

Alcohol License Review Committee
Meeting of April 26, 2018
Agenda #28, I/O Arcade Bar
Legistar #50597

Many comments have been submitted in support of I/O Arcade bar, and there seems to be support for having an arcade bar on Madison's east side.

The question is whether Williamson is the right location. Many people attended the neighborhood meeting. Gamers were there to express support and opined that gamers are more interested in gaming than in getting drunk. Neighbors expressed various concerns, including parking and having yet another fully licensed drinking establishment. More concerns were voiced than support.

Of concern to many residents is the continued increase in alcohol capacity. The capacity of establishments where alcohol is served, or approved to be served, on Williamson or within one block north of Williamson, is approximately 2,800 persons. About 2,500 of that capacity is in approximately 7 blocks. How much saturation is enough? Attached is a capacity map. This map is not 100% accurate (e.g., new license approvals and conditional use approvals for breweries/distillery expansions), but it is a much better representation of alcohol than the map labeled item #10 in this Legistar record.

Parking is not directly a concern of the ALRC, but there essentially is not any parking associated with this use that has a proposed capacity of 155 persons. The application states there are 30 parking places available. But the applicant said that these surface lot spaces are for residents and any/all commercial uses. The letter of intent for this development reflects 141 residential units and a total (underground and surface) of 140 parking spaces. Thus, it is questionable how much, if any, parking will be available. Further, there are only 32 exterior bike stalls, per the letter of intent.

What this neighborhood does not need is another bar (though many would argue the neighborhood does not need any more establishments that sell alcohol). Thus, the MNA letter asks for a requirement that the applicant maintain 25 games in order to ensure the establishment remains "indoor recreation" rather than a bar. However, clarification is required since, arguably, if the I/O Arcade has 25 Monopoly games, then that could qualify under the MNA proposed condition. Please consider the following condition:

The applicant must maintain a minimum of 25 functioning arcade games/pinball machines.

Please also require as a condition of the license that the applicant maintain an on-site smoking area. The applicant's lease contained language requiring the applicant to even keep smokers off the sidewalk (so residents would not be disturbed), which would then force smokers and their litter onto neighboring properties. The applicant provided an email stating: "I talked with the McGrath group yesterday and we've come to an agreement that there will be a designated smoking area on the Southeast corner of the lot." Please require that the applicant direct customers to this area:

The applicant must have signage at each exit door directing patrons to the smoking area.

