

IN THE MATTER OF: :
: :
Exotic Wine and Liquors, :
LLC, :
t/a Exotic Wine and : Fact Finding
Liquors : Hearing
1550 1st Street SW :
Retailer A - ANC 6D :
License No. 105806 :
: :
(Request to Extend :
Safekeeping) :

Thursday
November 8, 2018

The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board met in the Alcoholic Beverage Control Hearing Room, Reeves Building, 2000 14th Street, N.W., Suite 400S, Washington, D.C. 20009, Chairperson Donovan W. Anderson, presiding.

PRESENT :

DONOVAN W. ANDERSON, Chairperson
BOBBY CATO, Member
MIKE SILVERSTEIN, Member
JAMES SHORT, Member

ALSO PRESENT:

POOJA BEHL, Licensee

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

2 1:38 p.m.

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Our next case
4 is another fact-finding hearing for Exotic Wine
5 and Liquors, license no. 105806. Will the
6 parties please approach and identify themselves
7 for the record, please.

8 Come forward ma'am, if you're here
9 from Exotic Wine and Liquors. There's a sign in
10 sheet on the table, please sign your name and
11 please introduce yourself for the record.

12 Okay, identify yourself for the record
13 ma'am, please.

14 MS. BEHL: Pooja Behl.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: And who are
16 you, ma'am?

17 MS. BEHL: I'm from Exotic Wine and
18 Liquors.

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Are you the
20 owner?

21 MS. BEHL: I'm the owner.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Okay. All

1 right, do you have your request for a
2 continuation of a safekeeping request and this
3 license is been in safekeeping since January
4 25th, 2017, and this is your fourth request for
5 safekeeping?

6 Can you tell us why that this license
7 is not?

8 MS. BEHL: I think we have been
9 looking for the property.

10 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: What do you
11 mean you've been okayed for the properties. I
12 don't understand.

13 MS. BEHL: We have been looking for
14 the properties, like, you know, and find a
15 property already. And we have already have
16 signed the lease.

17 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: I'm sorry, I
18 can't hear you.

19 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Do you have a
20 copy of the lease you can provide to us?

21 MS. BEHL: Oh, yes, I've go it.

22 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Can you provide

1 the copy of the lease? So when did you sign the
2 lease?

3 MS. BEHL: We signed the lease just
4 this July, 16th day of July. Thank you. We
5 still have the drawings with DCRA for approvals,
6 and all of the approvals have been done except
7 energy which we had been talking to Robert
8 Campbell there.

9 And he said everything is okay so we
10 have, so we will be getting the energy approval
11 soon. So I brought the approvals too if you guys
12 want to see that.

13 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So what's the
14 anticipation, I mean --

15 MS. BEHL: Yes, I just got the
16 approvals which I got --

17 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- hold on.

18 MS. BEHL: This actually property is
19 just nothing inside, so we have to build it
20 before, you know, getting an occupancy of
21 certification, so I think we're going to need
22 after we get the energy approval. We're going to

1 take at least 90 days to build up.

2 MEMBER SHORT: Can I ask a question?

3 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Go ahead, Mr.
4 Short.

5 MEMBER SHORT: Good afternoon, ma'am.
6 Will you explain an energy inspection?

7 MS. BEHL: Actually, the drawings, you
8 know the architect who did the drawings for the
9 property, we had to submit to DCRA for the
10 approvals.

11 So there's a plumbing approval, there
12 is a structure approval, and there's an energy
13 approval. There are six kinds of approvals which
14 is the energy was pending which we had been
15 working on.

16 MEMBER SHORT: I'm very familiar with
17 process with DCRA inspections.

18 MS. BEHL: So I think that is the last
19 that we are waiting to start building.

20 MEMBER SHORT: So you got your
21 electrical inspections already done?

22 MS. BEHL: Everything done, yes.

1 MEMBER SHORT: But energy?

2 MS. BEHL: Yes, I got the approval,
3 energy was -- I've been talking to Robert
4 Campbell in DCRA, so he approved everything now
5 but we just still needs to get the email from
6 them.

7 MEMBER SHORT: So you've got all your
8 build-ups?

9 MS. BEHL: Yes, everything is done.
10 We had a contractor ready, so we were just
11 waiting for approvals to come so that we can
12 start construction.

13 MEMBER SHORT: Do you have a basic
14 business license?

15 MS. BEHL: Sorry?

16 MEMBER SHORT: A basic business
17 license, do you have that?

18 MS. BEHL: What is that, because I
19 didn't get anything yet? I just have the EIN
20 number.

21 MEMBER SHORT: A basic business
22 license is what any business or every business in

1 the District of Columbia that keeps track for
2 your taxes and all those other things.

3 So you have to have a basic business
4 license before we really will reissue you your
5 safekeeping liquor license. How long have you
6 had your liquor license?

7 MS. BEHL: Sorry?

8 MEMBER SHORT: How long have you had
9 your liquor license?

10 MS. BEHL: I think now 2017, I guess
11 we got, that's the time the 2016 end or '17. I
12 don't know --

13 MEMBER SHORT: When did you first
14 apply for it?

15 MS. BEHL: I'm sorry.

16 MEMBER SHORT: When did you first
17 apply? When did you first get an ABC license in
18 the District of Columbia?

19 MS. BEHL: I would say it was 2016,
20 last quarter.

21 MEMBER SHORT: So have you ever had an
22 operating business with your license? Have you

1 ever operated as a business?

2 MS. BEHL: Yes, what do mean by an
3 operating license. I don't, I'm sorry, I'm not -
4 -

5 MEMBER SHORT: Have you ever had --

6 MS. BEHL: -- it's the first time I'm
7 doing it.

8 MEMBER SHORT: -- open to sell alcohol
9 to the public. Have you ever open to sell
10 alcohol to the public in Washington D.C.?

11 MS. BEHL: No.

12 MEMBER SHORT: So, ever since you've
13 had your license it's been in safekeeping?

14 MS. BEHL: It's been in safekeeping
15 because we didn't have any property to put that
16 license on.

17 MEMBER SHORT: So you've got a license
18 without having any property?

19 MS. BEHL: Oh, no, no, no, our lawyer,
20 Paul Pascal, he --

21 MEMBER SHORT: Mr. Pascal --

22 MS. BEHL: Pascal, yes, it was with

1 Pascal --

2 MEMBER SHORT: He bought it for
3 someone else.

4 MS. BEHL: Yes, yes, correct.

5 MEMBER SHORT: Okay, that is a little
6 better.

7 MS. BEHL: Yes, it flows from
8 somewhere else, from somebody else, and then it's
9 been in safekeeping since that time because we
10 didn't get the right property.

11 MEMBER SHORT: So how much longer you
12 think it's going to take you to get all your
13 inspections done?

14 MS. BEHL: The energy is yes, we got
15 the approval that the DCRA, the Robert Campbell
16 who was checking everything. He said everything
17 is okay. He approved the HVAC, the compressor
18 which was, he wanted the two-stage one.

19 So it's been approved. And it's just
20 we are waiting probably by tomorrow or by Monday
21 we should be getting everything done. And after
22 that, we're going to start the construction, and

1 he thinks it's going to take at least 90 days.

2 That's the reason we wanted the safe,
3 you know, the license will be in safekeeping for
4 some time.

5 MEMBER SHORT: Is it going to take
6 another three months?

7 MS. BEHL: To construct because it's
8 just the walls. There's nothing inside so we're
9 going to take at least 90 days.

10 MEMBER SHORT: And so, therefore, the
11 next request would be, if we were to gain this
12 request, it's March 31st, 2019. Do you believe
13 that this license would be in operation by March?

14 MS. BEHL: Of course, yes. We are
15 planning to like by January, or as soon as we can
16 finish it, we'll try to do that.

17 MEMBER SHORT: Now, I feel one of the
18 reasons why we brought you in because, as you
19 said before, you have had this license.
20 January's going to be two years that you've had
21 this license and it has not been utilized.

22 MS. BEHL: Right, but I think this is

1 the last time it'll be doing in the safekeeping.
2 But we are already set to go with the lease, 10-
3 year lease.

4 It's a 10-year leased, so we are all
5 set. We just need to start the construction.

6 MEMBER SHORT: And where is it, what's
7 the address?

8 MS. BEHL: It's 2300 Washington Place
9 Northeast. It's a suite number 104S. It's at
10 Rhode Island --

11 MEMBER SHORT: Okay.

12 MS. BEHL: -- venue.

13 MEMBER SHORT: 2300 Washington Place?

14 MS. BEHL: Yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Well, I,
16 there is a lease so that as I do have in front of
17 me a lease. And so, therefore, a location has
18 been identified, and I do have in front of me the
19 approval from the Department of consumer
20 regulatory affairs.

21 We have a zoning review that was done
22 August 30th. We have a electrical review that

1 was must be September 12th. We have a structural
2 review that was done September 21st.

3 We have a fire review that was done
4 October 15th, and we have a plumbing review that
5 was completed on October 19th, 2018. And so it
6 appears that after a period of time they finally
7 identified a location in July.

8 Because this lease was signed on July
9 16th, 2018. So it appears to me that the owner,
10 the applicant has, is on its way towards
11 utilizing this license.

12 So with that said, I make a motion
13 that we grant the safekeeping request through
14 March 31st, 2019. Is there a second?

15 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: Second.

16 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Mr. Silverstein
17 has seconded the motion. All those in favor, say
18 aye.

19 (Chorus of ayes.)

20 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: Those opposed?
21 The matter passed four, zero, zero. You own a
22 very valuable license, and now that you have as I

1 see you have a lease. So it does, it tells me
2 that we will have, this license will be in
3 operation.

4 MS. BEHL: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: So I'm hoping
6 this is the last extension that you have --

7 MS. BEHL: Yes, yes, we are hoping that
8 too.

9 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: -- that you
10 will request, but I feel, I'm comfortable that
11 based on the presentation that was made today
12 that you have shown us that you are on the way
13 for the utilization of this license.

14 So thank you. If you can provide that
15 -- Okay, thank you.

16 MS. BEHL: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON ANDERSON: All right.

18 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
19 ended at 1:49 p.m.)
20
21
22

<p>A</p> <p>ABC 7:17 above-entitled 13:18 address 11:7 affairs 11:20 afternoon 5:5 ahead 5:3 alcohol 8:8,10 Alcoholic 1:2,14,14 ANC 1:8 Anderson 1:16,18 2:3 2:15,19,22 3:10,19,22 4:13,17 5:3 11:15 12:16,20 13:5,9,17 anticipation 4:14 appears 12:6,9 applicant 12:10 apply 7:14,17 approach 2:6 approval 4:10,22 5:11 5:12,13 6:2 9:15 11:19 approvals 4:5,6,11,16 5:10,13 6:11 approved 6:4 9:17,19 architect 5:8 August 11:22 aye 12:18 ayes 12:19</p>	<p>Chairperson 1:15,18 2:3,15,19,22 3:10,19 3:22 4:13,17 5:3 11:15 12:16,20 13:5,9 13:17 checking 9:16 Chorus 12:19 Columbia 1:1 7:1,18 come 2:8 6:11 comfortable 13:10 completed 12:5 compressor 9:17 construct 10:7 construction 6:12 9:22 11:5 consumer 11:19 continuation 3:2 contractor 6:10 Control 1:2,14,14 copy 3:20 4:1 correct 9:4 course 10:14</p>	<p>first 7:13,16,17 8:6 flows 9:7 forward 2:8 four 12:21 fourth 3:4 front 11:16,18</p>	<p>12:22 13:2,13 Licensee 1:22 liquor 7:5,6,9 Liquors 1:6,7 2:5,9,18 little 9:5 LLC 1:6 location 11:17 12:7 long 7:5,8 longer 9:11 looking 3:9,13</p>
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C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Exotic Wine and Liquors, LLC

Before: ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD

Date: 11-08-18

Place: WASHINGTON, DC

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under
my direction; further, that said transcript is a
true and accurate record of the proceedings.



Court Reporter

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