

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL BOARD
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MEETING

IN THE MATTER OF:

Temporary License Application
Event: National Cherry Blossom Festival Fact-
Date of Event: April 11, 2015 Finding
Applicant: Marc Hitzig Hearing
Neighborhood: 9th Street to 14th
Street, NW & Pennsylvania Ave.
Size of Event: 40,000 Attendees

March 25, 2015

The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board met in the Alcoholic Beverage Control Hearing Room, Reeves Building, 2000 14th Street, N.W., Suite 400S, Washington, D.C. 20009, Chairperson Ruthanne Miller, presiding.

PRESENT:

RUTHANNE MILLER, Chairperson
NICK ALBERTI, Member
DONALD BROOKS, Member
MIKE SILVERSTEIN, Member
HECTOR RODRIGUEZ, Member
JAMES SHORT, Member

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 9:47 a.m.

3 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Now, we have a
4 Fact-Finding Hearing for the National Cherry
5 Blossom Festival dated April 11, 2015. And in
6 this instance the applicant is Mr. Marc Hitzig.
7 Is he here? Yes? Okay.

8 The neighborhood is 9th Street to 14th
9 Street, N.W., and Pennsylvania Avenue. The size
10 of the event, according to my notes, is
11 approximately 40,000. Good morning.

12 MR. HITZIG: Good morning.

13 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Why don't we
14 start with introductions for the record?

15 MR. HITZIG: My name is Marc Hitzig,
16 the Executive Director of Japan-America Society.

17 MS. FOZARD: My name is Colette
18 Fozard. I'm the Director of Operations for the
19 Sakura Matsuri-Japanese Street Festival.

20 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: I'm sorry, could
21 you repeat your name again?

22 MS. FOZARD: Colette Fozard.

1 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Fozard?

2 MS. FOZARD: F, as in Frank, O-Z-A-R-
3 D, as in David.

4 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. Thank you.
5 So, Mr. Blanchard, welcome. I see you are here
6 for the Cherry Blossom --

7 MR. BLANCHARD: Oh, yeah.

8 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: -- Fact-Finding
9 Hearing. Okay.

10 MR. BLANCHARD: I'm waiting for them
11 to bloom.

12 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: We expect that
13 this will be short. I think you were on the
14 agenda because there are so many people. And so
15 it's a big festival, but I know you do it every
16 year. How many years has it been?

17 MR. HITZIG: This is the 55th year.

18 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay.

19 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: Is that right?

20 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: The 55th year in
21 the same spot, too?

22 MR. HITZIG: No. We have been

1 downtown since 1992.

2 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: '92, okay. How
3 does this one compare -- let's just go back to
4 last year.

5 MR. HITZIG: It's pretty much the same
6 as last year. The only change we have to our
7 beer garden is that people who have a wristband
8 and a hand stamp already, we would like to let
9 them enter through the exit where we have a hired
10 ID checker, a professional doorman to check IDs
11 at that exit as well. So --

12 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Let me just --
13 can I just interrupt you for one second?

14 MR. HITZIG: Yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: I just want to
16 make sure, Mr. Brashears, are you here for the
17 Cherry Blossom Festival case or another case?

18 INVESTIGATOR BRASHEARS: Another case,
19 ma'am.

20 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Oh, okay, good.
21 Okay. All right.

22 MR. HITZIG: So as you know, we have

1 two professional ID checkers at the entrance of
2 the beer garden. And we also have an ID checker
3 at the exit preventing any unlawful entry or
4 anything to the beer garden. So we would like to
5 change the dynamic where people who already have
6 gotten a beer earlier, have a wristband, have a
7 hand stamp, we would like them to come through
8 the exit where they would have their ID checked
9 again by the professional ID checker, so that
10 they can skip the long line and go to the side of
11 the -- inside the beer garden to get a beer.

12 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Which long line
13 are they skipping?

14 MR. HITZIG: The entrance to the beer
15 garden where there is a line forming to get your
16 ID checked, to get your hand stamped and then get
17 tickets. So most people will get a roll of
18 tickets ahead of time, so we would like to make
19 it easy for them to not have to go through the
20 whole process again.

21 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: So is it going to
22 be just a different process or if you go through

1 one process, you don't have to go through the
2 other one?

3 MR. HITZIG: No, no. They will still
4 get their hand -- their ID checked. Let's say I
5 have a wristband and a hand stamp, they will not
6 get that again.

7 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Oh.

8 MR. HITZIG: But they will get their
9 ID checked again.

10 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay.

11 MR. HITZIG: They -- if they already
12 have -- if they don't have stamps and they have
13 their ID checked and their hand stamped -- not
14 stamped, but tickets to buy a beer or soft drink,
15 then they would have to get back in the entrance
16 line.

17 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. So that's
18 what you are proposing to do differently this
19 year from last year?

20 MR. HITZIG: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: That's the only
22 change?

1 MR. HITZIG: If you want to --

2 MS. FOZARD: Basically, it's just to
3 alleviate the long lines. We do still check the
4 ID again. And then the person already clearly
5 has the wristband and the hand stamp, so it is a
6 quick check to make sure it is that person and
7 they can enter in, give their tickets at the
8 serving table and essentially do almost a fast
9 lane for that.

10 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: So there is just
11 one beer garden?

12 MR. HITZIG: No, there is two.

13 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: There are two.

14 MR. HITZIG: There are one on 10th
15 Street --

16 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay.

17 MR. HITZIG: -- and Pennsylvania and
18 one on 13th and Pennsylvania.

19 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: And what's the
20 capacity in that area?

21 MR. HITZIG: Inside the beer garden?

22 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Yes.

1 MR. HITZIG: Approximately, 250 people
2 can stand.

3 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. So did you
4 have any issues last year with more people
5 wanting to be in there?

6 MR. HITZIG: Well, since there is very
7 few places to sit in the whole festival, people
8 enjoyed going into the beer garden and having a
9 seat or at least leaning on a high round.

10 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: But you didn't
11 have any problems with it getting too crowded or
12 anything like that?

13 MR. HITZIG: No.

14 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. Is your
15 security going to be the same as last year?

16 MR. HITZIG: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: What's that?

18 MR. HITZIG: The Doorman Security
19 Group.

20 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Yes.

21 MR. HITZIG: They are professional
22 doormen in the District of Columbia.

1 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. And did
2 you have any problems last year?

3 MR. HITZIG: No.

4 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. Other
5 Board --

6 MEMBER SHORT: I do.

7 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Yes, go ahead.

8 MEMBER SHORT: How many security or
9 those doormen have you hired?

10 MR. HITZIG: We will have three at
11 each beer garden and two at our Sake Tasting
12 Tent. Then we have three teams of three people
13 roaming the festival. Then we have two --

14 MEMBER SHORT: Three teams? What do
15 the teams consist of?

16 MR. HITZIG: Three people in each
17 team. And we have them -- one team will go
18 between 9th and 10th Street. One team will be
19 between 10th and 12th Street. And the other team
20 will be between 12th and 13th Street roaming to --
21 for security purposes.

22 MEMBER SHORT: That was already run

1 past the MPD?

2 MR. HITZIG: Yes.

3 MR. BLANCHARD: Yes.

4 MR. HITZIG: And then we have two
5 security, DSG Security, at every entrance, which
6 we have four entrances. Then we will also have
7 security at our emergency exits. We have seven
8 emergency exits plus four additional exits behind
9 the stages where we will have security there to
10 prevent people from leaving the festival with any
11 alcoholic beverage.

12 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. And you said
13 this year the only difference is going to be the
14 why you host an egress. There will also be --
15 you will have people coming in and going out
16 there?

17 MS. FOZARD: Just at the beer garden.

18 MEMBER SHORT: Only one entrance to
19 the beer garden?

20 MS. FOZARD: There is one primary
21 entrance to the beer garden where we have the
22 dual ID checking, where the wristband and the

1 hand stamp is applied initially. If a person has
2 the tickets for purchasing beer and has already
3 received the wristband and the hand stamp, they
4 will be able to present their ID at the exit to
5 the beer garden, have it checked and then go in
6 and be -- present their tickets at the serving
7 table to be served then.

8 MEMBER SHORT: Okay. I assume we have
9 a copy of the diagram of the beer garden?

10 MS. FOZARD: Yes.

11 MR. HITZIG: Yes.

12 MEMBER SHORT: We do.

13 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay.

14 MEMBER SHORT: Expansions, okay. All
15 right. Thank you, gentlemen.

16 MR. HITZIG: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Other questions?
18 Yes, Mr. Rodriguez?

19 MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Can you tell me
20 more about your Sake tasting pavilion?

21 MR. HITZIG: I see a smile on your
22 face. The Sake pavilion people will buy a ticket

1 to get in.

2 MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Right.

3 MR. HITZIG: And then they will go to
4 a table and be instructed on the six different
5 Sakes that we have from Hakusan Sake plus there
6 is a plum wine included in that. Then they also
7 will be given a bottle of water for the tasting
8 and a complimentary small shotglass that is from
9 Hakusan. And we wipe the shotglass clean and
10 wrap it in plastic, not plastic, but paper
11 towels, so that if it drops on the blacktop, on
12 the street, it does not shatter.

13 MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Did you have
14 this last year?

15 MR. HITZIG: Yes. We have had it
16 since 2007 or '08.

17 MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Yes, I missed it,
18 so now I know.

19 MR. HITZIG: Okay.

20 MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. Other
22 questions? Do you have any questions for us?

1 Okay. Now being that this is a long-standing
2 festival and you have some great plans that you
3 have been implementing for many, many years, so
4 this is really just a check-in, you know, for
5 anything different and any problems from last
6 year. And it sounds like you have everything
7 under control, so I'm ready to move to approve
8 this application.

9 MEMBER SHORT: Madam Chair?

10 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Yes?

11 MEMBER SHORT: Just I would like to
12 make --

13 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Yes, yes, go
14 ahead, Mr. Short.

15 MEMBER SHORT: I would just like to
16 say that I am a Washingtonian and I am a Board
17 Member and I have really enjoyed this festival
18 over the years. And in particular, Washington,
19 D.C. being born every year at the Cherry Blossom.
20 Thank you for a great event.

21 MR. HITZIG: Thank you very much.

22 MS. FOZARD: Thank you.

1 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay. So I think
2 I made a motion to approve this application. Do
3 I have a second?

4 MEMBER SHORT: Second.

5 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Mr. Short
6 seconded the motion.

7 All those in favor say aye.

8 ALL: Aye.

9 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: All those
10 opposed? All those abstaining? The motion
11 passes 6-0-0. We will just initial this. Okay.
12 We love the Cherry Blossom, so we love to see you
13 all every year, you know.

14 MR. HITZIG: Thank you.

15 MEMBER SILVERSTEIN: When are they
16 coming out by the way? What are we hearing?

17 MR. HITZIG: Predicted being between
18 the 9th and 12th of April.

19 MS. FOZARD: Yes, the National Park
20 Service says all of it is the 14th, so it's going
21 to be right over our festival weekend. We are
22 prepared for a great crowd and we are hoping for

1 good weather.

2 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Right.

3 MR. HITZIG: Same as last year, what
4 happened last year. The people that do all the
5 work for the National Cherry Blossom are these
6 two young ladies back here.

7 (Applause)

8 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Oh, great. Thank
9 you.

10 MR. HITZIG: We just do one small
11 little event.

12 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Okay.

13 MR. HITZIG: Thank you very much.

14 (Whereupon, the Fact-Finding Hearing
15 in the above-entitled matter was concluded at
16 9:59 a.m.)

<p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p>a.m 2:2 15:16 able 11:4 above-entitled 15:15 abstaining 14:10 additional 10:8 agenda 3:14 ahead 5:18 9:7 13:14 ALBERTI 1:16 alcoholic 1:2,12,12 10:11 alleviate 7:3 Applause 15:7 applicant 1:8 2:6 application 1:6 13:8 14:2 applied 11:1 approve 13:7 14:2 approximately 2:11 8:1 April 1:7 2:5 14:18 area 7:20 assume 11:8 Attendees 1:9 Ave 1:9 Avenue 2:9 aye 14:7,8</p>	<p>5:12,21 6:7,10,17,21 7:10,13,16,19,22 8:3 8:10,14,17,20 9:1,4,7 11:13,17 12:21 13:10 13:13 14:1,5,9 15:2,8 15:12 change 4:6 5:5 6:22 check 4:10 7:3,6 check-in 13:4 checked 5:8,16 6:4,9 6:13 11:5 checker 4:10 5:2,9 checkers 5:1 checking 10:22 Cherry 1:6 2:4 3:6 4:17 13:19 14:12 15:5 clean 12:9 clearly 7:4 Colette 2:17,22 Columbia 1:1 8:22 come 5:7 coming 10:15 14:16 compare 4:3 complimentary 12:8 concluded 15:15 consist 9:15 control 1:2,12,12 13:7 copy 11:9 crowd 14:22 crowded 8:11</p>	<p>enjoyed 8:8 13:17 enter 4:9 7:7 entrance 5:1,14 6:15 10:5,18,21 entrances 10:6 entry 5:3 essentially 7:8 event 1:6,7,9 2:10 13:20 15:11 Executive 2:16 exit 4:9,11 5:3,8 11:4 exits 10:7,8,8 Expansions 11:14 expect 3:12</p>	<p>hearing 1:7,12 2:4 3:9 14:16 15:14 HECTOR 1:18 high 8:9 hired 4:9 9:9 Hitzig 1:8 2:6,12,15,15 3:17,22 4:5,14,22 5:14 6:3,8,11,20 7:1 7:12,14,17,21 8:1,6 8:13,16,18,21 9:3,10 9:16 10:2,4 11:11,16 11:21 12:3,15,19 13:21 14:14,17 15:3 15:10,13 hoping 14:22 host 10:14</p>
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