

LICENSE HEARING MINUTES
Raider Liquor LLC, dba Dabbler Depot, 1545 7th St W
Thursday, July 23, 2:00 PM
Room 330 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Boulevard West
Nhia Vang, Legislative Hearing Officer

The hearing was called to order at 2:00 PM

Staff Present: Jeff Fischbach, Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) Licensing Inspector; Grace Wagner, DSI Zoning Inspector (remote participation)

Licensee: Brad Brakke, Applicant/Owner; Matt Kenevan, Previous License Holder

License Application: Liquor Off Sale license

Legislative Hearing Officer Nhia Vang made introductory comments about the hearing process: This is an informal legislative hearing for a license application. This license application required a Class N notification to inform neighbors and the District Council about the application and provide them with an opportunity to submit comments. The city received correspondence of concern/objection, which triggered this hearing.

The hearing will proceed as follows: DSI staff will explain their review of the application and state their recommendation. The applicant will be asked to discuss their business plan. Members of the community will be invited to testify as to whether they object to or support the license application. At the end of the hearing, the Legislative Hearing Officer will develop a recommendation for the City Council to consider. The recommendation will come before the City Council as a resolution on the Consent Agenda; the City Council is the final authority on whether the license is approved or denied.

There are three possible results from this hearing: 1) a recommendation that the City Council issue this license without any conditions; 2) a recommendation that the City Council issue this license with agreed upon conditions; or 3) a recommendation that the City Council not issue this license but refer it to the city attorney's office to take an adverse action on the application, which could involve review by an administrative law judge.

Minutes:

Hearing Officer Vang asked if the applicant understood and agreed to the conditions listed on the Class N Notification.

Brakke: That's correct.

Jeff Fischbach, Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) - Licensing, gave a staff report for licensee Raider Liquor LLC, (License ID# DSIBLLOFS-000922-2026), d/b/a Dabbler Depot, located at 1545 7th St W. The application is for a Liquor Off Sale license. DSI is recommending approval with the following license conditions:

1. Licensee acknowledges that the only items permitted to be sold on the premises are those specifically authorized for an exclusive liquor store under Minnesota Statute 340A.412 Subd. 14..
2. The sale of tobacco products requires an active Tobacco Shop license issued by the City of St Paul.

No correspondence was received from the Fort Road Federation District Council. Building conditions, N/A; License approved with conditions; and Zoning approved.

Hearing Officer Vang asked about the Zoning review.

Grace Wagner, Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) - Zoning, gave a staff report. The area is zoned B3 – General Business. This is a permitted use. There is no parking requirements associated with this application.

Jeff Fishbach asked the applicant to confirm that they don't sell tobacco or hold a tobacco license.

Brakke: No, we don't sell tobacco, and we have no plans to sell tobacco or obtain a license.

Fischbach: They can't sell it. We put condition number 2 there because they need a separate license. They can't get one because there is a cap on tobacco licenses and we exceed that right now.

Hearing Officer Vang asked the applicant to talk about the business: history, hours of operation, number of employees, etc.

Brakke: I have owned a liquor store for 20 years and I have been in this business for 40 years. I have had no issues or violations at my first store which is in Wabasha County. This will be the secondary location. The business is roughly the same size as my first one. We currently plan to keep the same manager and the same staff that is currently employed at Dabler. The manager that will be on site is Ozzy Osmondson, he's been the manager for a while now and is very well liked.

Hearing Officer Vang next invited other attendees to testify.

Matt Kenevan spoke on the history of the business and specifics as the current owner selling to Mr. Brakke.

Kenevan: I'm the current owner of Dabbler Depot and I'm selling the business to do some other things. I will still have a shop on Energy Park Drive and I still have some other properties and business based out of Saint Paul. The hours for the Dabbler Depot are 10AM – 8PM Monday through Thursday and Friday and Saturday are 10AM – 9PM. Sunday is 11AM – 6PM.

Hearing Officer Vang: Can you talk about your vendors and deliveries?

Kenevan: There are 4 major distributors that are delivering that come with trucks that are short semis. All deliveries are made in the parking lot. The distributors are Breakthrough Beverage, Capital Beverage, Hollenstein and Clear River Beverage. For the most part they park in the alley or street. In the course of a week there was a 4-hour window where those deliveries transpired. I brought today an agreement that we came up with for everyone to sign that they won't use that alley as a delivery place anymore. This being an issue was never brought to my attention in the 4 years I have owned this place, there were never any complaints. I also brought a letter from the tenants that are moving out of the neighboring property owned by Dominic Eisenzimmer speaking to the issues that he put in his letter of complaint.

Hearing Officer Vang next read into the record the letters of concern from Dominic Eisenzimmer, Berkeley Rentals, which voiced concerns about deliveries, unpaid property taxes, and property valuation. She then gave the applicant the opportunity to respond.

Kenevan: The letter of complaint came out of left field as he is a regular customer in the store 2-3 times a week. Addressing the tax side of things addressed in this letter, I don't know how first that's relevant in a liquor license but second you know I just had my tax being counter send me the information of our history, and we just paid up currently but we were taking advantage of the Metro Surge opportunity for a delay of 2 months. The tax delay, that was something that the city of Saint Paul and the city of Minneapolis offered was 2 months. Delay on property taxes so we signed up for that took advantage of that; that's perfectly legal, but we paid up all taxes last week so that's not delinquent and the prior – to me, I had no idea we were ever late, but I'm told by my accounting people it was just a simple error. They mailed the check in on time, but it was delayed in being entered into the system. We have never had issues paying our taxes, so it was a little bit of a surprise. I've got a historic reputation for being a good neighbor, hence winning the Saint Paul Good Neighbor award. I care about people. I mow neighbors' lawns and plow their lots and help people out when they possibly can't and I've done that many times. Dominic and I just was in awe that he wrote a letter against this transaction, and it was a bummer because it ultimately set our deal back. We were supposed to close tomorrow.

Hearing Officer Vang had the paperwork submitted by Matt Kenevan into the record.

Hearing Officer Vang asked when the new owners would like to open.

Brakke: Tentatively, the 31st of August is the projected opening; however, it's going to depend on this process, but that's the aim.

Hearing Officer Vang asked Mr. Brakke and Mr. Kenevan to discuss what the patio area on the side of the property is being used for and what the intention of it is moving forward.

Kenevan: We use that area for a community gathering spot, that was the intention of it. Currently, Potters Pasties has taken over the coffee and donut shop. It's a small space so they use the food truck as a secondary cooking location during busy times.

Brakke: We have no intention of doing On Sale Liquor and while they don't have intention of changing that space since Potters sometimes uses it there is no intention of On Sale Liquor happening.

Hearing Officer Vang: Can you speak to the traffic in the area for entering and exiting and how that works when it snows?

Kenevan: I had 2 curb cuts on 7th street, and it was in my opinion that that caused an unsafe situation so I went through a large extent to get those curb cuts closed and as you all probably know sometimes that can be challenging especially when you're working with the highway and the city and folks. The program that's running there for traffic is the absolute best it can be, and I don't see it as any issues in any way. Snow gets pushed into the corner on Chatsworth and 7th and then when it builds up there, I come in with my skid steer. And move the snow so it doesn't impede with the traffic coming in. So, on a normal winter I would say average one to two times do I have to remove snow from the property.

Brekke: We intend to hire Matt to do the plowing for the property when it snows and it will remain the same as it has been in the past.

Hearing Officer Vang asked about the system that is in place for trash.

Kenevan: The dumpsters are locked, and Dominick's trash has to be taken by the truck coming into our lot. We have never had an issue with this.

Hearing Officer Vang stated that after reviewing the records and considering the testimonies from all parties, she will recommend to the City Council that they approve the license with the following agreed-upon conditions:

1. Licensee acknowledges that the only items permitted to be sold on the premises are those specifically authorized for an exclusive liquor store under Minnesota Statute 340A.412 Subd. 14..
2. The sale of tobacco products requires an active Tobacco Shop license issued by the City of St Paul.

The hearing adjourned at 2:38 PM.

The Conditions Affidavit was signed and submitted on July 23, 2026.