



Chairperson, Martha Taylor

*The City of New York  
Borough of Queens*

**Community Board 8**

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District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

**Liquor License Committee Meeting**

**Date:** Tuesday, February 19, 2019  
**Time:** 7:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Community Board 8 Office  
197-15 Hillside Avenue  
Hollis, NY 11423

**Michael Hannibal, Liquor License Committee Chair**

**Board Members:** Edward Chung, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, and Robert Harris.

**Also in attendance:** Lawrence Lessing - Owner – Blaze Pizza Fresh Meadows, LLC  
Izabela Szczepanska, Community Board 8 Staff

Liquor License Committee Chair Michael Hannibal called this meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. This was followed by self-introductions of all Board Members and staff.

**Purpose:**

This is to introduce the applicants to the Community Board to make them aware of the expectations of the Board for businesses with on-premise liquor licenses. This establishment is applying for a Wine, Beer, and Cider Liquor License for a restaurant with a sidewalk cafe.

**I. Blaze Pizza Fresh Meadows, LLC.  
61-34 188<sup>th</sup> Street, Store 12A, Fresh Meadows, NY 11365**

**Michael Hannibal** – *This establishment is a restaurant with a sidewalk café is that correct?*

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes.

***Do you have a Certificate of Occupancy [C of O]?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – We do not have it right now because we are still under construction.

***When do you anticipate getting the C of O?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Hopefully towards the end of May or early June.

***Early May?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – End of May.

***What is the maximum occupancy for the building?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – I would think probably 60. I think it will be 60 seats.

***60 seats?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes, it’s probably about 65 or 68 total.

***Do you see it getting close to or exceeding 75?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – No, I don’t think so.

**Marc A. Haken** – *How do you get 68 people with 60 chairs?*

*Mr. Hannibal asked that Board Members wait to ask questions until after his set of questions.*

**Michael Hannibal** - *If it is under 75 you will not need a Public Assembly Permit [PA] but if it is more then you will need one.*

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Okay.

***What are the hours of operation?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – From 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

***Monday thru Friday?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Monday thru Sunday.

***You are basically a 7 days a week operation?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes, seven days a week.

***How do you plan to prevent underage drinking?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – On the P.O.S screen there is a reminder every time the cashier rings in a beer or wine purchase. It prompts them and asks if an ID was checked. It is also another part of our cashier training to check every single person's ID.

***Is your cashier training part of a State wide regulatory system or is it a City oversight?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – It is just part of our standard training. To work the cash register there are training packets, videos, and certifications that the general manager needs to sign off on.

***What security measures will be taken? What would you do in terms of St. John's students or people coming in? How would you handle that type of security particularly since you are going to be open 7 days a week?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – We train the managers on handling things like that and to be out in the dining room. Are you saying in relation to alcohol use?

**Yes.**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – We will make sure to check every ID and monitor the space. We have someone that works in the dining room. They are cleaning and checking on things like that. The managers are also frequently going out and keeping an eye on things.

***Anything like security cameras or anything of that nature?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes, we will have security cameras. I think we are going to have about 20 security cameras in the restaurant.

***How will you maintain cleanliness of the establishment outside (i.e. smokers (ashtrays))?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – We will also have a team member placed in front house to maintain cleanliness. It's also part of the general manager and assistant general manager to walk around the restaurant and check everything. They also assign cleaning projects every day to members of the team if there is anything that needs to be addressed. Usually we address everything in the moment. Periodically, we do a deep cleaning to prevent any build up and not to become an eyesore. This is to make sure it stays the way it is supposed to.

***Mr. Hannibal opened the floor for questions or concerns from the Board Members regarding the applicant. He announced that Marc A. Haken can go first.***

**Marc A. Haken** – *You have an outdoor café that will seat how many?*

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – I think about 15 or 20.

***Will it be a defined area that is roped off or something along the way?***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes, there will be a fence.

***There will obviously be no smoking within that area where people are dining.***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Right.

***Alcohol will be served to customers there also.***

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – I think they can keep it as long as they stay inside the gate. They would have to buy it inside and bring it out. That will be something that will be contained within the sidewalk café. If the guests take it outside they could get into trouble. We could also get into trouble so it is in our best interest to monitor that.

**You will get into a lot more trouble than they will.**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Exactly.

**You are a franchisee?**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes.

**Your franchiser sets down certain rules and regulations as to how you conduct your business correct?**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes.

**So many of the things you related to us come from up above and down to you?**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes, a lot of it is standard operating procedure. We operate seven franchise locations and that's how we do this and all of those too.

**You speak about we. Are you going to be running this particular location or are you an expeditor for Blaze Pizza who comes in and opens up to assist somebody else? Are you the owner of this particular business?**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes [owner].

**Do you have you any others?**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes, seven others.

**Mr. Hannibal asked if Robert Harris has any questions or concerns for the applicant.**

**Robert Harris – I cannot figure out the exact location.**

**Marc A. Haken – It is where Radio Shack was.**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes, it's where radio shack was right next to Haagen-Dazs.

**Robert Harris – Do you have gluten free pizza?**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes, we have gluten free and vegan.

**James Gallagher Jr. – If you have 60 inside and 20 more outside doesn't that go over the PA?**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – I think it is 60 total. It's really about 40 inside. It's small, the space is only 2,000 square feet. It's like 40 and 15. I was talking to my cousin today who handles the construction and he said it's under 75. A total of 60 with the sidewalk café.

**The sidewalk café is where I have problems. Will it have a roof above it like Hooters does?**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – No.

**So when it rains what happens?**

**Marc A. Haken – People don't sit there.**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Yes, you just don't use it during rainy days and during the colder months.

**James Gallagher Jr. – Is there a bar inside or is it all seating areas?**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – It's just all seating inside.

**Michael Hannibal – No standing at the bar?**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – No, there is no bar. It is a really small. The beer and wines are a really small part of the business. It is less than one percent of our sales. We call it the veto vote so if a dad is with his kids and he feels like having a beer than we have it as an option. It's not a type of place that people come in to have a bunch of drinks. A lot of the other franchise restaurants have draft beer systems. For this one I took it out of the proposal because I didn't think it was necessary.

**Michael Hannibal – So it remains more or less like a family focused restaurant?**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – It's much more of a family focused. I've never really seen people have more than one or two drinks. It doesn't have any kind of bar or anything like that.

**Edward Chung – Like an Applebee's?**

**Answer:** [Mr. Lessing] – Way less drinking.

**Michael Hannibal** – *Applebee’s has a bar.*

**Marc A. Haken** – *The wine comes in little individual bottles.*

**Answer:** *[Mr. Lessing]* – Yes, it is small.

**Marc A. Haken** – *You are not advertising yourself as a pizzeria. You are advertising yourself as a restaurant. What will you be serving beyond pizza?*

**Answer:** *[Mr. Lessing]* – We have salads and a couple of deserts like brownies and cookies. It is 95% pizza.

*Then why don’t you call yourself a pizzeria rather than a restaurant?*

**Answer:** *[Mr. Lessing]* – We figured restaurant covers everything.

**Michael Hannibal** – *I just want to follow what Marc said. The application states Blaze Pizza of Fresh Meadows. That is the franchise name. For your spot it will probably say Blaze Restaurant or something along those lines?*

**Answer:** *[Mr. Lessing]* – No, it will say Blaze Pizza. It will have the corporate logo that all of them have.

*It will still represent Blaze Pizza?*

**Answer:** *[Mr. Lessing]* – Yes.

**James Gallagher Jr.** – *You know Ron Craddock?*

**Answer:** *[Mr. Lessing]* – Yes.

***Mr. Hannibal asked the Board Members if anyone else may have any other questions or concerns to the applicant.***

Marc A. Haken made a motion to approve the application for a Beer, Wine, and Cider Liquor License for Blaze Pizza Fresh Meadow, LLC, located at 61-34 188<sup>th</sup> Street, Store 12A, seconded by Robert Harris, pending the receipt of the C of O or Letter of No Objection.

**Votes in favor: 5**

**Votes against: 0**

**Board Members who voted in favor:** Edward Chung, James Gallagher Jr., Michael Hannibal, Marc A. Haken and Robert Harris.

**Board Members who voted against:** None.

*The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Hannibal reiterated that the applicant should reach out to the 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct Community Affairs Unit. He provided contact information for NYPD 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct NCO and Community Affairs Officers for Quadrant A. He also added that the applicant should inform the Community Board of any concerns that arise. He advised the applicant to go and introduce himself. He welcomed him aboard. Mr. Haken asked the applicant how community oriented he is. The applicant responded that their biggest marketing is fundraising. They have events where they donate for school sport teams, churches, and any kinds of club. They also take 20% of sales from that night and give it back to the community. Mr. Haken informed the applicant that he is President of Friends of Cunningham Park and it would be great to work together in the future. Mr. Chung informed everyone that Jamaica Estates is having an event on Monday at 7:00 p.m. He said that there will be performances, dancing and food. He welcomed everyone to come. The applicant announced that they are hoping to open June 1<sup>st</sup>.*

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**This meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.**

*Respectfully submitted by,*

*Izabela Szczepanska, Community Board 8 Staff*

*April 12, 2019*