

SB0547_Fire and Rice_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Greenfeld, Joshua

Position: FAV

FIRE & RICE

4801 Harford Rd. Ste. S2 * Baltimore, MD 21214 * 443.759.4387

March 5, 2021

Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 547 - 45TH DISTRICT CLASS B-D-7 LICENSE

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee:

My name is Alex Champagne, I am one of the two co-owners of Fire & Rice located at 4801 Harford Rd in Baltimore City. We write in support of Senate Bill 547 creating a new B-D-7 liquor license for 4801 Harford Road that will ultimately reside at the Fire & Rice sushi restaurant. I want to share some information about my background, Fire & Rice's mission and our intentions with using the proposed license for our business.

For more than 10 years, the neighborhoods of Waltherson, Hamilton & Lauraville have been my wife, mine and now our 3-year old son's home. Our relationship with our neighbors, local businesses and community associations has only grown stronger and more important to us over the years. For even longer than that, I have worked in the restaurant & hospitality industry in Baltimore. I have been fortunate enough to work at and manage some of Baltimore's most beloved spots; Golden West Cafe, True Chesapeake, Fadensonnen & Hamilton Tavern to name a few. Learning from a diverse group of incredibly talented, passionate & caring owners & managers, I have always wanted to create an inviting & joyous spot in my own neighborhood.

That opportunity began to take shape when I met my now business partner, Kevin Scheuing, and Sam Polakoff of Property Consulting, Inc. (PCI) in 2019. Kevin has a great knowledge and appreciation for Japanese cuisine. My affection for Japanese spirits was kindled after training and working in a Sake bar. Together, Kevin & I knew we could create a menu & environment that the neighborhood would be excited to welcome. With honesty & integrity we want to concentrate on respecting the flavors and ingredients of Japanese food as a gift to us.

Fire & Rice officially opened in October of 2020, and the community has been so welcoming, uplifting and delighted with what we have been offering during these difficult times for small businesses everywhere. Our aspiration was to be able to share not only Japanese food, but also beverages to our guests. That desire is even more dire now that we cannot safely serve patrons how we had normally done for so long. Attaining this license helps us increase our sales greatly so we will be able to continue sharing our flavors and joy with our neighbors. Being able to pair a glass of sake with a meal or integrate Japanese spirits in our craft cocktails, not only satisfies an ambition Kevin & I share, but also introduces our guests to new experiences & understandings.

To me, attaining this license not only means achieving a goal, but also taking on a responsibility to our community. I am incredibly grateful for the cooperation and assistance we have received from PCI, the Waltherson Improvement Association (WIA) and its members. Working together on the terms of this license has been straightforward. I believe that's because we see eye-to-eye on how Fire & Rice can serve our community, neighbors and friends. Fire & Rice will dutifully carry out all of the terms of agreement between us, WIA and the requirements of this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration and time on this legislation. If for any reason you wish to contact me, please do so at 443.989.8504 or alex.d.champagne@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Alex Champagne, Co-Owner
Fire & Rice

SB0547_Property Consulting_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Greenfeld, Joshua

Position: FAV

Property Consulting, Inc.
PO Box 3650
Baltimore, MD 21214
443.915.9133

March 5, 2021

Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 547 - 45TH DISTRICT CLASS B-D-7 LICENSE

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee:

Property Consulting, Inc., owner of the property known as SoHa Union located at 4801 Harford Road in Baltimore City, writes in support of Senate Bill 547 creating a new B-D-7 Liquor License for this property. Property Consulting, Inc., the Waltherson Improvement Association (WIA) and the ultimate licensee, Fire & Rice sushi restaurant, have agreed upon and support the limitations on this license enumerated in the legislation and the letter of support provided by WIA.

SoHa Union is a brand new mixed-use apartment and commercial building along the Hamilton Lauraville Mainstreet housing five (5) retail/restaurant spaces and sixteen (16) two-bedroom apartments. One of the restaurant spaces is the home of Fire & Rice, Northeast Baltimore's newest Sushi restaurant. The two co-owners of Fire & Rice both live in Baltimore and one of the owners, Alex Champagne, lives in the Waltherson neighborhood where the restaurant is located. Mr. Champagne will be the ultimate license holder. The restaurant contains a small indoor dining room with about 25 seats (currently closed due to COVID-19) serving sushi, ramen, rice bowls and housemade mocktails. The restaurant is seeking a liquor license to help it sustain itself financially and to provide a service to the community that is difficult to find in Northeast Baltimore - craft cocktails and Japanese Sake.

After meeting with the leadership of the WIA and explaining our intentions with this new license, the WIA wrote a letter of support dated December 23, 2020. You will find the letter as part of your bill package. The business owners, property owners and WIA have agreed to abide by the various restrictions enumerated in the Community's letter of support as well as in the text of SB547, which is somewhat more stringent than asked for by the community association.

SoHa Union, as well as other properties along the Hamilton Lauraville Mainstreet, such as Zeke's Coffee, the Children's Bookstore, Function Coworking Community, and more are owned by Property Consulting, Inc. (PCI). Property Consulting has invested more than \$10 million in Northeast Baltimore in the last five years and is deeply committed to the community. We are investing in the community for the long term and maintain the properties we own in excellent condition. We are responsive to the community's wishes as well as their concerns. We will be good stewards of SoHa Union and this license for years to come.

Thank you so much for your attention to this legislation and for your support. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 443.250.8509 or samuel@cormonydevelopment.com

Sincerely,

Samuel Polakoff, Owner
SoHa Union
4801 Harford Road
Baltimore, MD 21214

547 Senator McCray's Testimony - Senate Bill 547 -

Uploaded by: McCray, Cory

Position: FAV

CORY V. McCRAY
Legislative District 45
Baltimore City



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Budget and Taxation Committee
Capital Budget Subcommittee
Health and Human Services Subcommittee

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Vote Yes on Senate Bill 547

Bill Title: The Health Food Accountability Act of 2021

Hearing Date: March 5, 2021 - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Chair: The Honorable Paul Pinsky; Vice Chair: The Honorable Cheryl Kagan

I write to you today in **support** of Senate Bill 547. Pursuant to statute, the Board of Liquor License Commissioners for Baltimore City may not issue a new license in any of the City's six legislative districts unless certain criteria is met.

The purpose of this Bill is to authorize the Board of Liquor License Commissioners to issue a Class B-D-7 license in the 4800 Block of Harford Road in my legislative district. The license would be granted, for example, if:

- I. Average daily receipts from the sale of food are at least 65% of the applicant's total daily receipts;
- II. The applicant executes a memorandum of understanding with the community association
- III. Alcoholic beverages are served only to patrons seated at tables.

If enacted, Senate Bill 547 would take effect on July 1, 2021.

In efforts to ensure that our alcoholic beverage industry is regulated and that the community is involved with the granting of new licenses, we hope that you will move for a **favorable** report of Senate Bill 547.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cory V. McCray".

Cory V. McCray
State Senator