

City of Northville
Liquor License Review Committee
August 1, 2011

Call to Order

The meeting of the Liquor License Review Committee was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the City of Northville Municipal Building, City Council Chambers, 215 West Main Street, Northville, Michigan, 48167.

It was noted that Councilmember Michele Fecht and Commissioner John Buckland were present. Mayor Pro Tem James Allen was not present and was noted as absent/excused.

Also present were City Manager Patrick Sullivan, City Clerk Dianne Massa, Police Chief Gary Goss, representatives from Northville Cider Mill and Northville Brewing Company, and one citizen.

Public Comments

None

Approval of Minutes

Motion Buckland, seconded by Fecht to approve the June 6, 2011 minutes as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing - Request to Add Location and Outdoor Service for Northville Cider Mill and Northville Brewery, 630 and 714 Baseline

On August 3, 2009, at the recommendation of the Liquor License Review Committee, City Council adopted a resolution recommending a transfer of ownership of the Northville Cider Mill to Robert and Carina Nelson (transferred from his parents). The resolution and adjoining investigation was sent to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC). Since that time, at the direction of the MLCC, the Northville Brewing Company L.L.C., owned by Robert and Carina Nelson, requests to transfer ownership from Northville Cider Mill Inc. (owned by the parents of Robert Nelson) and add an additional location for their tasting room located at 714 Baseline by including the building at 630 Baseline. Additionally, they request to add three outdoor service areas along with an Entertainment Permit.

The MLCC determined that a second resolution for the change of ownership was necessary as the Northville Cider Mill was incorporated and the Northville Brewing Company is a Limited Liability Company (LLC), which represents a change of ownership.

The applicants completed the Liquor License Review Committee Application indicating the intention to operate the two locations as full service wine tasting bars serving wine made on their premises. In addition, they request three outdoor service areas:

- Location #1: adjacent to the 630 Baseline address (primary tasting room)
- Location #2: adjacent to the seasonal tasting room at the 714 address
(Both of these addresses are located on the Northville Cider Mill property)
- Location #3: located on the north lawn of the property adjacent to Baseline and in
between the primary and seasonal tasting rooms

The applicants plan a limited food menu and patrons may sample wine or purchase wine by the glass. Bottled wine will be available for consumption off-premises. The applicants plan to provide acoustic entertainment (i.e., guitar or piano). The owners have requested an Entertainment Permit; however, it is not necessary for the type of entertainment listed in their Plan of Operation and is not recommended.

The hours of operation will be Monday through Thursday from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to Midnight and Sunday from Noon until 5:00 p.m. The Police Department has conducted a thorough background investigation on both owners and can find no reason to object to an approval of their requests. Proper notice has been given to surrounding residents and businesses in accordance with City ordinance.

City Administration explained that the request will need further review as the existing cider mill building is grandfathered as a non-conforming use in a PR-1 zoning district. However, the request for a change in operation at the Cider Mill is an expansion of a non-conforming use. The current industrial zoning does not allow this type of commercial operation. City staff noted the request will require further review by the Planning Commission for a possible change in zoning or a variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Public hearing opened at 7:02 p.m.

Steve Barth, city resident, voiced support of the Cider Mill, noting that he enjoys the activity associated with "cider mill" activity. However, he was not in support of the proposed plan to expand the operations to allow for alcohol consumption in three separate areas that are less than 150 feet from residential property. Barth also voiced concern with the increase in traffic as well as traffic that would include intoxicated persons. He is supportive of wine bars and wine tasting; however, not at this location.

In response to a question from the LLRC, the Nelsons explained that serving food is required in order to be in compliance with the MLCC license. The type of food planned includes cheese, pate, crackers, and possibility sandwiches. The Nelsons also noted that the Cider Mill has been licensed to sell wine since 1981 and there have been no incidents or complaints regarding this part of the business. The Cider Mill's proximity to residential homes is similar to that of the downtown bars and restaurants that serve alcohol. In addition, it was noted that the larger outdoor seating area would only be used for special events, such as an art fair.

Further comments from Barth noted that he did not believe that alcohol service in the downtown (and the downtown's proximity to residential homes) was an accurate comparison. He voiced the belief that alcohol service at the Cider Mill would have a negative impact on safety in the area.

Being no further comments, the public hearing closed at 7:14 p.m.

Motion Buckland, seconded by Fecht to recommend that City Council table the request submitted by Northville Brewing Company, LLC to transfer ownership of 2010 Small Wine Maker license from Northville Cider Mill, Inc.; the request that the Small Wine Maker license include a building located at 630 Baseline Northville, and the request for the three outdoor seating areas, until the request for a change in operation is reviewed by the Planning Commission or the Board of Zoning Appeals. **Motion carried unanimously.**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Massa
City Clerk

Approved as submitted: 1/17/2012