distinguish between the lobby and the bar. This would let the guests know that this is an area for guests over twenty-one (21) only.

The only thing I suggest is having some sort of a division with planters or something, not just a sign so that you don't have children running through.

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – I'll see what else we can do in addition to a sign.

Martha Taylor –

I am going to try to put this in the form of a question. The franchise that must be strictly adhered to and has many rules as I understand. They train you and you have to operate the way they tell you to. This is hypothetical, if you should decide at some point that you want to let the public in, do you have to get the franchise permission?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – Of course. We have a contract that we will follow the franchise standard that’s why we need to include the bar. Under the franchise standard we need to have a bar.

Answer: *[Martha Taylor]* – You need to have a bar in a hotel of course.

Kevin Forrestal –

Are there going to be mini bars in the rooms?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – No.

Blossom Ho –

We are planning to have our Grand Opening day on Tuesday, January 31, 2017. According to the franchise standard it is Monday, January 23, 2017. According to them you can’t see the hotel yet in case we have other things to finalize before the Grand Opening Day.

Robert Harris –

We had the question before about students and it applies to the bar. We were told years ago that students will be coming here and staying there at the hotel. Are students going to be coming or not?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – For now I haven’t heard anything like that. We are a hotel that is going to be open to the public not just for students. I am also the manager of the hotel there and if we only target students that would limit our business from growing.

Michael Hannibal –

Let me clarify, what Bob (*Robert Harris*) was just saying. At one time your base was going to be just students. It is not that. Is it just going to be for families and whoever wants to stay at that hotel?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – Yes.

How does the hotel, now that it is in a residential area, is plan to support and actually see itself as part of the Fresh Meadows community? Can you give us any idea of what your vision is or what the objectives are to that end?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – As I said before I am also a hotel manager. On the very first day that I took this job, I posted my recruiting information to the two colleges. I really want to recruit people from the neighborhood. This is good for the hotel and for the neighborhood. It will give me more flexibility to handle the operation. We will do our best to provide the best quality accommodations when they stay here in Fresh Meadows.

Shengming Shi –

The primary targeted guests are the tourists from two nearby airports: JFK and LaGuardia. The hotel is located in a better position. It is not far away. In the future, the hotel will provide a shuttle bus from the hotel to the airports. It will also be open to the public but they will have to pay a fee. Discounts will also be provided to people from the community.

Tami Hirsch –

Do you have handicap accessibility?

Answer: *[Blossom Ho]* – We have four (4).

Carolann Foley made a motion to accept the application for a Liquor, Wine, Beer and Cider License for Bar Mayflower located at 61-27 186th Street in Fresh Meadows, seconded by Steven Sadofsky.

Votes in favor: 10

Votes against: 2

Board Members who voted in favor: Dr. Allen Bennett, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Michael Hannibal, Tami Hirsch, Frank Magri, Tammy Osherov, Steven Sadofsky, Harbachan Singh, Martha Taylor.

Board Members who voted against: James Gallagher Jr. and Robert Harris.

Michael Hannibal congratulated the applicants and suggested that they stay in contact with the 107th Precinct and make sure they also reach out to Carolann Foley who is the President of the 107th Precinct Community Council and should they encounter any issues to always contact the Community Board for help.

Martha Taylor suggested that Ms. Ho look into all the cultural places that we have in this Borough and have information for their guests. She informed her that there is a Tourist Bureau at the Queens Borough President's Office. She suggested that she get in contact with them and find things of interest that their guests can do right in the neighborhood.

Carolann Foley made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:05 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jatnna Reyes, Community Board 8 Staff
January 23, 2017*