

STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

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DATE: November 30, 2020

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Ian Wells, Acting Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: Liquor License Application No. LL100173

Applicant: Daniell Aben on behalf of Snaring River Holdings Ltd., Inc. No. C0782486
Location: 363 George Street

ATTACHMENT(S): Location and Existing Zoning Map
Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch Application

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Council:

1. CONFIRMS that its comments on the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch's prescribed considerations are as set out in the report dated November 30, 2020 from Ian Wells, Acting Deputy City Manager, for Liquor Licence Application No. LL100173;
2. CONFIRMS the methods used to gather the views of potentially affected property owners were in accordance with section 4: Public Consultation of the City of Prince George Liquor and Cannabis Licensing Policy and that the views of affected residents are as summarized in the minutes of the Council Meeting held on December 21, 2020; and
3. SUPPORTS the approval of the Liquor License Application to allow patron participation and extension of hours for The Firm Lounge and Grill located at 363 George Street for the following reasons:

This application is not expected to have a negative impact on the community or produce any significant negative land use impacts on adjacent properties.

PURPOSE:

The applicant has applied to the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) to allow patron participation entertainment and extension of hours at The Firm Lounge and Grill located at 363 George Street (subject property). This application will facilitate the addition of a patron participation endorsement (i.e. standup comedy shows and music events) and extension of hours to a Food Primary License.

The LCRB is the authority for liquor licensing, and must therefore approve liquor and food primary licenses. The LCRB requires that the local government review the application, gather the views of residents that will be affected by the proposal and pass a resolution on the application. Once Council reviews this application, the resolution will be forwarded to the LCRB.

Background

Site Characteristics

Location	363 George Street
Legal Description	Lot 6, Block 134, District Lot 343, Cariboo District, Plan 1268
Current Use	The Firm Lounge and Grill
Site Area	308.5 m ²
Zoning	C1: Downtown

Liquor and Cannabis License Policy

Type of License	Food Primary Liquor License
Current Hours of Service	Monday- Sunday: 10 am to 12 am
Proposed Hours of Service	Monday- Sunday: 10 am to 2 am
Occupant Load	100 patrons

POLICY / REGULATORY ANALYSIS:

Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch

The LCRB is the authority for liquor licensing, and must therefore approve all liquor license applications. The LCRB regulates restaurants, bars, pubs, liquor retailers, manufacturers and special events. The proposed patron participation entertainment requires approval from the LCRB.

City of Prince George Liquor and Cannabis License Policy

The [City of Prince George Liquor and Cannabis Licensing Policy](#) (LCLP) establishes guidelines for the operation of licensed liquor establishments and cannabis retail stores within the City. The LCLP provides guidelines on hours of operation and location. Staff have evaluated the criteria outlined in the LCLP and have considered their relevance to this application, as noted below.

Patron Participation Entertainment

The LCLP guidelines state that the following types of patron participation entertainment may be permitted in food primary establishments such as karaoke, comedy club, music club and dinner theatre. This application is to permit special events with patron participation at The Firm Lounge and Grill, which is consistent with the LCLP.

Hours of Liquor Service

The LCLP guidelines recommend that Food Primary Licenses within the Downtown have hours of liquor service between 9 am and 1 am. The applicant has applied for an extension of hours to 2 am. The proposal of 2 am is outside of the LCLP guidelines, however the policy provides suggested hours of liquor service for Council's consideration. The proposed extension is one hour more than what is outlined in the LLP and is similar in hours to pub and restaurants in the Downtown area. Therefore, Administration is supportive of this application.

Occupant Load

The building's occupancy of 100 persons (85 patrons and 15 staff) was determined by a qualified professional for their current Food Primary Liquor License. The occupant load calculations are based on the LCRB's Liquor Licensing Policy Manual and Building Code. The occupant load is not change as a result of this proposal.

Location of Establishment

The subject property is located at 363 George Street, which is identified as Downtown in the Official Community Plan (OCP). The OCP encourages maintaining the Downtown as the primary entertainment and cultural centre of the City with medium to large scale entertainment and cultural uses, including theatres, movie theatres, music venues should be located downtown (Policy 8.3.19). The table below summarizes the surrounding land uses.

Surrounding Land Use Table

North	Undeveloped commercial property; Commonwealth Financial Building
South	Central Interior Native Health Society; 4 th Avenue
East	George Street; Commercial Buildings
West	Laneway; Commercial buildings

Administration supports this application to facilitate a patron participation endorsement, and extension to liquor service hours. This application is consistent with the Official Community Plan's direction, and is typical to other uses occurring within the Downtown area.

Community Impacts

The proposed patron participation and extension of hours is not expected to have significant impacts on the surrounding properties. This application will facilitate patron participation events such as stand-up comedy nights and music events on the subject property. Administration has considered the following potential impacts:

Proliferation of uses in the Downtown

As previously stated, the OCP identifies the downtown as the primary entertainment centre of the City. There are several locations, which have active liquor primary licenses or have the potential for a liquor license (based on zoning) within 200 m of the subject property (LAMBDA Cabaret, Nancy O's, Special Beauty Parlor and Day Spa, Black Clover, Croft Hotel, 1st Avenue Tavern, and Cornerstone Kitchen and Lounge). This application is consistent with OCP policy direction, and is typical of other uses occurring within the Downtown Area.

Noise

The subject property is bounded by a laneway (west), George Street (east), an undeveloped parcel (north), and Central Interior Native Health Society (south); it is not anticipated that the patron participation and extension of hours will generate significant noise impacts to the surrounding land uses.

Parking and Traffic

The location provides flexibility for parking and traffic circulation along George Street, and is in close proximity to multiple surface parking lots and on-street parking.

Referrals

This application was referred to internal City divisions and external agencies with no outstanding concerns.

Notification to Adjacent Property Owners

As per the requirements set out in the *Local Government Act*, the City of Prince George will provide a delivery of notice to adjacent property owners whose interests may be affected by this license.

Council Procedures during COVID-19

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ministerial Order issued under the *Emergency Program Act*, City Council at their meeting held April 6, 2020 passed a resolution to waive public hearings for permit applications and certain bylaws where such hearings are not required.

As per the requirements set out in the *Cannabis Control and Licensing Act*, City Council will receive written submissions in response to the public notice for this application. The City of Prince George will mail or otherwise deliver a public notice to property owners and tenants whose interests may be affected by this application and publish this notice in accordance with the *City's Liquor and Cannabis Licensing Policy*.

Written submissions received in response to the public notice for this application will be provided to Council for consideration at the time the application is being considered. Submissions received after the meeting agenda has been published will be provided to Council as a handout on the day of the Council meeting for consideration during deliberations on the application.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the resolution
2. Approve the resolution as amended
3. Refuse the resolution
4. Defer or otherwise deal with the resolution

Administration recommends that Council approve the resolution as written in the recommendation of this report.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

The applicant has applied for a patron participation and extension of hours for the Food Primary License for the subject property located at 363 George Street. Administration recommends that Council approve the recommendation and forward it to the LCRB as the application is consistent with the OCP and LCLP.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Ian Wells, Acting Deputy City Manager

PREPARED BY: Melissa Nitz, Planner

APPROVED:

Walter Babicz, Acting City Manager
Meeting Date: 2020/12/21