**Community Board 17**

**Commerce Committee Meeting**

**Tuesday, November 15, 2022**

**Present: Guests:**

 June Persaud Patrick Agard

 Brie DaCosta Sean Myton

 Adele Bennett Det. Delano Skinner,

 Marguerite Vigliante Comm. Affairs, 67th Pct.

Alexander Stewart John Dickson

 Robert. Gordon

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The **Commerce Committee Virtual** meeting was held on **Tuesday, November 15, 2022 at 7:30pm.**

**Ms. June Persaud** said called the meeting to order at 7:40pm.

**Roll Call**-June Persaud, Sean Myton, Patrick Agard, Brie DaCosta, Marguerite Vigliante, Det. Delano Skinner, Alexander Stewart

**Chairperson’s Report**

**Ms. Persaud** said she continues to build the membership of the Commerce Committee. It is a task that she thinks they can successfully get it done. Her goal is also to get more business owners to join the committee. She also wants to remind the members that if they miss 3 consecutive meetings, they will be removed from the committee.

Tonight, they have Det. Skinner with them to discuss compliance and safety issues regarding bars and restaurants.

They also have a location for the Networking Breakfast. It will be at Woody’s Restaurant, located on Clarkson Avenue and they are looking at March or April next year.

Tonight, they have 4 applications to process.

They do not have a quorum to approve the minutes.

**Det. Delano Skinner** said he is a Community Affair Officer at the 67th Pct. Crime has been down in the Precinct, but one thing they have seen is a rise in burglaries at certain commercial establishments, like construction sites and new development buildings where they are taking the copper wires. If they see people in the area with equipment and they don’t have a Verizon or construction company truck and they look suspicious, call 9-1-1. Holiday times are coming up and they should try not to over crowd their establishments because they are just coming out of the pandemic and people want to get out and about. They can always call the Precinct if they have any issues. They have Sgt. Warren, the Night Live Sargent and they do an excellent job and also doing inspections at some these locations. It is the holiday times and people are trying to solicit funds and let people know to be on the lookout for prank/scam calls where they are asking for money or donations.

**Ms. Persaud** said her concern is regarding the surges of event spaces they have in the community that don’t have liquor licenses. Is there any type of enforcement being done because she feels it is unfair to the licensed establishments? A lot of people think that event spaces do not require a license, but the law says they are not allowed store or sell alcohol in a commercial space without a license. Her main concern would be is there any enforcement being done by the 67th Pct. in this community regarding the event spaces.

**Det. Skinner** said enforcement has always been done on these event spaces by Sgt. Warren and the Special Operations Lt. Merkle and they do go out and inspect a lot of these locations that don’t have licenses. They do enforce summonses and make arrests when need be, but they cannot shut down the locations by themselves. When they do the march operations with the Sheriff’s Dept. and it takes a while and it is called Nuisance and Abatement.

**Ms. Marguerite** **Vigliante** said regarding the enforcement and arrests, they are still waiting to see what happened with Lotus Lounge because they have been operating consistently for a long time without a license and they were told there was an arrest made and summonses given. The place needs to be shut down because it is operating illegally. Isn’t the SLA supposed to get involved and they go in there with them?

**Det. Skinner** said the SLA only does inspections on licensed establishments.

**Ms. Vigliante** asked if they are not licensed, who shuts the place down? If the SLA does not get involved and the Precinct cannot do anything, they will continually operate without a license and have been serving liquor for over a year.

**Det. Skinner** said Lotus Lounge sometimes looks open, but it is not open. There is a spot next to Lotus Lounge, which is a body shop/car spot that has been operating and they have been going there and also doing enforcement to that location as well. When they go to Lotus Lounge, they find that the music is coming from the other location.

**Ms. Persaud** they are connected because there is a door between Lotus Lounge and the body shop, unless they lock it up. The person that rents the body shop also operates Lotus Lounge.

**Det. Skinner** said when the Night Life Team went there, they found a party at the body shop and they got summonses for operating out of their business. They got summonses for overcrowding and not having a liquor license. When they are issued C summonses, they have to go to Criminal Court to pay the fine. As far as the Nuisance and Abatement, it takes a while.

**Ms. Vigliante** said they have been operating for over a year, how long does it actually take?

**Det. Skinner** said they did a Nuisance and Abatement on Clarkson Avenue, and it took 2-3 years.

**Ms. Vigliante** said the SLA used to closed down places that did not have a license, what changed.

**Det. Skinner** said they spoke to the SLA about this and they said only go after places that have licenses to make sure they are in compliance.

**Ms. Vigliante** said before, if a place did not have a liquor license, they would be shut down by the SLA.

**Ms. Persaud** it might have been other agencies closing them down, unless there is a situation that happened and the Precinct gets involved and they bring them there.

**Det. Skinner** said they have done operations with the Dept. of Buildings where they would look at some of these places and tell them what they can and cannot have. The Dept. of Buildings have also done enforcement. There are different agencies coming together to do enforcement.

**Ms. Vigilante** asked how do they get the agencies to come together to shut these places down because they are operating illegally. What can they do to get these places shut down? They need a plan to move forward.

**Det. Skinner** said if the Police Dept. goes there and are issuing summonses and making arrests, they are doing their part, and the Dept. of Buildings is doing their part, it has to be a bigger entity, whether it is the Fire Dept. and Consumer Affairs, and they have done march operation with them before.

**Ms. Vigliante** asked how do they set this up to do it with this particular place?

**Det. Skinner** said he would have to run this by his SOL and the Night Life Sargent to see if they can do another march operation. They constantly go there and do enforcement. They have a list of frequent location where they constantly go to and do inspections.

**Ms. Vigliante** said they must be making a lot of money because if they keep giving them summonses and they just keep paying them because they don’t care.

**Det. Skinner** said if a Judge decides to give them the fine and they pay it, that is out of their hands. To nuisance and abate a place does not just happen overnight. There was a yard on Ditmas Avenue and Rockaway Parkway where they were having parties and they were able to shut that down quick because of the fact there were shootings, constant fights and violence that was taking place there. He does not know if the violence is not taking place, if that is the reason why it is not happening right away.

**Ms. Adele Bennett** said there are issues going with Lotus Lounge, and prior to the **(INAUDILE)** multiple times and the SLA did help the Precinct. Did something change in the laws and can they get someone from the SLA to come to the meeting?

**Ms. Persaud** said they are not going to come to their meeting because they have a quarterly meeting for the licensed establishments. She will try to invite them to the Networking Breakfast. If anything happens at Lotus Lounge, the licensed establishments are going to get blamed for it and this is a matter that needs to be addressed immediately.

**Ms. Brie DaCosta** asked if there were any arrest made for the recent robbery at the Walgreens on Church and Utica Avenues on Halloween night?

**Det. Skinner** said they did not get any leads because they had masks on, and the Detective Squad is looking at the videos.

**Ms. DaCosta** said in reference to all the smoke shops that are popping up, and the people will be licensed to sell marijuana. What kind of security will be in place or required for places like this in order to keep the community safe from potential robberies that could transpire because of the paraphernalia they will be selling?

**Det. Skinner** said with the smoke shops, not everyone is supposed to be getting a license. Right now, the Police Dept. will be doing inspections along with the Sheriffs and the thing is, no one is supposed to be selling marijuana because they don’t have licenses yet. They are opening under a smoke shop name, and in hopes of when the licenses are distributed, they will already have the name of their business established. However, they are saying smoke shop, but are selling stuff like tobacco and hookahs, however, if they are selling marijuana, that is enforceable because the Sheriffs and the Precinct have been doing operations. As far as security wise, there is nothing in play and the City has not said anything to the nature of that.

**Ms. Persaud** said before they get a Cannabis license, they have to come before the Commerce Committee and the agency that deals with that have not started distributing any licenses.

**New Business**

**Mr. Patrick Agard** said he is representing All Nations Restaurant & Lounge, located 1019 Utica Avenue, on the corner of Tilden Avenue. The establishment has been in business since 2002. The business has mostly been closed for the last 2 years. She has opened back up and held some small events on weekends. She is looking to get back to operating more fully as they were doing prior to the pandemic.

**Ms. Persaud** said this a renewal application and there were no incidents for any of the applicants.

The next applicant is for Pitant Sports Team, located at 502 East 95th Street, Brooklyn, NY and is also a renewal for a full liquor license.

**Mr. Agard** said Pitant Sports Team, located at 502 East 95th Street, between Church Avenue and Willmohr Street and have been in business since 2008 and they are looking to renew, and they have had no incidents there. This is a family-run business started by the Father, Mr. **(INAUDILE)** and he continues to be a part of it. His son, Garth and his sister manage it and they are listed on file with the SLA as Managers.

**Ms. Bennett** asked what is the size of the business and how many people can it accommodate?

**Mr. Agard** said it is about 1,200 square feet, with 20 seats inside and they are more on the lounge side of the business. They have a small crowd that comes to them and they have been doing that for last few years. They are in compliance with the **(INAUDILE)** the Fire Dept. and the Buildings Dept.

**Ms. Persaud** said the next applicant is Sean Myton, 1308 Utica Avenue, Brooklyn, NY and this is a new application for a full wine and beer license.

She said she noticed the business does not have the name that he will be using or a DBA name.

**Mr. Sean Myton** said he was going to name it Legacy Lounge.

**Ms. Persaud** said that would have to be put on the application. She said if he was applying for a temporary permit, that also has to be put on the application. The application was changed in January by the SLA. The purpose of the application is to inform the Community Board that he is applying for a temporary license as well. The application says the establishment is on the 1st floor. She is familiar with this location it has 2 floors, and 2 bars.

**Mr. Myton** said the 2nd bar will be dismantled and it will be like a lounge and there will only be 1 bar in the establishment.

**Ms. Persaud** said the SLA has on file that this location has 2 bars.

**Mr. Myton** said the 2nd bar takes up space that is not necessary, because it is one building.

**Ms. Persaud** said the application say the location is 500 feet from 3 or more establishments, and the answer was no. She asked if he were aware that he is within 500 feet of 3 locations?

**Mr. Myton** said he was not aware of that.

**Ms. Persaud** said they are Bamboo Wok, **(INAUDILE)** Garden and Tropical Breeze.

**Ms. Vigliante** asked if he will be operating on the 2 floors?

**Mr. Myton** said that is correct.

**Ms. Persaud** said his application is incorrect because it says the 1st floor.

**Ms. Vigliante** asked if this is going to be a night club?

**Mr. Myton** said no, it is going to be a lounge to sit down and eat food.

**Ms. Vigilante** asked will there be a sound system or live music? When Rag Top was there, the music was very loud when they were doing business. She asked if he was going to update the sound proofing?

**Mr. Myton** said they are going to have music and the sound proofing will be updated.

**Ms. Vigliante** asked how many people does the place hold? What the hours of operation?

**Mr. Myton** said less than 200 people total on both floors. During the week, they will close around 11pm to 12am, and on the weekends by 2 am.

**Ms. Bennett** asked if he were going to have music outside of the building? What about the parking?

**Mr. Myton** said no, because residents live behind the building and that would be inconsiderate to have loud music. He will encourage people to walk or take Ubers since they will be drinking, and why would they want to drive.

**Ms. Persaud** said as the Chair of the Commerce Committee and the person to sign the letter for the SLA, she is not comfortable with all the discrepancies on this application and she suggested that he resubmit the application because what is submitted to the Community Board has to be submitted to the SLA, and this is inaccurate. The application will be rejected with all the discrepancies that are on it. Has the 2nd bar been dismantled already or is it going to be, because she is not comfortable with that?

**Mr. Myton** said he did not get the go ahead to start anything yet when he does not know if he will get the approval

**Ms. Persaud** said the next application is Footprints Café, located at 5814 Clarendon Road, Brooklyn, NY 11203. This application is a renewal for a full wine and beer license. There were no incidents at this location, and they have been in business for almost 22 years.

**Mr. Robert Gordon** said it has been a pleasure serving the community for almost 22 years and he employs over 100 people. They are a restaurant and bar, and 90% of their revenue is from the food and about 10% from alcohol sales. If there is ever an issue with anything they do, operational wise, on day-to-day operations. He encourages anybody in the community to give him a call about any issues that may arise.

**Ms. Bennett** said she has a problem with the sidewalk being blocked.

**Mr. Gordon** said the sidewalk space is about 4 ½ -5 feet wide and when they are doing the set-up, and there are one of the few places that were licensed for the sidewalk, pre pandemic. They try to comply with all the regulations, and a 4-5-foot walkway is provided for pedestrians to walk by, per regulations, but if he has to make adjustments, that is not a problem. They also have a space in the street.

**Ms. Persaud** said they do have a location for the Networking Breakfast at Woody’s Restaurant at 1133-35 Clarkson Avenue. She is looking to hold the event in March or April from 10am to 1pm. The owner has volunteered his location for the event. She asked if this was okay with the members? She would prefer to do it on a Monday or Tuesday, from10am to 1pm. She will have a date for them by the next meeting and then they will start working on the flyers, the food and guest speakers. If they have any suggestions as to who they should invite, let her know.

They can do the Sumptuous Sampling in June 2023. She has to speak to the owner of the location first and then work on a date.

She asked if there were any comments, questions or unfinished business? Having heard none, she asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting?

**Ms. Vigliante** made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Ms. Bennett** seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned.