

Good Neighbors Report

To: PS&L Committee

From: Attorney Nhu H. Arn

RE: The Green Room Lounge, LLC., dba/The Green Lounge, Woodie Mogaka, Agent

Meeting date: Monday, November 21, 2022

Departments: Attorney, Police, Building, Health, and City Development

License(s) requested: Class “B” and “Class B” (beer and liquor)

Topics Discussed:

Agent and owner experience. It is unclear what experience, if any, members of The Green Room Lounge Limited Liability Company have, since they were not present at the good neighbors meeting. The agent, Woodie Mogaka, has worked in the industry for nearly a decade, either as a bartender or as part of management. Mr. Mogaka will work full-time remotely conducting research in the healthcare industry, and manage the bar at the same time. He plans to commute from Madison at least three days a week to manage the premises. The company intends to hire at least two more employees to operate the premises.

Criminal record check for owner. Mr. Jeff Smith, president and owner of the company, is disqualified based on his false statement that he has never been convicted of any offenses and possibly, his convictions within the past five years. Please see the cover sheet and defer to Sgt. Zupke for more details.

Building/health department inspections. The conversion of the premises to a bar/tavern is a new use for the building. At the time of this report, the applicant had not submitted any applications for an occupancy permit or a restaurant license, so any potential building/health issues have yet to be identified.

Conditional grant of the license. The business is not yet operating at this time. Mr. Mogaka understands that with a conditional grant of the license, he must operate the premises within six months, unless otherwise approved.

Police issues. The operation of a bar in this strip mall is a new use. Sgt. Zupke highlighted the need for extra lighting in the parking area, especially because this business will have longer closing hours than any of its neighbors. She also encouraged the agent to call the police department when assistance is required.

Incorrect agent information on state’s website. The Wisconsin Department of Financial Institution still lists the former agent, Misty Ukkonen, as the registered agent and needs to be updated.

Overall summary:

There are some concerns regarding the owner's failure to disclose his criminal record as discussed above. Assuming the committee determines that the owner had good cause for providing the false statement and/or provides competent evidence of rehabilitation, it is worth noting that this is a brand new location for a bar/tavern. Sgt. Zupke provided some tips to the agent to proactively deal with issues. Mr. Mogaka seems to be receptive to these suggestions and does have an established record of experience managing a bar.