

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE AND CANNABIS BOARD
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MEETING

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IN THE MATTER OF: :

Sandlot, LLC :
t/a Sandlot Anacostia :
633 Howard Road SE : Fact Finding
Retailer Caterer - : Hearing
ANC 8A :
License No. 122231 :
:
(Review Application for :
Relocation of Catering :
License) :
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Wednesday
May 6, 2026

The Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis
Board met via WebEx videoconference, Chairperson
Donovan W. Anderson presiding.

PRESENT:

DONOVAN W. ANDERSON, Chairperson
RYAN JONES, Member
DAVID MEADOWS, Member
TERI JANINE QUINN, Member

ALSO PRESENT:

JOSE ORELLANA, DC ABCA Staff
IAN CALLENDER, Licensee

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 11:10 p.m.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. The
4 next case in our calendar, we have another fact
5 finding hearing. It's Sandlot Anacostia, License
6 Number 122231. Mr. Orellana, can you please
7 elevate the rights of the licensee in this case?

8 MR. ORELLANA: Sure thing. Ian
9 Callendar, access elevated. That is all, Chair.

10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Good morning, sir.
11 Can you, Mr. Callender, can you please spell and
12 say your name for the record?

13 MR. CALLENDER: Yes, good morning. My
14 name is Ian Callender, I-A-N C-A-L-L-E-N-D-E-R.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Good
16 morning, sir. All right. Just give me one
17 minute, sir. Please give me a minute. All right.

18 We decided to have a fact finding here today,
19 sir, because we need to get some clarification.
20 What is the -- what's your intent and your
21 business model? It is my understanding that you
22 are trying to -- you recently moved to 7th and --
23 I think it's 7th and Florida, right at the corner
24 of Georgia and U Street, which is a moratorium
25 zone.

1 Understanding that you had applied for a
2 tavern license, but because you're in the
3 moratorium zone, the license was, the placard was
4 rescinded. And you were operating in a southeast
5 location, and you are trying to move your catering
6 license to this location. That's my
7 understanding.

8 MR. CALLENDER: That's correct.

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And you might be
10 trying to use your catering license to operate
11 your business in that location. So I guess the
12 purpose of the fact finding hearing is for you to
13 explain to us what is it that you are trying to
14 do?

15 MR. CALLENDER: So I can provide some
16 background. Our Sandlot Anacostia location, which
17 we have a tavern license as well. That tavern
18 license is 118-500. We secured a catering license
19 there because we purchased a 36-foot commercial
20 kitchen food trailer by way of the food access
21 grant. And it was secured to provide fresh food
22 access east of the river, where we had a culinary
23 incubator program dialed up so that that can be
24 our way of providing food service for our events.
25 We are event based. We are not a consistent

1 business where we open Thursdays through Sundays.

2 Our 10-year lease was recently terminated
3 for no reason. And we have this 36-foot food
4 trailer, which is a valued asset of ours, that we
5 were looking to relocate to an already existing
6 location at our Sandlot Uptown location at 1900
7 7th Street. So that was the initial reason why we
8 applied for the application once we learned that
9 the tavern was in the moratorium zone. So, you
10 know, we've consistently been working with food
11 partners. None of our event programs are without
12 food. So that's something that we hold very
13 valuable at all of the locations that we activate
14 across the city.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Tell me a little
16 bit about the truck again, please.

17 MR. CALLENDER: So it's a 36-foot food
18 trailer. And, you know, on street level, DC is
19 18.5. We obviously operate our food assets on
20 private property, but we also work with city
21 agencies to ensure the viability of those assets.
22 We also have a 20-foot shipping container
23 commercial kitchen, where we did work with DLCP,
24 FEMS, and all the other agencies to get 100 pound
25 propane tank waivers from the fire chief,

1 considering that this 36-foot food trailer, while
2 it is on wheels, it will be fixed to a specific
3 location. And that, you know, was the determining
4 factor of us getting our truck inspected every
5 year, getting everything safely advanced.

6 And then again, we provide that asset to
7 licensed professionals to provide food service,
8 Tacoma Station, Flavortour, DC Smokehouse. I can
9 probably name a host of others. But we've created
10 this community asset so that it can be of value in
11 areas that lack food offerings. But that is the
12 basis around that particular 36-foot food trailer,
13 which we do have a parking area for it. So that
14 was the hope of relocating now that we are no
15 longer at Sandlot Anacostia, 633 Howard Road.

16 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. But
17 you're renting space in the 1900 block of 7th
18 Street, is this where -- so this is where this
19 trailer is now located?

20 MR. CALLENDER: It's not located there
21 yet. The hope is based on this fact finding that
22 we could relocate it. It's currently in a storage
23 yard in Buzzard Point.

24 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: But the trailer is
25 the commercial kitchen, is that correct?

1 MR. CALLENDER: That's correct.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: But do you have
3 approval from the Department of Health to have
4 this commercial kitchen at this address?

5 MR. CALLENDER: We do not at the moment.

6 Again, we were trying to kind of move
7 consistently once we found the -- once we got the
8 word of our lease being terminated. So
9 processing, you know, might have just been out of
10 order slightly. But we do have a dedicated water
11 source, which was part of the approval process
12 when we were at 633 Howard Road. So we're just
13 trying to line everything up so that we can have
14 no disruption in our business.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: One reason I ask
16 you that, because wasn't that you have approval
17 from the Department of Health at this juncture in
18 order to have a commercial kitchen? That is a
19 process that's approved by the Department of
20 Health. And so therefore, it's not ABCA. So if -
21 - I think the issue is that, is it your intent to
22 use -- what type of business are you intending to
23 operate at this, at 1900 7th Streets Northwest?

24 MR. CALLENDER: So this was a former CVS
25 that was vacant for a couple of years. And just,

1 you know, some more details, Sandlot activates
2 underutilized real estate assets, whether it's a
3 lot, a building, whether it's blighted or
4 dilapidated. So our intent with our university
5 who owns the real estate is to provide this as a
6 safe space for use for all types of organizations,
7 event organizers, you know, community folks,
8 whether it's ANC. We definitely have the
9 resource, and we've been doing this since 2019.

10 So the goal here again is to provide
11 this, you know, improved asset as a community
12 space for programming. For example, this weekend,
13 Howard University graduates. The College of Fine
14 Arts will be using the interior of the building,
15 which we do have a permit from DOB to have their
16 seniors exhibit their senior show Friday through
17 Sunday. It's open to the public 12:00 to 6:00.

18 And then we recently hosted the Apollo
19 Theater doing a block party prior to their Howard
20 Theater event. And we've also hosted fish fries
21 for candidates and other things.

22 So historically Sandlot does not operate
23 as a bar, bullpen, Bardo, all those other folks.
24 We are a community amenity to all the
25 neighborhoods that we intentionally go in to

1 rectify blight and negative activity in
2 neighborhoods. And I guess the value add to that
3 is the hospitality side, right? There is F&B that
4 we do try to provide for those types of events
5 when necessary.

6 And historically, we've had -- we have
7 three tavern licenses in safekeeping right now.
8 Sandlot Georgetown was one of our more recent
9 locations where we have that in safekeeping. Our
10 Navy Yard location, which closed, that's in
11 safekeeping. And then our Sandlot Anacostia,
12 again, once we received word that our lease was
13 being terminated, we moved that into safekeeping
14 as well. So we have three active taverns in
15 safekeeping. And the goal is to transition the
16 catering to this location since we are no longer
17 at 633 Howard Road.

18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And so currently,
19 do you have access to a commercial kitchen
20 licensed by Department of Health at this site or
21 at any other site?

22 MR. CALLENDER: We do not, but we do have
23 access to food partners who are licensed and other
24 catering food professionals where we have
25 subcontractor agreements in place for them to

1 provide fresh food service for our events. So
2 that is the goal of satisfying that requirement
3 while we go through the process. I believe we
4 have to put the food trailer in place connected to
5 the water source just on the north side of the
6 building. And then once we do the inspection with
7 DOH, DLCP will sign off and we'll be back at it.

8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. So do
9 you plan to sell food and alcohol for offsite
10 consumption or will patrons be able to dine in on
11 the 1900 7th Street location?

12 MR. CALLENDER: So there are different
13 pop-up opportunities. Usually those are all on a
14 case-by-case basis, depending upon the dynamic of
15 the location that we're reactivating. But the
16 latter portion would be to have folks have the
17 opportunity to dine in at 1900 7th Street when
18 there is event experiences happening.

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: What are the
20 proposed hours of operation for this location?

21 MR. CALLENDER: So we currently don't
22 operate the exterior space past 10:00 p.m., or at
23 least we don't have amplified music past 10:00
24 p.m. We hold true to the noise ordinance of the
25 city. And then any internal or interior

1 activations, we don't go past 12:00 a.m.

2 I think, I believe the flexibility there,
3 especially when you do the liquor license
4 applications, you always put 2:00 a.m. and 3:00
5 a.m. But then working with ANC and Lee Droid and
6 all the other community members of Shaw, we always
7 tailor that within the settlement agreement in
8 case there is a scenario where we do go past 12:00
9 a.m. and we go until 1:00 a.m. on the interior.
10 But nothing on the exterior. It's too much of a
11 busy intersection to add to that type of
12 environment.

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. With
14 full disclosure, I've seen your establishments
15 around the city. And to me, it's an open lot. So
16 I guess maybe I need to explain. You said
17 interior, exterior, because I thought that your
18 entire business model was an exterior facility.
19 So explain what you're saying, interior, exterior,
20 because I don't understand.

21 MR. CALLENDER: Sure. I can just give
22 you the full timeline. In March, 2019, we
23 activated a 5,000 square foot lot, purely all
24 outdoors. 2020, we relocated to our Navy Yard
25 location where we had 1,800 square feet of

1 interior space at the bottom of an apartment
2 building called the Maren, across from that
3 stadium. And then we also had a 5,000 square foot
4 lot that was adjacent to that space where we had
5 the ability to safely have people transition from
6 interior and exterior.

7 Georgetown location was purely exterior.

8 It's the old gas station at the entrance of
9 Georgetown, across from the Four Seasons. Of
10 course, it's a building there now. And then the
11 Anacostia location was, again, all exterior. But
12 this Sandlot uptown location, we activated, or we
13 took over the entire CVS piece of real estate.
14 It's 20,000 square feet. So the interior of the
15 CVS was updated. Again, that's where we received
16 the pop-up permit with the Department of
17 Buildings, went through that process.

18 And then we also improved the exterior
19 parking lot of the CVS with an elevated area as
20 our summer garden. So again, guests have the
21 capabilities of transitioning from the interior to
22 the exterior and vice versa. And then most
23 recently, we activated the old Urban Outfitters in
24 Chinatown as another pop-up that was totally
25 separate from the Sandlot model.

1 But our more recent location is District
2 Center 555 12th Street, which is all interior with
3 a rooftop, and that's where we plan to relocate
4 one of our safekeeping licenses to that address.
5 I don't recall which one, but we are starting to
6 do more community programming with property owners
7 who have seen what we've done in the past and
8 understand the business model to, again, improve
9 the vacancy issue that we have in our city and our
10 communities.

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. So
12 what's the operation that you intend to run at the
13 7th Street location?

14 MR. CALLENDER: It's event-based. It's
15 purely event-based. If you want to host a
16 birthday party or a graduation celebration or,
17 again, an art event, a health and wellness yoga.
18 It's all -- think of it as your apartment building
19 amenity space. That is the business model. We
20 work with corporate partners to underwrite the
21 renovations of those spaces so that the property
22 owners don't have to, which is why we get so much
23 success with accessing so much real estate in the
24 region.

25 And then we, again, program as necessary

1 with folks that need to utilize space. Space is
2 such an issue in our city because it's a small
3 city to begin with, but the barriers of entry is
4 limited for non-profits or for-profit entities to
5 utilize these facilities to activate their
6 programming.

7 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So is this space,
8 is it the intent to operate year-round, or -- is
9 the intent to operate year-round at this space, or
10 is it just during the summer? Explain.

11 MR. CALLENDER: Yeah, we actually have a
12 three-year lease with Howard University with two
13 one-year extensions. That particular site is
14 slated to be a building at some point, but the
15 Metro green line is directly underneath and the
16 assessments of that is astronomical. The
17 president of the university actually sees this as
18 a valued opportunity for student, faculty, and
19 alumni. So we may have an opportunity to extend
20 beyond the five years, but the goal is to be at
21 this particular intersection for some time.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: But I guess what
23 I'm trying to say here, though, is that you have a
24 current lease. So would you intend to operate --

25 MR. CALLENDER: Year-round, yes.

1 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- year-round?

2 MR. CALLENDER: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Now, and I said
4 before, it's correct that you did apply for a
5 tavern license at this location, is that correct?

6 MR. CALLENDER: Correct, yeah, I applied
7 in 2024 actually. And I think that there was
8 some, I don't want to say discrepancy, but just
9 the moratorium that was initiated, or at least the
10 call to the moratorium. We felt that we did
11 submit everything prior to it becoming law, I
12 guess, or a part of the legislation, the
13 legislative rulemaking. But yeah, I think that
14 was just something that we felt we had an
15 opportunity to be incorporated in, at least for a
16 tavern.

17 Now if there's another type of license,
18 whether it's a one-day or -- I don't really know
19 what's best here, but we follow the rules. I
20 don't think we've ever had any issues or
21 incidents. We just want to be good residents to
22 the District and continue to do the good work of
23 our community efforts.

24 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: But I think that
25 one of the reasons -- it's my understanding, or

1 the Board had ruled that the reason the
2 application was denied was because you did fall in
3 the moratorium zone for the type of license that
4 you're trying to -- for a tavern license, that you
5 can have a tavern license in that zone.

6 MR. CALLENDER: Right.

7 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Of course, you can
8 have a restaurant license. If I believe
9 correctly, I don't think there is any issue with
10 having a restaurant license in that zone, but
11 don't quote me on that. I'm not aware of -- I
12 think that there probably was an exception for a
13 restaurant license, but don't quote me on that.
14 That's something you'd have to follow up with the
15 agency.

16 I guess, I think one of the concerns is
17 that, is it your intent to utilize the catering
18 license, if it's granted? And again, the agency
19 can approve a catering license, but you also have
20 to have, in order to operate as a licensed
21 caterer, you need to have a kitchen in the
22 District of Columbia, which is provided through
23 the Department of Health. And so, I guess the
24 understanding is that, is it that you're trying to
25 utilize your catering license to provide -- to

1 utilize your catering license at this location to
2 sell and serve alcohol at this location?

3 MR. CALLENDER: In addition to the food
4 service. Again outside of that, we bring in
5 caterers and food professionals to provide those
6 elements. Going back to the Sandlot Anacostia
7 location, we had both a tavern and a catering
8 license. We secured the catering license
9 specifically for our 36-foot food trailer. If we
10 didn't purchase that 36-foot food trailer, we
11 wouldn't have applied for a catering license. And
12 that was in 2022, 2023. So the goal here is to
13 make explicitly our culinary asset, our catering
14 back of house for programming and activating.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And so what you're
16 saying, if the Board was to impose conditions on
17 this license at this location to say, burn events,
18 the service of food or alcohol on the site and not
19 provide an entertainment endorsement in light of
20 the North Shaw Moratorium Zone, that this would
21 not be -- this would not work well with your
22 business model?

23 MR. CALLENDER: It wouldn't, sir. And
24 again, I'm just really just speaking explicitly
25 about the history of how we've operated and how

1 our business model is designed. We're self-
2 sustained. We don't have investors. We don't
3 have -- you know, it's myself and my partner that
4 are doing the applications. You know, we don't
5 have legal representation. We don't have any of
6 that. We're two native Washingtonians who was
7 literally born at Howard University Hospital and
8 elsewhere.

9 So while even just with our first liquor
10 license in 2019, going through that process with
11 your licensed specialist, we learned a lot. And
12 even going through this process, we're learning a
13 lot. I still find it lucky for us to even have a
14 liquor license in Georgetown, considering the
15 moratorium that was there. But understanding the
16 emergency order that the mayor put in place during
17 COVID, we are more in a helpful position and
18 stance when it comes to improving our city. It's
19 always a call to action.

20 So there was a call to action to open
21 outdoor spaces during COVID. We did just that.
22 We secured a lease with East Bank and we opened
23 Sandlot, Georgetown, even with the old Georgetown
24 Board, which is a whole other daunting process.
25 We had to do it every year since we've activated

1 there for four years safely and providing the same
2 type of energy that I'm telling you we're doing
3 right here on 1900 7th Street.

4 And if it requires letters of
5 recommendations and other things, we can secure
6 that as well. But I think the conditional point
7 that you mentioned with DOH and DOCP, we're
8 totally fine with at least having that be the one
9 element that will allow this type of programming
10 to happen at this location.

11 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, I don't
12 think -- the concern is that you're in a
13 moratorium zone and you cannot have a tavern
14 license in this location.

15 MR. CALLENDER: Correct.

16 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And the
17 requirements for catering license, I mean, the
18 purpose of having a catering license is that
19 you're a caterer, you're serving food, and the
20 alcohol sale is incidental. The alcohol sales, as
21 a caterer, it's incidental, and it doesn't appear
22 -- I don't know for this location if the alcohol
23 sales would be incidental to the catering, because
24 it might be.

25 I don't -- and I can be wrong, but that's

1 why I'm just asking a question that it appears
2 that in order to sell and serve alcohol at this
3 location, it is your intent to use your catering
4 license to sell and serve alcohol at this
5 location, which is not -- that goes against the
6 spirit of what the moratorium is because you're in
7 a moratorium zone.

8 MR. CALLENDER: So I can add another
9 layer of -- I guess to advance the conversation.
10 So even with our culinary partners that we've
11 brought in through multiple programs like, you
12 know, Uber Eats which was a part of that Sandlot
13 Georgetown success story, PLNT Burger and Grub
14 Rockstar. I can go on and on and on again. These
15 are opportunities for culinary entrepreneurs.

16 We are slated to launch a Sandlot uptown
17 food truck village with Howard University. They
18 recently eliminated six food establishments at
19 Wonder Plaza, Potbelly, Chipotle, Negril, Carry
20 Out, and I'm probably missing two others. But in
21 partnership with the university, we're going to
22 activate a small area in the parking lot with just
23 our food partners.

24 Again, those are food professionals or
25 establishments that have brick and mortars that

1 also have food trucks, 18-and-a-half-foot food
2 trucks literally in the middle of that parking lot
3 with some shipping container elements purely
4 providing food services to the student community
5 and those around that area for food offerings.
6 That is the ethos of every location. It's not to
7 circumvent or just sell alcohol.

8 I don't think, even with our tavern
9 licenses, we ever held an event where we did not
10 have food as the main factor, whether it's crabs
11 in a barrel, which is an event that we do where we
12 focus on just fish and seafood, or whether it's
13 grilled cheese social where we focus again
14 specifically on grilled cheese offerings.

15 We're introducing a different hospitality
16 dynamic because it's valuable and it works versus
17 the other industries like Occasions and Spilled
18 Milk or Windows where they are catering
19 professionals that go to Mellon Auditorium or
20 other CX locations like Arena Stage or The Loft.
21 We're a unique dynamic, and I think it just shows
22 exactly what we intend to do at every location
23 that we open.

24 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And I think that
25 your intentions are great. I don't think there's

1 an issue with your intention. I don't think
2 there's an issue with your business model. I
3 think the only problem is that this is a
4 moratorium zone, and because -- so the model that
5 maybe worked over at Georgetown, the model that
6 worked over at in Anacostia, there you were not in
7 the moratorium zone. So there was not necessarily
8 per se an issue with getting a tavern license
9 because you can apply -- I guess the other license
10 that you had, you had a tavern license in
11 Georgetown, you had a tavern license, I believe,
12 at, and I could be wrong, in Anacostia.

13 But because of the moratorium, you cannot
14 have a tavern license at this location. So when
15 you apply for a tavern license, it was denied.
16 But your business model, based on your business
17 model, you need an alcohol license.

18 MR. CALLENDER: So the Georgetown
19 location, just for reference, that moratorium was
20 actually in place when we received the tavern
21 license in Georgetown in 2021.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: I know that. I
23 was here on the Board in 2021. There were changes
24 made to that. And let me -- I'm not going to go
25 back and forth around the dates, but I know that -

1 - I'll say this, I've been in DC long enough that
2 when I moved to DC, Georgetown was the
3 entertainment capital of DC. DC has changed
4 significantly. And so there was a moratorium put
5 in place for Georgetown because they did not want
6 to be the entertainment capital. And so then the
7 city moved on and left Georgetown behind.

8 And then Georgetown came back to the
9 Board to say, oh, by the way, we still exist. I
10 need entertainment back here. So at some point, I
11 know that this board voted to remove some of the
12 restrictions regarding what type of license could
13 not operate -- what new licenses could not operate
14 in Georgetown.

15 So probably the type of license you
16 requested at that time was because Georgetown came
17 back to this Board to say that because the city
18 had moved on, because Georgetown was no longer the
19 entertainment capital of DC, and that they wanted,
20 at least in my view anyway, they wanted to attract
21 new businesses. So your business model, but --

22 So as I said before, it's not our intent
23 to question your business model. It is just this
24 location specific because of the moratorium zone.

25 And because you're in a moratorium zone and you

1 cannot -- and you can't have a tavern license in
2 this zone. You did apply for a license that was
3 granted and it appears like, okay, fine, I need to
4 operate. How can I operate in this area?

5 And even if you were able to move -- say
6 if the Department of Health approved your mobile
7 kitchen as a commercial kitchen, because that's
8 what you need to operate, are we able to provide
9 you -- would you be able to utilize this license
10 to operate that area? And I think that's the
11 issue, whether or not you can utilize a caterer's
12 license based on your business model at this
13 location. And this is what this hearing is about,
14 for us to find out more about your business model,
15 to find out your business model, and to talk about
16 what is it that -- how you can utilize a catering
17 license --

18 MR. CALLENDER: Yeah --

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- and it cannot
20 be -- yeah. Go ahead, sir.

21 MR. CALLENDER: Yeah. And even with
22 just, again, working on ways to improve different
23 business areas to enter in, having a commercial
24 kitchen unlocks so much, especially in that
25 neighborhood, whether it's us, again, providing

1 food service to complement the food truck village,
2 which is forthcoming, and operating culinary
3 experiences during the week. Again, we were doing
4 this at other locations. You have tastemakers,
5 you have so many other shared commercial kitchen
6 facilities, Mess Hall and Union Kitchen even. We
7 have that same opportunity and capability with
8 this asset, which we secured.

9 So I think that there is a multi-layer
10 approach, but I definitely hear and acknowledge
11 your thoughts and the Board's interpretation of
12 what our focus, or at least the application that
13 we've put forth to you by relocating an already
14 existing -- you know, we paid our fees, our dues
15 and everything. Again, we're in good standing. I
16 think that's kind of what we're looking to achieve
17 here without knowing the dynamics around how the
18 applications are written or how the rulemaking
19 decisions are made. So we really just advise to
20 what is best from the Board's position.

21 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Generally, are you
22 well-versed, or have you reached out to the agency
23 regarding the do's and don'ts of maintaining a
24 caterer's license in the sense of who you can
25 purchase alcohol from?

1 MR. CALLENDER: Absolutely.

2 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And so just
3 generally, like, who do you purchase your alcohol
4 from generally when you have events?

5 MR. CALLENDER: The distributors,
6 Southern, Premium, Republic National, all the big-
7 box distributors.

8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Any
9 questions by the Board members? Go ahead, Mr.
10 Meadows.

11 MEMBER MEADOWS: Yes, Mr. Callender, good
12 morning. It's still morning. I think that, as
13 the chairman was saying, Georgetown definitely was
14 the place. I know when I was younger, in the
15 early '90s, late '80s, I think it's coming up now
16 again. But you are a testament to our city.
17 You've had some successful venues. My three
18 colleagues are legal professionals. I am not.
19 I'm just a longtime community member. But I do
20 have some issues. You have a 36-foot trailer.
21 And then you mentioned another vehicle that you
22 would have, a catering kitchen kind of type thing.
23 What was that other vehicle?

24 MR. CALLENDER: It's a 20-foot shipping
25 container kitchen. It's not active right now.

1 It's not connected. It's literally sitting at our
2 northeast location, going through that
3 construction phase. But that will be a different
4 style approach for us. That particular location,
5 we're waiting for a couple of corporate
6 partnerships to land. So that specific location
7 can be our first culinary test kitchen location
8 where we focus specifically on food. We're not
9 going to be doing any heavy alcohol over there
10 like our tavern locations. And that's
11 intentional.

12 Again, it's a food desert in Ward 7. We
13 secured this asset with city funding through the
14 same food access grant. Hope is to just, again,
15 close that gap with the type of food offerings in
16 Minnesota and many. But that's not active right
17 now. It's just literally sitting at that
18 location.

19 MEMBER MEADOWS: Does that location
20 qualify for food access grants, like in Anacostia?

21 MR. CALLENDER: Yeah, yeah. We already
22 received it and have advanced it. We've been at
23 that site since 2023, when we signed that. But
24 just, it's been this long since we've worked
25 through the corporate partnership element, which

1 usually is the case. The same Uber Eats
2 partnership that we had for our Georgetown
3 location, that took a little over a year.

4 MEMBER MEADOWS: Does this 36-foot
5 trailer currently have a food truck license?

6 MR. CALLENDER: So that's what we were
7 going through right now, now that we have to
8 relocate it with DLCP.

9 MEMBER MEADOWS: Okay. But you want to
10 permanently install it there in the parking lot?

11 MR. CALLENDER: Correct.

12 MEMBER MEADOWS: And so you'll be hooking
13 up electric and gas and water to that structure?

14 MR. CALLENDER: So we have a variance
15 from the FEMS for our 633 Howard Road location.
16 And again, just going through the multi-agency
17 process of relocating to our newest location,
18 that's the same process that we're planning to go
19 through.

20 We have two 100-pound propane tanks that
21 are refillable, that eliminates the gas element.
22 We have fresh water access directly where the
23 spigot of the trailer is along the building. And
24 then we have electrical waiting to connect
25 directly into the food trailer, which actually

1 doesn't require as much power as one might expect,
2 similar to the 18-and-a-half food trucks, but no
3 generators, no emissions or anything of that
4 nature.

5 MEMBER MEADOWS: Okay. And so the CVS
6 building itself, so that's 20,000 feet. And is
7 there restroom facilities within that building?

8 MR. CALLENDER: Yeah, we have multiple
9 restrooms along the interior.

10 MEMBER MEADOWS: Okay. And so you're not
11 requesting like a seven-day-a-week type license.
12 You're saying that it's basically an event-based
13 one-on-one. Is that my understanding true?

14 MR. CALLENDER: No. I mean, we're
15 similar to the pop-up permit. These are processes
16 and legislations that we work with the Department
17 of Buildings to design and create, not just for
18 our intent, but others as well. The goal here is
19 to replicate a lot of the other culinary venues,
20 again, Mess Hall, Tastemakers, some of the others,
21 where professionals who don't have access to
22 commercial kitchens can have access. And whether
23 that's us doing our own internal hiring of chefs
24 and culinary folks to provide food services across
25 the city, we have that capability with that 36-

1 foot food trailer, again, which is our intent.

2 MEMBER MEADOWS: So I'm envisioning like
3 a Sycamore & Oak or perhaps maybe like a Little
4 Union Market kind of thing?

5 MR. CALLENDER: Yeah, absolutely.

6 MEMBER MEADOWS: For the building itself?

7 MR. CALLENDER: Correct.

8 MEMBER MEADOWS: Yeah. And so for your
9 events that you have, because you were saying
10 something about 10:00 p.m., what do you think is
11 the capacity if you had -- say I had a birthday
12 party and invited everyone I knew, what would my
13 capacity max out at?

14 MR. CALLENDER: So our current capacity
15 with our certificate of occupancy is 500, and
16 that's both indoors and outdoors. You know,
17 20,000 square feet if you were to, you know, if I
18 were to do the calculation per DOB with an
19 assembly space or the type of use that we have,
20 that occupancy would max out at 1,300. It's one
21 person at every 15 square feet with no fixtures or
22 no furnishings. We always do our calculations
23 based on the amount of restroom facilities and,
24 again, making it more of a community center versus
25 a club or a hall for that matter. But 500 would

1 be the capacity, max capacity.

2 So whether your birthday party -- you
3 know, and these are the type of rules and
4 restrictions historically that we give to folks
5 that want to come in and utilize our facilities.
6 We provide everything step by step. It's almost
7 like, you know, workforce development. We're kind
8 of educating people as they come into space, which
9 again is rare. If you wanted to look at an
10 example of, you know, Bullpen or other venues, we
11 operate completely different because that's not
12 our scope.

13 And again, our hope is for you and
14 everyone else on the Board to want to have a
15 birthday party or a retirement party or whatever
16 type of experience you'd like to have at that
17 space. Again, we're problem solvers, you know,
18 and I'll use this as my final note.

19 Cleveland Elementary, which is a school
20 directly south of our location, came to us and
21 said, hey, look, our teachers get tickets every
22 day. You know, is there anything you can do to
23 help? And I said, we have space. You guys can
24 utilize this parking lot every day at no cost.
25 We're just trying to be good neighbors and

1 understand the law and legislation and just
2 continue, as you mentioned, to do good work in our
3 city.

4 MEMBER MEADOWS: Well, I understand. And
5 that kind of leads me to what I was thinking, too.

6 You know, certainly I don't think the
7 neighborhood itself would be excited to have an
8 additional supply of parking that's limited, as we
9 all know. Yeah, so I thank you for your questions
10 and answers. And, as I said, I'm not the legal
11 scholar. I'm going to take advice from my board
12 members, and I wish you the best. Thank you, Mr.
13 Chair.

14 MR. CALLENDER: Thank you. And I am,
15 too. I'm not a legal professional by any means.
16 I got an engineering degree from Drexel
17 University. So that's as far as it goes.

18 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Any other
19 questions by any other board members? I guess
20 another question I have, would you be willing or
21 based on the business model that you have, could
22 you apply for a restaurant license?

23 MR. CALLENDER: I've never applied for a
24 restaurant license before. I'm not a
25 restaurateur, and I have plenty of restaurant

1 friends. And I believe that is a question that I
2 can't answer at this moment. But to answer your
3 question, possibly, yeah.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: No, because you're
5 at a location that you want to operate, but
6 because you're in a moratorium zone, the
7 moratorium covers nightclubs, taverns, and multi-
8 purpose facilities. Those are the type of
9 licenses that falls under the moratorium. A
10 restaurant license doesn't fall under. That's an
11 exclusion.

12 MR. CALLENDER: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And you're trying
14 to find out, there -- and as I stated before,
15 whatever issues involving your caterer's license,
16 because you need to have access to a commercial
17 kitchen, and you're saying the commercial kitchen
18 is this mobile, or it's this truck. That's your
19 commercial kitchen. However, there are other
20 parts moving with the Department of Health.

21 And so you don't have -- I'm not hearing
22 from you today that you have a commercial kitchen
23 to cook. So even if we were to -- even if the
24 Board was to say, okay, fine, yes, you can get a
25 catering license, you can have a catering license,

1 you're not providing us with a commercial kitchen
2 that you're operating from. So even the Board has
3 to say -- you don't have a commercial kitchen that
4 you're operating from, because your commercial
5 kitchen is this truck.

6 MR. CALLENDER: Correct. So now that we
7 have to relocate from the previous location, we
8 have to go through the process again. So we had
9 that in place. And again, our hope and goal is
10 that, you know, the DLCP, we've communicated with
11 everyone. I think the first step is, you know,
12 where does ABCA stand on this position? We know
13 the requirements on the DOH and the DLCP side.

14 But you know how permitting fees and all
15 of those things are. It doesn't make sense to
16 advance one way when you have to go back and spend
17 more money to change and redo things. We didn't
18 think that the process of relocating was actually
19 going to be this lengthy. Again, you know, we
20 didn't expect our 10-year lease to get terminated
21 six years early for no reason.

22 So there's other implications that we're
23 dealing with at the moment. I think now we're
24 just at a position of gathering as much
25 information, similar to this fact finding, so that

1 we can have the best path forward and know that we
2 can, you know, safely make an impact in this part
3 of the city.

4 So to answer your question, though,
5 regarding restaurant, we have a location in
6 Tyson's as well. And one of the requirements in
7 Tyson's for any type of alcohol, because it's, you
8 know, a state-run control over there, is that if
9 you do any type of alcohol, 75 percent of your
10 receipts have to be food. And that, I don't know
11 what the requirement is in the District. I'm
12 obviously going to research pretty extensively
13 after this call. But we don't have that
14 capability if that's a similar element in the
15 District.

16 Again, when we look at, you know, the
17 type of business that we've been running for the
18 past six years now, seven years going on, that was
19 never a consideration because we're not restaurant
20 professionals. And we do partner with restaurant
21 professionals in every industry, whether it is a
22 caterer who has the same capabilities that we
23 have, or a larger brick-and-mortar entity that has
24 a food truck, that has those capabilities to
25 provide food service.

1 Again, that's part of the problems that
2 we're trying to solve, but also enhance and
3 amplify, whether it is through legislation, just
4 like the pop-up permit. You know, that's another
5 reason why we do have so many different
6 opportunities to change things.

7 So I will look at the restaurant license.
8 I think that's a great offering. And, you know,
9 without understanding on the catering license
10 side, where we stand with that, I know the
11 renewal, which also led to this, we wanted to at
12 least make sure that we were current or accurate.

13 But again, we're just trying to understand what's
14 the best route here. So that's a suggestion we'll
15 take in and we'll follow through.

16 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: What's driving
17 this process is the location that you chose?

18 MR. CALLENDER: Understood.

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So you're in a
20 location that, because of the moratorium, you
21 applied, similar to your other locations, you
22 applied for a tavern license. And there is no
23 food requirement for a tavern license. So yeah,
24 so there's no there's food requirement for a
25 tavern license. So there is no issue. However,

1 because you're moving into the location that you
2 have now chosen that you want to operate your
3 business, you applied for a tavern license that
4 was denied because of the moratorium.

5 There are specific requirements to have a
6 catering license. So I don't know. So the Board
7 might say -- the Board could say, we're going to
8 approve your catering license. We're going to
9 renew your catering license, but the agency might
10 not issue the license because you're waiting for
11 approval from the Department of Health.

12 MR. CALLENDER: And I think that's fine.
13 Like, for us, like, that was --

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: But what I'm
15 saying that it puts you in the same position
16 because we will -- we're not going to, and I don't
17 know what is it you have to provide to the agency
18 to get a catering license, but if you have to
19 prove that you have a commercial kitchen, we're
20 not going to issue a license until you can prove
21 to us that you have a commercial kitchen. So even
22 if this agency was to approve it, you have to
23 provide us information.

24 So even if the Board would say, yeah, we
25 could renew the license, the agency is not going

1 to issue the license to you until if -- they
2 require you provide us proof that you have access
3 to a commercial kitchen. And if you don't have a
4 commercial kitchen, it doesn't really matter. So
5 I believe it's having a commercial kitchen first,
6 and then you come to the agency for catering
7 license.

8 But I don't -- because of the moratorium,
9 because of the moratorium, okay, your business
10 model for this location where you have been
11 utilizing a tavern license and it has worked, it
12 cannot work in this location. It's simple as
13 that, because you cannot get a tavern license in
14 this location to support your business model. And
15 so, therefore -- go ahead.

16 MR. CALLENDER: I can clarify. So when
17 you say, like, our business model is purely based
18 on tavern, right? That's partially true. We have
19 a partnership with Howard University, right?
20 Where rent is abatement. That's for a reason.
21 All of our locations rent is abated, or it's a
22 percentage rent. That is for a reason. We don't
23 have the same deficiencies as our other restaurant
24 or venue partners. That is intentional and by
25 design.

1 Our catering license, which we did have
2 at our Anacostia location for multiple years was
3 done through the proper processing. But now that
4 we are relocating similar to this ABCA fact
5 finding, we just have to go through the process
6 again. So I don't think it's a matter of we
7 didn't have it before. It's like when you change
8 your ID, right? When you move from one apartment
9 to the other, you have to go to the DMV, you have
10 to go here. That's what we're doing here.

11 So I don't think it's a matter of us not
12 having the commercial kitchen, which you have made
13 the suggestion if you were to advance or make a
14 conditional request based on, what that does is
15 that allows us to not have to go through a process
16 again which could later impact timing and just how
17 things are normally handled.

18 You know, we started seasonal and now we
19 have interior space where we can be year-round.
20 We still have staff and personnel that we want to
21 ensure doesn't, again, go to other locations for
22 work similar to our event partners. And 2024 was
23 probably the most difficult year for us because we
24 were impacted by construction at our Anacostia
25 location. So there was zero business. There was

1 zero catering filings that year because we didn't
2 have access to our location, and that severely
3 impacted our business.

4 So I think, again, it's not so much the
5 business model. It's just understanding how we
6 can solve these solutions and really, you know, to
7 your point, just do good business. So that's
8 applying for a restaurant license, great. If
9 it's, we'll approve your catering license, but you
10 have to get the approval from DOH, we have the
11 asset, we have the contacts. They're literally
12 just waiting for us to advance the ball. Then we
13 can do so and relatively quickly.

14 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: As I said, what is
15 driving this process is this particular location,
16 and you had applied, you followed the proper
17 procedures to apply for catering -- I'm sorry, a
18 tavern license for this location, but not for the
19 moratorium, the license would have been granted.
20 But because there is a moratorium, no new multi-
21 purpose nightclub or tavern license are being
22 issued in the moratorium zone, okay? That is for
23 the period of the moratorium.

24 And so, based on your business model,
25 what type of license can I apply for to operate at

1 this location? That's where we are. And I do not
2 believe that the catering license can work. I
3 think that even if the Board was to -- all things
4 on the table, if the Board was to approve a
5 catering license for this location, based on your
6 business model, I think you'd get in trouble with
7 the agency because you'd be using the catering
8 license for the wrong purpose.

9 In the sense that because it's not
10 apparent that, at least at this location, that
11 alcohol would be incidental to the catering
12 because it's not apparent that you're selling food
13 at this location. That's what I'm saying, because
14 that's what you'd have to do at this location.
15 You would have to sell food at this location, and
16 the alcohol is incidental to this location.

17 MR. CALLENDER: Yeah. And I think that's
18 the back and forth, right? If you -- out of the
19 thousands of events that we've done, food has been
20 primary. We haven't had maybe a handful of those
21 thousands where there was no food present. And I
22 believe a majority of that might have been due to
23 a deficiency from one of our contracted food
24 partners, which food truck might have broke down
25 or some other element might have occurred.

1 But at every location that we've had, at
2 our Southeast location, we had a catering kitchen
3 that we applied. We did the eating and drinking
4 establishment form with DOH. Everything's clear.

5 Our business, external, has always been
6 misunderstood, which is fine. I think that's not
7 a bad thing. The great thing in this moment is
8 that there is an opportunity for clear definition
9 of incidental, or at least clear understanding of
10 intent.

11 And I think even just looking back at why
12 we even chose this location, we don't look at
13 locations because we want to open a location
14 everywhere. T Street was the worst intersection
15 in the city, and we came in with the T Street task
16 force and the university to rectify a problem in
17 2022. That's how long this has been, prior to the
18 moratorium even being discussed.

19 Had we have applied the moment that we
20 knew we were going to take over the site, sure,
21 this wouldn't be a discussion. And I hear you
22 loud and clear as far as this being a moratorium,
23 but I think the solution with the catering might
24 be a short term while we do the restaurant
25 application. But there are things that we would

1 like to plan and schedule again with our other
2 event organizers that, you know, should we
3 transition now and start doing one-days?

4 And I don't want to -- I don't know
5 what's the best method here, but the plan is to
6 activate that corner. And we've gone with ANC.
7 Every ANC, at least in my acknowledgement from
8 when we did our first look of this space,
9 appreciates us being here. They understand the
10 scope. They understand the dynamic. They didn't
11 at first.

12 Same thing with Culture House and Blind
13 Wine on 2013. Everybody didn't really understand
14 it in the beginning and every agency came by that
15 first day that we opened. But 13 years later,
16 that's still a cultural institution. It's global.

17 And it's literally solving the problem that we're
18 intending to solve right here on 7th and Florida.

19 So I acknowledge and I appreciate everything that
20 you and the Board has suggested. We're just
21 looking for the best next steps.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, the only
23 thing I'm going to add, you said you have three
24 licenses in safekeeping. And am I correct that
25 the three licenses that you have in safekeeping,

1 they're all tavern licenses? Is that correct?

2 MR. CALLENDER: Correct.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. And
4 that's the problem. Your business model prior to
5 -- your business model supported you having a
6 tavern license. You're not eligible to receive a
7 tavern license at this location because of the
8 moratorium. So based on your business model and
9 the moratorium, is there a different type of
10 license that you can apply for in this location?
11 I think that's where we are.

12 MR. CALLENDER: Got it. Got it.

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: At the top of my
14 head, a catering license -- I'm sorry. A
15 restaurant license is not a part of the
16 moratorium. Does your business model support
17 having a restaurant license, I don't know.
18 There's a different process in a sense to have a
19 catering license, because in order to have a
20 catering license, you need to have access to a
21 commercial kitchen. You don't have the commercial
22 kitchen. You don't have -- based on your business
23 model, your overall business model, you don't
24 currently have access to a commercial kitchen,
25 right? You don't have access to a -- that's what

1 I'm hearing.

2 You don't have access to a commercial
3 kitchen based on your current business model,
4 because you still need approval in order to move
5 to this location. So if you were to use this
6 address as the commercial kitchen -- because since
7 you're cooking your own food, if you were to use
8 this location as your commercial kitchen, you
9 still have to go through the regulatory challenges
10 with other agencies, okay? So that's what it is.

11 So is there a different --and again, with
12 the moratorium, are you eligible to apply for a
13 one-day? I don't know. I would have to look to
14 see if a temporary one-day. I don't know if you
15 could even apply for one-day licenses for this
16 location. I don't know. That's something that
17 we'd have to consult.

18 MR. CALLENDER: Okay.

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So it's a fact
20 finding hearing. We're trying to find out from
21 you what your business model is.

22 MR. CALLENDER: Got it.

23 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: It's up to us to
24 provide you some guidance to say these are the
25 next steps.

1 MR. CALLENDER: Yeah, we're grateful. So
2 again, we appreciate. And thank you guys for your
3 time today.

4 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you have any
5 final comment you want to make before I bring this
6 hearing to a closure.

7 MR. CALLENDER: No, not this time.

8 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right. Well,
9 thank you for being here today. And we'll have
10 our homework, so we'll take this matter under
11 advisement. So we will have our homework and try
12 to provide you some guidance on next steps.

13 MR. CALLENDER: All right. Thank you so
14 much.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.
16 Thanks. Have a great day.

17 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
18 went off the record at 12:17 p.m.)
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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2 This is to certify that the foregoing transcript
3 was duly recorded and accurately transcribed
4 under my direction; further, that said
5 transcript is a true and accurate record of the
6 proceedings; and that I am neither counsel for,
7 related to, nor employed by any of the parties
8 to this action in which this matter was taken;
9 and further that I am not a relative nor an
10 employee of any of the parties nor counsel
11 employed by the parties, and I am not
12 financially or otherwise interested in the
13 outcome of the action.

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