

19-20 **Mezcal & Miel Company**
d/b/a Mezcal & Miel
3504 N. Prospect Road
Requesting: Class C-1 (packaged goods)
Subclass 6 (product tastings)

Christell Frausto & Sultan Noorullah, Co-Owners, presented a Site Application for a Class C-1 (packaged goods) Liquor License with a Subclass 6 (packaged goods) at 3504 N. Prospect Road.

In discussion with Chairman Miller, Ms. Frausto reported that along with her Uncle Sultan, she wanted to open their sixth business together, which would be a packaged high-end liquor store. She said they wanted to have tastings of cocktails and alcohol. She said she wanted to serve natural ingredients to make a more natural cocktail. She gave a brief overview of her culture and she explained that Mezcal was considered to be a natural “poor” drink. She explained that she was also a responsible community leader and she went on to say that she had taken due diligence to meet with the community and others in regards to their plans. She went on to say that they were experienced business owners and she said they owned the Marathon Gas Station down the street from the proposed site. She further stated that they ran a clean and customer focused operation. She said that they also wanted to bring a little bit of the spotlight to their culture with art and artisanal decorations. She said she chose this area because she wanted to bring the trendiness of Peoria Heights at this location south of War Memorial.

In more discussion, Mr. Sultan Noorullah reported that he formerly held a liquor license at an establishment on Galena Road near Detweiller Park. He said he ran the location for many years, but he said he had recently sold it. He reiterated that they were proposing a high-end liquor store at the Prospect location and he went on to say that it would not be your typical liquor store. He said he currently ran the Marathon gas station and he went on to say that he was preparing to remodel it with new gas pumps and everything. He briefly described their proposed operations and he went on to say that they wanted to make this place viable again. He said the building was huge and around 7,000 sq. ft. He commented that in addition to the high-end liquor store, he said eventually they wanted to add a restaurant to the back section of the building.

In discussion with Commissioner Morris in regards to the Police Dept. comments, Ms. Frausto confirmed that she was aware and also in agreement of their request for a Plan of Operation. She said during the community meeting, Officer Slavens had suggested the different security measures.

In response to a question from Chairman Miller, Liquor Investigator Slavens reported that Ms. Frausto had given her business model to those who were in attendance at the community meeting. He said there wasn’t really anyone present who spoke in opposition of the request. He explained the Police Dept. concerns and the reasons for safeguards that needed to be put into place by way of a Plan of Operation.

Chairman Miller pointed out that there had previously been two different site applications submitted in 2014 for packaged liquor in a gas station on Prospect Road. He said at that time, both of those requests were denied by both the Liquor Commission and the City Council because of the concern in regards to putting a liquor store in a neighborhood.

In response, Ms. Frausto said she was aware of some of the concerns, but she said she was confident that they could build this business up and run a clean and safe operation on Prospect Road. Mr.

Noorullah said he was well vested in that neighborhood and he said he owned a number of residential properties there that he had been cleaning up for the betterment of the neighborhood.

Council Member Moore commented that the proposed site was not in her district, but she said she knew Ms. Frausto professionally, as the President of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She said if there were anyone who could pull this off, she said she was confident that Ms. Frausto could do that.

In discussion with Commissioner Coates in regards to their opening date, Ms. Frausto stated if the remodel went smoothly, she said they had planned to open in possibly February or March of next year.

Hearing no more comments or questions, Chairman Miller called for the motion.

Commissioner Morris moved to recommend approval of the Site Application for a Class C-1 (packaged goods) Liquor License with a Subclass 6 (product tastings) at 3504 N. Prospect Road; seconded by Commissioner Kouri.

Approved by roll call vote.

Yeas: Coates, Kouri, Morris - 3;

Nays: Miller - 1;

Abstention: None.

Chairman Miller stated this recommendation would be heard at the City Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday, November 12, 2019, at 6:00 p.m. and a representative of this establishment should be present at that meeting.