

Alcohol License Review Committee
Meeting of December 18, 2019
Agenda item #22, Legistar #58134, Discussion as a Result of Alcohol Density Study

You have received a very informative communication from Dan Nordstom. I agree that limits on alcohol sales are needed. Limiting alcohol sales based on population/geography is not an unusual restriction. In California, there is a limit of one premise selling distilled spirits for every 2,000 county residents, and one premise selling beer/wine for every 2,500 county residents. In comparison, a limit on one premise for every 400 residents in an aldermanic district could be viewed as generous.

The scope of alcohol goes beyond restaurants, taverns and nightclubs.

- In June 2019, the Council approved "incidental alcohol sales" under permitted activities in the Zoning Code. The alcohol sales cannot count for more than 25% of business income. In some zoning districts, incidental alcohol sales are a permitted use – including all mixed-use districts (except limited and neighborhood mixed-use) and downtown and urban districts -- districts which already tend to have high alcohol density levels. It is distressing that a beloved business such as the Soap Opera feels the need to have an alcohol license to give people "experiences" so that the business does not vanish like other retailers (answer to question #27 of the Soap Opera's license application).
- In 2019, the Council also approved a new zoning category for "Art Center." Art Centers were given specific authority for accessory sales of alcohol.
- Distilleries and breweries also need to be taken into account when any potential restrictions are considered.

The City should consider setting standards, or increasing oversight, for alcohol sales that occur on City property, whether that is a semi-permanent beer garden or a festival/concert. City ordinances should be changed so that ALRC advice is sought when the types of venues serving alcohol is being expanded (such as the two zoning changes listed above).

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Lehnertz