



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

2 (9:58 a.m.)

3 CHAIRPERSON MILLER: Good morning.

4 Welcome to, we have an extra day of hearings  
5 today at the D.C. Alcoholic Beverage Control  
6 Board. Today is September 19th, 2013.

7 My name is Ruthanne Miller. I'm  
8 the Chairperson. To my far right is Mr.  
9 Donald Brooks. To my immediate right is Mr.  
10 Nick Alberti. And to my immediate left is Mr.  
11 Mike Silverstein.

12 The Board has four members in  
13 attendance for the congress of business today,  
14 with three constituting a quorum. Copies of  
15 today's hearing calendar and agenda are  
16 available at the receptionist's desk.

17 Please be aware that these  
18 proceedings are being recorded by a court  
19 reporter. Therefore, we ask you to refrain  
20 from any disruptive noises or actions in the  
21 hearing room.

22 If you have electronic devices,

1 pagers, cell phones, or such, please make  
2 certain that they're turned off to avoid any  
3 interruption of the proceedings.

4 When I call your case, please come  
5 forward, take a seat at the table. You'll see  
6 there's a piece of paper there on the table  
7 for you to sign in. This is to ensure the  
8 correct spelling of your name for the record.

9 The Open Meetings Act requires  
10 that the public hearing on each case be open  
11 to the public. The Board may, consistent with  
12 Section 405(b) of the Open Meetings Act, enter  
13 a closed meeting during or after the public  
14 hearing on occasions, to consult with an  
15 attorney, to obtain legal advice, discuss  
16 settlement agreements, or deliberate upon a  
17 decision in an adjudication proceeding.

18 Okay. This morning we have  
19 several fact finding hearings. They are not  
20 contested cases. No one will be put under  
21 oath. We have asked individuals to come to  
22 provide us just with some more information,

1 understanding to help us proceed with whatever  
2 applications may be before us concerning those  
3 cases.

4 Okay. So I'm going to call the  
5 first fact finding case, which is District  
6 Lounge and Grille, located at 2473 18th  
7 Street, N.W., license number 91034, and ANC  
8 1C.

9 MR. BIANCO: Good morning, Madame  
10 Chair. My name is Richard Bianco, on behalf  
11 of the applicant. We have the members of the  
12 applicant's entity here before you. I'll  
13 allow them to introduce themselves.

14 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: My name is  
15 Alireza Hajaligholi. You can call me Haji for  
16 short. Spells A-J-I-R-E-Z-A, H-A-J-A-L-I-G-H-  
17 O-L-I.

18 MR. TAPPER: Good morning. My  
19 name is Dino Tapper, spelled D-I-N-O, T-A-P-P-  
20 E-R.

21 MR. WILDER: Good morning. My  
22 name is Ari Wilder, A-R-I, last name's W-I-L-

1 D-E-R.

2 MR. RENEAU: Good morning. My  
3 name is Paul Reneau. I'm the owner of the  
4 building. I spell my name R-E-N-E-A-U.

5 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Let me just  
6 start. And then I think other Board members  
7 will dig in with questions. But we have a  
8 request from Mr. Reneau to remove the license  
9 from safekeeping. And that's the application  
10 that's before us.

11 And I believe there's also a  
12 transfer application to new owners, or  
13 prospective new owners, all of whom are here.  
14 Is that correct? Did I hear everybody? Did  
15 I hear Mr. McLean here?

16 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Mr. McLean is my  
17 brother.

18 CHAIR MILLER: He's not here.

19 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: And he's at a  
20 liver transplantation, and he couldn't make it  
21 --

22 CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

1 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: -- because of  
2 that.

3 CHAIR MILLER: But he is one of  
4 the four --

5 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes, he is.

6 CHAIR MILLER: -- owners  
7 identified, or prospective owners? Okay.

8 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes.

9 CHAIR MILLER: And Mr. Tapper's  
10 here. Okay. And Mr. Wilder and Haji is here.

11 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes, yes.

12 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. All right.  
13 So I guess first, before the Board members get  
14 into questions, if you could just give a  
15 little synopsis of what is actually going on?  
16 Who is transferring the license from whom?  
17 And, you know --

18 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: You want this,  
19 or you want me to do it?

20 MR. BIANCO: Joyce, you prepared  
21 the application --

22 CHAIR MILLER: Oh, hello. You

1 want to introduce yourself for the record.

2 You just came in?

3 MS. NJOROGÉ: Yes. My name is  
4 Joyce Njoroge. I'm representing the  
5 applicant.

6 CHAIR MILLER: You're representing  
7 who?

8 MS. NJOROGÉ: Chloe, Inc. for the  
9 transfer of the license.

10 MEMBER ALBERTI: Your name again?  
11 I'm sorry, I didn't --

12 MS. NJOROGÉ: Joyce Njoroge.

13 MEMBER ALBERTI: Njoroge.

14 MS. NJOROGÉ: I can spell the last  
15 name for you.

16 MEMBER ALBERTI: Yes.

17 MS. NJOROGÉ: It's N, like in  
18 November, J for Joyce, O for Orange, R for  
19 Robert, O for Orange, G for God, E for Edward.  
20 First name Joyce.

21 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. So you're  
22 representing Chloe?

1 MS. NJOROGE: Yes.

2 CHAIR MILLER: Who has the  
3 license, or does -- What is Chloe's role?

4 MS. NJOROGE: I'm representing  
5 both parties, the transfer and the transferee.

6 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. I want to  
7 know, just to -- Is the transfer Chloe or Mr.  
8 Reneau? Or who's the transfer?

9 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: I can, let me  
10 tell the whole story.

11 MR. BIANCO: As I understand it,  
12 the license is in safekeeping.

13 CHAIR MILLER: Right.

14 MR. BIANCO: And it belongs  
15 presently to Showboat, LLC. Showboat, LLC  
16 acquired the license by virtue of a default in  
17 a lease from the former owner, which is how  
18 Showboat acquired it.

19 And now we are applying to have it  
20 taken out of safekeeping, and transferred from  
21 Showboat, LLC, which is the landlord entity,  
22 to Chloe, LLC, which is the proposed

1 operations entity.

2 CHAIR MILLER: It's transferred  
3 from Showboat to Chloe --

4 MR. BIANCO: Chloe, yes.

5 CHAIR MILLER: -- is what the  
6 application is for?

7 MR. BIANCO: Correct.

8 CHAIR MILLER: And, Mr. Reneau,  
9 what's your relation to Showboat?

10 MR. RENEAU: It's actually  
11 Showboat 2473, LLC. That's the correct name  
12 of the LLC. And I am one of two owners of  
13 that LLC. I have a partner, Keyvan Ahdup,  
14 which each of us owns the LLC.

15 CHAIR MILLER: Who's the other  
16 owner?

17 MR. RENEAU: Keyvan Ahdup.

18 CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

19 MR. RENEAU: K-E-Y-V-A-N, last  
20 name A-H-D-U-P. We're 50/50 partners on this.

21 CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

22 MR. RENEAU: Well, 50/50 partners

1 on the LLC.

2 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. All right.  
3 I'm going to pause for a while. Okay. And do  
4 you have any relation to Chloe? Or is Chloe  
5 a --

6 MR. RENEAU: I do not. I'm the, I  
7 mean, we own the building and we rent the  
8 building. We rent the space to Chloe. I have  
9 no interest in the restaurant.

10 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. You rent the  
11 space currently to Chloe?

12 MR. RENEAU: Well there's four  
13 spaces in the building.

14 CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

15 MR. RENEAU: And I rent one space  
16 to Chloe, one space to District, a third space  
17 to Eartha, which is a carry out, and a fourth  
18 space to a yogurt place called Caliyogurt.

19 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. I thought  
20 Chloe and District are the same entity.

21 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Oh yes.

22 MR. BIANCO: They are.

1 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: There's several.  
2 It's called Saki.

3 MR. BIANCO: Yes, Saki.

4 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: You misspoke.

5 MR. RENEAU: There's several, yes.

6 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Because the  
7 proposed transfer is to Chloe.

8 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes.

9 CHAIR MILLER: Chloe isn't  
10 operating right now, is that correct?

11 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: No.

12 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. All right.  
13 And can you just tell us a little bit about  
14 Chloe then? And then I'm going to let others  
15 ask questions.

16 MS. NJOROGE: Chloe is an LLC of  
17 five members, four members, sorry.

18 CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

19 MS. NJOROGE: Dino Tapper, Ari  
20 Wilder, Haji and Michael. He's not here.  
21 McLean.

22 MR. TAPPER: We're looking to

1 operate as a full service restaurant.

2 CHAIR MILLER: This LLC isn't  
3 operating anything else, or operating now at  
4 all?

5 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: No, no.

6 CHAIR MILLER: It's going to be a  
7 new operation, correct?

8 MR. BIANCO: Correct.

9 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes.

10 MR. BIANCO: Correct, ma'am.

11 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. So can you  
12 give us information about the plans for this  
13 new restaurant?

14 MR. TAPPER: Sure. It's going to  
15 be a sports bar restaurant that will be open  
16 Monday through Sunday, with a heavy focus on  
17 Saturday and Sunday brunches. The plan is  
18 really to utilize the massive space as an  
19 event space also for private events.

20 I currently own two other  
21 restaurants here in D.C. I have inquiries for  
22 parties of anywhere from 200 to 1,000 people

1 that I cannot facilitate in any other  
2 property. I was drawn into this space because  
3 it could allow me to funnel guests that I now  
4 turn away into my own space.

5 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. I'm sorry,  
6 are you Mr. McLean or --

7 MR. TAPPER: I'm Dino Tapper.

8 CHAIR MILLER: Tapper, okay. So  
9 you own another restaurant?

10 MR. TAPPER: Yes, ma'am.

11 CHAIR MILLER: Which restaurant is  
12 that?

13 MR. TAPPER: Floriana.

14 MEMBER ALBERTI: What was it?

15 MR. TAPPER: Floriana.

16 MEMBER ALBERTI: Floriana?

17 MR. TAPPER: Correct.

18 CHAIR MILLER: And you're saying  
19 you end up turning guests away? That you  
20 need, that's why you want another space?

21 MR. TAPPER: Correct.

22 CHAIR MILLER: Is it going to be

1 operated like Floriana?

2 MR. TAPPER: I believe so, yes.

3 CHAIR MILLER: Oh, but Floriana's  
4 not a sports bar, is it?

5 MR. TAPPER: Correct. No,  
6 Floriana's an Italian restaurant.

7 CHAIR MILLER: Right.

8 MEMBER ALBERTI: On 17th Street?

9 MR. TAPPER: Correct. Now I have,  
10 I'm in a small brownstone. So I can only do  
11 100 people at Floriana. That doesn't mean  
12 that I can't still serve the same kind of food  
13 from Floriana at Chloe, or District. I just  
14 want to make this clear. We're going to, I'm  
15 going to refer to the place as District --

16 CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

17 MR. TAPPER: -- instead of the  
18 LLC, so we stop co-mingling four names and  
19 getting confused. I have inquiries all the  
20 time for anywhere from 200 people to 1,000.

21 Especially where I'm located in  
22 Dupont Circle, which is a stone's throw away

1 from Adams Morgan. Funneling people from one  
2 restaurant to another is what I'm trying to  
3 do.

4 CHAIR MILLER: So your plans are  
5 to have similar food, but it would be a sports  
6 bar?

7 MR. TAPPER: I can do similar food  
8 for my general public. It will be more of  
9 American Gastro Pub for District.

10 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. And what are  
11 the other owner's experience that they're  
12 bringing to this new restaurant.

13 MR. WILDER: Ari Wilder. I've  
14 been opening restaurants in D.C. since 2001,  
15 Zola Restaurant, Potenza, Lima Restaurant and  
16 Lounge.

17 I'm currently the Beverage  
18 Director for Barcode and Lima, Barcode  
19 Restaurant and Lima. And the partial owner of  
20 Federal. And the Director of Operations for  
21 Federal and District now, hopefully. I  
22 oversee all the beverage and personnel side,

1 the food service, et cetera.

2 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Part of the  
3 reason, one of the main reasons we're going  
4 into this is because the restaurant before did  
5 not succeed. Okay. And then there's one  
6 other owner here, correct?

7 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: I'm Haji.

8 CHAIR MILLER: Right.

9 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: I'm the original  
10 owner. And I sold the business to the people  
11 that changed it and made District. And they  
12 failed basically to pay me. And also Mr.  
13 Reneau as well. So I had to basically go to  
14 court and take the place back.

15 And my experiences in D.C. goes  
16 back four years. But I'm simply going to be  
17 more of a silent partner, and have Dino and  
18 Ari really take care of the business. Because  
19 I'm a single dad, and I'd like to spend time  
20 with my children. So this would be a win win  
21 situation for all of us --

22 CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

1 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: -- if it works  
2 out.

3 CHAIR MILLER: Okay, good. All  
4 right. I'm going to defer now to other Board  
5 members. Who would like ask some questions?  
6 Mr. Silverstein?

7 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: I had one.  
8 Haji?

9 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes.

10 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: The previous  
11 place failed in every possible way. It was a  
12 problem in the neighborhood, it was a problem  
13 for you. And we see some of the same people.  
14 And I think we're hearing some of the same  
15 promises. Why is this going to be different?

16 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Sir, when I had  
17 Chloe, the only problem with Chloe was, at the  
18 time, that I did not meet my food requirement.  
19 It failed miserably and became a problem when  
20 I sold it to the previous owners, the ones  
21 that had it since 2009.

22 But as far as issues with me, the

1 main issue was really the meeting the food.  
2 I had a tough time meeting the food. I was  
3 never a food person. I'll be honest with you,  
4 I hired a great chef. But it just didn't work  
5 out.

6 And I also had some other personal  
7 problems I rather not really to get into that  
8 caused me basically to sell the place and go  
9 about my business. And unfortunately, these  
10 people just ruined the place and didn't pay  
11 either me or the landlord. And we ended up  
12 just taking it back.

13 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: I think we all  
14 understand that.

15 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes.

16 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: But why is it  
17 going to be different this time?

18 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: The difference  
19 is that I have people that are very good at  
20 what they do. And Floriana is a place that  
21 does probably 80 percent food.

22 Another place Dino owns, that does

1 probably 70, 80 percent in food. And they're  
2 the ones that are going to be putting the  
3 plan. They have a plan. And it's going to  
4 hopefully work out.

5 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: Mr. Trapper, I  
6 am familiar with your establishment on 17th  
7 Street, and Dino's downstairs. It is  
8 absolutely a food establishment. And --

9 MR. TAPPER: I don't want to cut  
10 you off. But what drew me to Adams Morgan --

11 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: No. I want to  
12 know what --

13 MR. TAPPER: Yes.

14 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: What is your  
15 plan? What are you going to do to turn what  
16 has been a troubled establishment, and an  
17 establishment that's been trouble for the  
18 neighborhood, into something more like what  
19 you have on 17th Street? And obviously it  
20 can't be exactly like Floriana. It's a much  
21 larger space, it's got a whole lot of  
22 different things.

1 MR. TAPPER: Correct.

2 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: What are you  
3 going to change? What are you promising?

4 MR. TAPPER: I'm stating the fact  
5 that with what I've done with Floriana, I've  
6 turned it into a neighborhood institution. I  
7 think if you're familiar with it and Dino's,  
8 you would understand that.

9 We have regulars that come every  
10 day. Because they feel good about the people  
11 who work there, the food that they're eating,  
12 and the ambiance that we're emitting. That is  
13 my goal for District.

14 I'm not looking to be an upper  
15 echelon fine dining restaurant. I think  
16 Floriana teeters on that, you know, but we  
17 don't pride ourselves on it.

18 I think, what I tell people all  
19 the time when they ask if they have to wear a  
20 suit and tie to dinner is, sure, do flip  
21 flops, it's fine by us. Other people feel as  
22 though they need to dress up nicer.

1                   But we're a neighborhood eatery.  
2                   We're here for the neighborhood, you know. I  
3                   believe in turning District, which, you know,  
4                   failed before because it wasn't built to be a  
5                   restaurant, you know.

6                   I think by turning it into what we  
7                   envision as a sports bar gastro pub, it  
8                   invites people to come -- There's sports, I'm  
9                   sorry, there's sports on 365 days a year.

10                  I mean, I'm talking about  
11                  Christmas Day there's sports on. I think  
12                  sports also start at like 6 o'clock, instead  
13                  at what District was operating at, where they  
14                  open the door at 11:00 p.m., you know.

15                  How are you going to have dinner  
16                  if you don't open until people are ready to go  
17                  to bed, you know? We want to open it early.  
18                  And we want to play sports.

19                  We want people to come in and  
20                  drink a beer, and have a hamburger, or a steak  
21                  with mashed potato. And I don't think anyone  
22                  has done that yet to this day in that space.

1 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: And, Mr.

2 Wilder, you --

3 MR. WILDER: Yes, sir.

4 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: You're going  
5 to be in charge of the part of it that's  
6 probably the part that is concerned to most of  
7 us, which is more the club part, the  
8 entertainment part, that you've been involved  
9 with a number of places that are pretty lively  
10 downtown.

11 MR. WILDER: Right. My background  
12 is actually restaurants. I've been a beverage  
13 director for Liberty Tavern in Virginia, Lion  
14 Hall, Potenza Restaurant, Zola Restaurant.

15 And then I was also one of the  
16 openers for Lima Restaurant and Lounge. And  
17 then I opened Barcode Restaurant and Lounge.  
18 Some of the concept for District when I got  
19 involved with Dino was similar to that of  
20 Barcode from the sports restaurant side.

21 Barcode has become a staple for  
22 lunch and happy hour, and sporting events. We

1 felt that the similar concept that I was a  
2 part of, long before Barcode opened with  
3 Armand and Massoud and Antonus, which was  
4 opening a neighborhood gathering place that  
5 would specialize in happy hour for the  
6 neighborhood guests, and sporting events for  
7 the people that would stay a little bit later.

8 And then, yes, they are a late  
9 night lounge on Fridays and Saturdays. But my  
10 purpose in District is the same as Dino  
11 Tapper's. And my background is ten years in  
12 restaurants, not lounges and night clubs. But  
13 I will be the Director of Operations.

14 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: My colleagues,  
15 Mr. Alberti and Mr. Brooks have far more  
16 experience with this particular establishment.  
17 And I think I've gone far enough. I'll defer  
18 to them.

19 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Mr. Brooks.

20 MEMBER BROOKS: Yes. Thank you,  
21 Madame Chair. So this is going to be a sports  
22 bar? Is that the --

1 MR. TAPPER: Sports restaurant. I  
2 think I --

3 MEMBER BROOKS: Well, restaurant.

4 MR. TAPPER: Yes.

5 MEMBER BROOKS: It's going to be a  
6 restaurant. Okay. Have you guys developed a  
7 menu yet?

8 MR. TAPPER: Yes.

9 MEMBER BROOKS: You have. Did you  
10 bring it with you?

11 MR. TAPPER: I did not. I'm  
12 sorry.

13 MEMBER BROOKS: And downstairs --

14 COURT REPORTER: Just one moment.  
15 Is the mic on?

16 MEMBER BROOKS: I'm sorry. Can  
17 you hear me now? Okay. The downstairs  
18 portion, which is now, what is it?

19 MR. TAPPER: Federal.

20 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: Federal.

21 MEMBER BROOKS: Is that open?

22 MR. TAPPER: Yes.

1                   MEMBER BROOKS: Okay. But that's  
2 a tavern, is that correct?

3                   MR. TAPPER: Correct.

4                   MEMBER BROOKS: Okay. So upstairs  
5 is a restaurant, sports restaurant, and  
6 downstairs -- Now, do you guys own the  
7 downstairs portion?

8                   MR. TAPPER: Yes.

9                   MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes.

10                  MEMBER BROOKS: Okay. So you're  
11 running both.

12                  MR. TAPPER: Correct.

13                  MEMBER BROOKS: You intend to run  
14 both.

15                  MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes.

16                  MR. TAPPER: Correct.

17                  MEMBER BROOKS: Oh, okay.

18                  MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Mr. Brooks, it's  
19 a completely separate corporation, and a  
20 separate license, the two places. We just  
21 happen to own both of them.

22                  MEMBER BROOKS: Yes, I understand.

1 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: And Mr. Reneau  
2 happened to own --

3 MEMBER BROOKS: All the buildings.

4 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: -- all the three  
5 buildings.

6 MEMBER BROOKS: Sure, sure.

7 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes.

8 MEMBER BROOKS: Okay. And the  
9 restaurant on 17th Street, Mr. Tapper, how  
10 long have you owned that?

11 MR. TAPPER: Almost four years.

12 MEMBER BROOKS: Four years.

13 MR. TAPPER: I bought it from my  
14 mother who had owned it for 30.

15 MEMBER BROOKS: Oh, okay. Yes,  
16 I've heard of it. So I know what you're  
17 talking about. Okay. Madame Chair, that's  
18 all I have at the moment anyway.

19 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Mr. Alberti.

20 MEMBER ALBERTI: Good evening,  
21 gentlemen.

22 (Crosstalk)

1                   MEMBER ALBERTI: Good morning.  
2 I'm going to sort of take a step back. I'd  
3 like to know -- You've got four people who  
4 are part of this LLC. What is each person's  
5 role?

6                   MR. TAPPER: Okay. So very simply  
7 put --

8                   MEMBER ALBERTI: Very  
9 specifically, what is each --

10                  MR. TAPPER: Yes, very  
11 specifically. Haji approached me. He had  
12 known my parents well before --

13                  MEMBER ALBERTI: I don't need the  
14 background. I need to know --

15                  MR. TAPPER: He had approached me  
16 about the --

17                  MEMBER ALBERTI: -- what your role  
18 is going to be in this establishment. And I'm  
19 sorry to interrupt you. But I don't want to,  
20 you guys don't want to spend all day here.

21                  MR. TAPPER: No.

22                  MR. HAJALIGHOLI: No.

1                   MEMBER ALBERTI: You agree. So my  
2 question is --

3                   MR. TAPPER: Haji approached me to  
4 run a restaurant inside of both places.

5                   MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay.

6                   MR. TAPPER: I took a look around  
7 the space, and I, knowing the neighborhood  
8 now, where Wood Place was four James Beard  
9 nominations, I know that people are coming to  
10 that neighborhood to dine.

11                   I was very attracted to the space  
12 for what it is, a humongous space that I can  
13 fill with people that are going to want to  
14 eat.

15                   MEMBER ALBERTI: So what's your  
16 role?

17                   MR. TAPPER: My role is the food  
18 and the service.

19                   MEMBER ALBERTI: Is what?

20                   MR. TAPPER: The food and the  
21 service.

22                   MEMBER ALBERTI: What's that mean?

1 MR. TAPPER: That I will implement  
2 the chefs and pack it with people that are  
3 there to dine.

4 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. So you're  
5 responsible for hiring the chefs?

6 MR. TAPPER: Correct.

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. What else  
8 are you responsible for?

9 MR. TAPPER: Overseeing payroll.  
10 I am the back of the house number cruncher,  
11 the banking, the finances.

12 MR. WILDER: My role would be the  
13 complete opposite, which would be the front of  
14 the house operations, all day to day  
15 operations. So personnel, service,  
16 management, et cetera.

17 I'm there seven days, later on in  
18 the days and nights a week. And Dino's there  
19 seven days early morning and through the  
20 evening. So I oversee all the hiring for my  
21 adjunctive management, et cetera.

22 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. So you're

1 the day to day sort of operations manager?

2 You hire bartenders --

3 MR. WILDER: Servers.

4 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- servers, the  
5 general -- Do we have a general manager in  
6 there?

7 MR. TAPPER: Yes, sir.

8 MR. WILDER: Yes, sir, for both  
9 places.

10 MEMBER ALBERTI: For both places,  
11 right. And so you'll be responsible for  
12 hiring that person?

13 MR. WILDER: And overseeing all  
14 their management and managing them, if you  
15 will.

16 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. Now the  
17 two other investors, what's their role?

18 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: My role  
19 basically is to hope that everything works  
20 out. And I'd be able to recoup some of the  
21 money that I lost, sir.

22 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. I'll put

1 you down as investor.

2 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes.

3 MEMBER ALBERTI: So you're not  
4 going to have any --

5 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: I'm not going to  
6 have any --

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: You don't have a  
8 responsibility for day to management, or week  
9 to week --

10 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: No, sir, no.

11 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- management, or  
12 concept?

13 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: No.

14 MEMBER ALBERTI: You don't have  
15 any responsibility for concept?

16 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: No, no. I don't  
17 want to be involved. And as I said, I'm a  
18 single dad. And not to make it a long story.  
19 But I know Dino and his mom since Dino was 12  
20 years old. So I couldn't find a better person  
21 to trust, and let him run with it.

22 MEMBER ALBERTI: You should be

1 flattered by that. But my job here is just to  
2 find out, okay, you know, who the players are

3 -- MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes.

4 MR. TAPPER: Of course.

5 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- what's going  
6 on, and who's -- All right. And you have a  
7 fourth person?

8 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: That's my  
9 brother. He was a investor originally. And  
10 he is liver transplant patient. And he  
11 basically is a silent partner as well.

12 MEMBER ALBERTI: An investor like  
13 you. Okay.

14 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Yes.

15 MEMBER ALBERTI: So most of my  
16 questions are going to be directed to these  
17 two gentlemen, Mr. Tapper and Mr. Wilder.

18 MR. TAPPER: Correct.

19 MR. WILDER: Right.

20 MEMBER ALBERTI: You don't have a  
21 menu. Can you --

22 MR. TAPPER: I have a menu. I

1 don't have it with me.

2 MEMBER ALBERTI: All right. Can  
3 you tell us what that concept for the food is?

4 MR. TAPPER: Sure.

5 MEMBER ALBERTI: You know --

6 MR. TAPPER: Gastro pub.

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- a little more  
8 than just bar food.

9 MR. TAPPER: Right. I think high  
10 end bar food is what gastro pub really  
11 entails. I mean, there will be braised short  
12 ribs on the menu. There will be, you know,  
13 four different kinds of sliders on the menu.

14 Flat bread pizzas, which, by all  
15 means, are just a fancy word for pizza that,  
16 because we don't have a pizza oven, but can  
17 still be baked, you know. We're looking at  
18 french fries. We're looking at corn dogs.  
19 We're looking at meat and cheese plates.

20 You know, for the brunch food  
21 it's, you know, eggs benedict, it's scrambled  
22 eggs, it's, you know, crab cakes, french

1 toast.

2 You know, I believe that we can be  
3 very successful in that neighborhood, just on  
4 the two brunches. I think you'll be amazed at  
5 what we can do in two brunches there.

6 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. So two  
7 brunches meaning when?

8 MR. TAPPER: Saturday and Sunday  
9 brunch.

10 MR. WILDER: Which we are open --  
11 Federal, we just opened brunches for Federal  
12 two weeks ago, which is the lower restaurant  
13 that's open. And we've been, I mean, doing,  
14 I mean, turning people away.

15 We can't even accept reservations  
16 up through the third week of October in open  
17 table, because there's such a high demand for  
18 a brunch like that, which is great for us.

19 Because it means that hopefully  
20 when we open District, now we have an overflow  
21 place for brunch, where we can send the guests  
22 we cannot accommodate at Federal, up to

1 District to accommodate them there. And the  
2 same goes for dinner.

3 We've been very successful with  
4 our dinners at Federal, very simple menu that  
5 just accommodates the local guests. A  
6 neighborhood gathering place.

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. How many  
8 seats will this place have?

9 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: It has a hundred  
10 --

11 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: 145.

12 MR. TAPPER: 145.

13 MEMBER ALBERTI: 145 seats.

14 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: The layout is in  
15 a way that you just cannot have a lot of other  
16 seat. But the load for the building is 355 --

17 MEMBER ALBERTI: That answers my  
18 question.

19 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: -- occupancy,  
20 yes. But the seating is about 145. Because  
21 we have a roof patio as well. So including  
22 everything is about 145.

1 MR. TAPPER: Gentlemen and Madame,  
2 are you familiar with the show "Iron Chef"?  
3 Have you ever seen it on TV?

4 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: Yes.

5 CHAIR MILLER: I've seen --

6 MR. TAPPER: Where two competing  
7 chefs, and there's a taste panel of judges,  
8 and someone wins. We want to bring that to DC  
9 with that space. Not really, sorry, trying to  
10 divulge some of my intentions to other people  
11 that are around.

12 But, you know, we will, once a  
13 month have two restaurants competing. You  
14 know, we're going to call it a special event.  
15 But it is what it is. It's "Iron Chef" that  
16 we're bringing to D.C.

17 We're going to have two very  
18 successful local restaurants here competing  
19 against each other inside of our  
20 establishment. And the winner of that food  
21 battle, the donations will be made to their  
22 charity. And this will happen once a month.

1 MEMBER ALBERTI: That sounds  
2 great.

3 MR. WILDER: Here it's like local  
4 mixologists and, you know.

5 MEMBER ALBERTI: So forgive me for  
6 not knowing, but does Federal have a kitchen?

7 MR. TAPPER: Yes.

8 MEMBER ALBERTI: Separate from  
9 District?

10 MR. TAPPER: Yes.

11 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. How large  
12 is that kitchen that you have? And the reason  
13 I'm asking is that when it was the District  
14 Lounge and whatever -- I guess it was Saki  
15 still downstairs.

16 MR. WILDER: It was District  
17 Underground I think at that time.

18 MEMBER ALBERTI: District  
19 Underground, okay. Thank you. They weren't  
20 utilizing a kitchen. They were utilizing the  
21 District kitchen. So can you tell me -- So  
22 I know it's a little off track, but can you

1 tell me a little bit about Federal's kitchen?

2 MR. TAPPER: I mean, by all means,  
3 I would much prefer to converge our two  
4 kitchens into one, as they probably did,  
5 because of the beautiful kitchen that is in  
6 District. I mean, we're talking about, you  
7 know, I own restaurants. This is a kitchen  
8 like I've never seen before. I mean --

9 MEMBER ALBERTI: Where? Which  
10 one?

11 MR. TAPPER: District.

12 MR. WILDER: District. Yes, it's  
13 very nice. It's a two galley kitchen.

14 MEMBER ALBERTI: So let's talk  
15 about Federal kitchen.

16 MR. TAPPER: Right. I would like  
17 to converge both kitchens into one. I think -  
18 -

19 MEMBER ALBERTI: So where is  
20 Federal kitchen?

21 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: It's in the  
22 basement.

1 MR. TAPPER: It's in the basement.

2 MR. WILDER: It's in the basement.

3 It's smaller. It's one aisle kitchen. It's  
4 somewhat limited. But we've been able to  
5 still crank out a 18 item menu.

6 And we put a large focus on cheese  
7 and charcuterie, and late night items for  
8 guests, for industry people that get off at  
9 midnight, for instance.

10 A lot of the Mintwood staff,  
11 Cashion's staff, and people coming from U  
12 Street and Florida come up to us because we  
13 are open for food later than everybody else.  
14 We serve food until 12:00 a.m. or 1 o'clock in  
15 the morning to accommodate a lot of our  
16 neighborhood industry friends.

17 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. So you  
18 alluded to the fact that you would like to, in  
19 a perfect world, convert the District. Great  
20 kitchen, great space for a good kitchen. I  
21 can appreciate it that from a business point  
22 of view.

1 MR. TAPPER: I mean, I like,  
2 coming from a restaurant I don't think you  
3 understand what this kitchen is upstairs. I  
4 mean, we've got convection stuff, combo ovens.  
5 We've got broilers, salamanders. We've got  
6 four ovens. We've got a tilt skillet.

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: Great.

8 MR. TAPPER: We've got, it's  
9 amazing what's going on in the kitchen.

10 MEMBER ALBERTI: I can see the way  
11 you're salivating. But, you know, I watch  
12 cooking shows. I can understand why you're  
13 salivating.

14 But the question I have is though,  
15 when you run two kitchens like that together,  
16 how do you keep the accounting of food and  
17 products and sales and purchases? How do you  
18 keep those separate?

19 MR. TAPPER: It's two separate  
20 POSs, sir. Just like you have a computer  
21 terminal in front of you that has got a  
22 dedicated --

1 MEMBER ALBERTI: And that's fine.

2 MR. TAPPER: She has a computer in  
3 front of her that's also dedicated. So when  
4 you order from Federal that is one POS. And  
5 that's a Point of Sale system.

6 It is tagged into one Federal ID  
7 number, or Tax Identification number. It is  
8 one. The only difference is that a wire can  
9 be run to a printer for upstairs.

10 MEMBER ALBERTI: Got you.

11 MR. TAPPER: Okay. Whereas,  
12 District, it has its own POS, a Point of Sale  
13 system that has its own dedicating credit card  
14 vouching, its own dedicated Federal ID number.  
15 That also has a wire with a printer.

16 MEMBER ALBERTI: All right. And  
17 now, I own both places. And I order a  
18 shipment of strip steaks.

19 MR. WILDER: Separate food  
20 invoices.

21 MR. TAPPER: Separate food  
22 invoices, separate food costs, separate food

1 trays, right.

2 MEMBER ALBERTI: You don't, how do  
3 you ensure that?

4 MR. TAPPER: I'm sorry? I didn't  
5 hear.

6 MEMBER ALBERTI: How do you ensure  
7 that?

8 MR. TAPPER: It's different menus,  
9 sir. I mean, maybe potatoes overlap. There  
10 might be an overlapping item. But by no means  
11 do I intend to buy food for just one.

12 MEMBER ALBERTI: But you don't  
13 have the menus here. So I can't see that.

14 MR. TAPPER: I wasn't prepared for  
15 this line of questioning. I didn't know I  
16 should bring that kind of stuff here.

17 MR. WILDER: We would have  
18 otherwise.

19 MR. TAPPER: I'm more than happy  
20 to --

21 (Crosstalk)

22 MR. WILDER: I mean, our menu for

1 Federal is on line on our website. Not that  
2 I'm asking you to log on to it.

3 CHAIR MILLER: No. And Federal  
4 isn't necessarily at issue here. So you  
5 don't, you weren't expected to bring menus  
6 from Federal. So don't worry about that.

7 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: No, they have  
8 the Federal menu. It's about District.

9 MR. TAPPER: Yes.

10 MR. WILDER: I mean, we're happy  
11 to bring it. It's been, we've been working on  
12 it since we opened Federal actually, with  
13 multiple chefs.

14 So the great thing that we have at  
15 our disposal is also Floriana, which they make  
16 all their pastas in house, and such. And we  
17 intend on using the same pasta person that he  
18 uses there, part time at Federal and District  
19 to be making in house at our restaurants as  
20 well.

21 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. The  
22 special events.

1 MR. TAPPER: Yes.

2 MEMBER ALBERTI: I'm trying to  
3 understand in more detail. I'm trying to  
4 understand how that's going to work in terms  
5 of your business plan.

6 MR. WILDER: So --

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: Because you're --  
8 Wait. Let me finish.

9 MR. WILDER: Sorry.

10 MEMBER ALBERTI: You're open every  
11 day of the week as a restaurant?

12 MR. TAPPER: Correct.

13 MEMBER ALBERTI: Well that's what  
14 you, I mean, that's the impression I'm  
15 getting.

16 MR. WILDER: Yes.

17 MEMBER ALBERTI: So how does, how  
18 do you close for special events? How does  
19 that work into your business plan?

20 MR. TAPPER: I do it all the time.  
21 Tonight at Floriana there's a complete person  
22 buy out. We close out the book for open

1 table. Therefore, you can't make a  
2 reservation. I put a sign on the front door  
3 that says, we're closed for a private event  
4 this evening.

5 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. And what  
6 time --

7 MR. TAPPER: From my aspect of  
8 this business, being, you know -- Someone  
9 wanting to come into my business, but it's  
10 closed because so many people are in there is  
11 very attractive for more people coming back,  
12 you know.

13 MEMBER ALBERTI: I know my  
14 questions -- Let me pause here. I know my  
15 questions are pointed, all right. But, you  
16 know, we've had this experience where one  
17 restaurant wasn't meeting their food sales.

18 And they had been a successful  
19 business in other respects. But it wasn't  
20 meeting its food sales though, in terms of the  
21 legal requirements.

22 MR. TAPPER: Mr. Alberti --

1                   MEMBER ALBERTI:  -- like this.  
2                   And District didn't make it.  They gave us,  
3                   they described something different that they  
4                   didn't meet.

5                   So the reason I'm putting you on  
6                   the spot is because, well let's say in some  
7                   ways the place seems to be jinxed.  Or maybe  
8                   it's attracting, maybe its layout just  
9                   attracts a different model.  I don't know.  
10                  But we have to be careful, because --

11                  MR. TAPPER:  I understand.

12                  MEMBER ALBERTI:  -- you have food  
13                  requirements.  So just, I beg you to just bear  
14                  with me with these questions.

15                  MR. TAPPER:  Yes.

16                  MEMBER ALBERTI:  All right.  So  
17                  what kinds of events are you going to have in  
18                  terms of your special events?  What are you  
19                  envisioning?

20                  MR. TAPPER:  Weddings, rehearsal  
21                  dinners, you know, corporate events.  We are  
22                  a stone throw away from the Omni Shoreham that

1 holds some of the largest conventions in this  
2 city. I mean --

3 MEMBER ALBERTI: So --

4 MR. TAPPER: -- a stone throw  
5 away. We're talking about one bridge  
6 separates us.

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: So you, as an  
8 owner, would you be promoting? Or would you  
9 partner with someone --

10 MR. TAPPER: My wife --

11 MEMBER ALBERTI: Wait, let me  
12 finish.

13 MR. TAPPER: My wife --

14 MEMBER ALBERTI: Let me finish,  
15 please. Let me finish my question.

16 MR. TAPPER: Yes, sir.

17 MEMBER ALBERTI: Or would you be,  
18 ever plan to be partnering with someone to  
19 promote entertainment events? Say, a disc  
20 jockey, I mean, other than wedding kinds of  
21 things, like something that is not tied to a  
22 convention, a meeting, a wedding, a birthday.

1 Do you have plans to promote things where it's  
2 just more entertainment oriented, pure  
3 entertainment oriented?

4 MR. TAPPER: We do. We have every  
5 intention of also having night life in that  
6 space, yes.

7 MR. WILDER: Networking events,  
8 social media events. We're working -- His  
9 wife does a lot of his events for Floriana.  
10 We're looking to sign on with Lindley or  
11 ThreeLockharts, or one of the other local PR  
12 companies and event companies in D.C. to do a  
13 lot of our outsourcing to hotels, businesses,  
14 et cetera, to hold events at District.

15 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: They're not  
16 going to have promoters, sir. I understand  
17 where you're getting that. They're not going  
18 to have promoters, people that come in there  
19 and they have the place for their own.

20 That's one of the very first  
21 things we discussed. We are not going to have  
22 other people come into our place and take

1 over, and try to run it. It's going to be all  
2 in house.

3 MR. TAPPER: I think Barcode, the  
4 establishment on 17th and L, is a very good  
5 business model of what I want to be.

6 CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: Which is?  
8 Explain that to me.

9 MR. TAPPER: Which is open seven  
10 days a week. It does a tremendous amount of  
11 food business up until 11 or 12 o'clock at  
12 night. And then they, yes, they do have, you  
13 know, late night beverages. And I'm looking  
14 to do that also.

15 I mean, I think that is a great  
16 way for me to be financially prosperous in  
17 that neighborhood. The revenue that generates  
18 opens up the doors for me to be able to do  
19 "Iron Chef" there.

20 MEMBER ALBERTI: Great. So let me  
21 ask you. Is your intention to frequently have  
22 events that are promoted to be late night

1 events?

2 MR. WILDER: Fridays and  
3 Saturdays.

4 MEMBER ALBERTI: Starting, okay,  
5 10 o'clock on?

6 MR. WILDER: Yes.

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: And how often?

8 MR. TAPPER: Food will still be  
9 offered.

10 MEMBER ALBERTI: And how often?

11 MR. WILDER: Fridays and Saturdays  
12 is the plan for now, for the late night events  
13 with DJs.

14 MEMBER ALBERTI: On a regular  
15 basis?

16 MR. WILDER: Yes. It's the only  
17 we that we also see us being able to  
18 supplement our income to pay rent, bills, et  
19 cetera.

20 MEMBER ALBERTI: You know, I --

21 MR. TAPPER: Mr. Alberti --

22 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- thank you for

1 your honesty. No. Just thank you for your  
2 honesty.

3 MR. TAPPER: Mr. Alberti, you  
4 know, I would like to make this known, that I  
5 am not the previous tenant. I think his name  
6 was Patrick Dilvine.

7 I don't know what kind of  
8 restaurant experience this gentleman had. I  
9 don't know if he was a manager or an owner of  
10 a previous food establishment. And --

11 MEMBER ALBERTI: And I'm not  
12 saying you are. I'm not saying you are. I'm  
13 starting with a fresh start. And I'm asking  
14 questions. And these are questions that I've  
15 asked lots of other owners.

16 MR. WILDER: Right.

17 MEMBER ALBERTI: So you as an  
18 owner --

19 MR. TAPPER: You know, I'm coming  
20 in this --

21 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- you need  
22 answers.

1 MR. TAPPER: -- as a restaurant  
2 owner --

3 MEMBER ALBERTI: Mr. McLean's  
4 being very --

5 MR. TAPPER: -- not as someone who  
6 operates --

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- very honest.  
8 And I appreciate that.

9 MR. WILDER: Thank you.

10 MEMBER ALBERTI: So --

11 CHAIR MILLER: I'm sorry. Mr.  
12 Tapper, could you just repeat that last thing  
13 you said? Because I didn't hear it. You're  
14 what, a restaurant owner?

15 MR. TAPPER: I come in as a  
16 straight restaurant owner that does anywhere  
17 from 65 percent to 80 percent food sales every  
18 month, not once in a while, every month.

19 CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

20 MEMBER ALBERTI: So you're --

21 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: You're not  
22 going to do that here, are you?

1 MR. TAPPER: I hope so. That's my  
2 intention. My intention is, this is a CR.  
3 And I will sell my required food sales.

4 MR. WILDER: I mean --

5 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. For your  
6 restaurant business --

7 MR. TAPPER: Sorry?

8 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- what do you  
9 expect, and sort of other than the special  
10 events, what is your expected revenue for this  
11 place?

12 MR. TAPPER: I think \$3 million  
13 dollars a year is what we're expecting to do,  
14 with somewhere in the verge of \$2 million in  
15 food sales.

16 MEMBER ALBERTI: \$2 million in  
17 food sales.

18 MR. WILDER: Just so that, I  
19 understand that it looks and sounds  
20 unrealistic based on the history.

21 MEMBER ALBERTI: I didn't say  
22 that. I didn't say that.

1 MR. WILDER: I'm just being  
2 honest.

3 MEMBER ALBERTI: I'm not in  
4 numbers. So I don't know what some of you  
5 will get.

6 MR. WILDER: I'm being honest with  
7 you from how I see it, coming from other  
8 restaurants that are not set up this way.  
9 That is why we have a huge focus on private  
10 and special events.

11 Because we believe that we can  
12 accommodate those food percentages based on  
13 our private and special events. Reaching out  
14 to as many concierge and local businesses as  
15 possible to accommodate Christmas parties,  
16 business functions, meet and greets, social  
17 networking, et cetera.

18 And obviously catering, because we  
19 have a catering sized kitchen. So we can  
20 actually use it this time like it hasn't been  
21 used before.

22 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. So \$2

1 million in food sales.

2 MR. TAPPER: That's the plan.

3 MEMBER ALBERTI: All right. All  
4 right.

5 MR. WILDER: We plan on serving  
6 food later, late as well. So instead of  
7 people spending all their money at Jumbo  
8 Slice, they might be able to spend their money  
9 at District, and eat a better quality food.

10 MR. TAPPER: I mean, Floriana last  
11 year did \$1.7 million, \$1.1 million was food.

12 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. I'm --

13 MR. TAPPER: You know, I mean, I'm  
14 not making like -- I know, I'm looking at  
15 this from the perspective of how I run my  
16 businesses currently.

17 MEMBER ALBERTI: Good. I got you.  
18 And I'm looking at this in the perspective of  
19 what are the legal requirements.

20 MR. WILDER: Understood.

21 MEMBER ALBERTI: That's my role,  
22 of course. All right?

1 MR. WILDER: Right.

2 MEMBER ALBERTI: Because, you  
3 know, there is a -- I don't get to decide.  
4 I don't get to judge. But I do know that  
5 there is a moratorium on taverns at Adams  
6 Morgan. I don't, I have to respect that,  
7 whether I think it's a good idea, bad idea.  
8 It's not my role here.

9 MR. TAPPER: Right.

10 MEMBER ALBERTI: My role here is  
11 to respect that, and to determine whether or  
12 not we're going to have another tavern --

13 MR. WILDER: Right.

14 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- in essence.  
15 And so, please, just bear with me.

16 MR. TAPPER: That makes sense.

17 MR. WILDER: We understand.

18 MEMBER ALBERTI: All right? You  
19 understand? Okay. So that's about 100,  
20 that's like 1,000 -- That's \$1,350  
21 approximately in food per seat, all right,  
22 which is below the \$2,000. But you also have

1 that percentage, all right.

2 So I'm just trying to think about,  
3 you have to do -- How many seatings a month  
4 do you have to do to get that per table? I  
5 mean, have you thought about this?

6 MR. TAPPER: Yes, sir, we have. I  
7 mean, it's, you know, like --

8 MEMBER ALBERTI: I mean, how do  
9 you do your calculations, in terms of whether  
10 you're going to make this or not, in terms of  
11 food sales? Sort of run me through that math  
12 that you went through --

13 MR. TAPPER: Sure.

14 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- to come up  
15 with, yes, I can make it.

16 MR. TAPPER: I have an Excel  
17 spreadsheet.

18 MEMBER ALBERTI: What do you have  
19 to sell? How many people do you have to have  
20 in? What their average meal cost has to be?  
21 Run that through, run those numbers for me.  
22 Just --

1 MR. TAPPER: Sure.

2 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- give me some.

3 MR. TAPPER: So, I mean, I have  
4 obviously, you know, Joyce and I have  
5 developed an Excel spreadsheet that's about,  
6 you know, if you print it out, about eight  
7 pages long.

8 It covers every cost on how I'm  
9 going to operate a business, from, you know,  
10 what it takes to put a napkin down to rent and  
11 food and beverage costs.

12 The big trigger that is hard for  
13 someone who's not in my industry to understand  
14 is that "Iron Chef" will generate, you know,  
15 \$10,000 dollars on a Thursday in food sales,  
16 you know.

17 So I can't say, I need to do, you  
18 know, 117 diners on Monday when, you know, I'm  
19 going to do 300 diners just on a private  
20 event.

21 MEMBER ALBERTI: Fine. Monthly,  
22 weekly --

1 MR. TAPPER: Right.

2 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- tell me what  
3 you think.

4 MR. TAPPER: Like I said, I don't  
5 have that in front of me. I can produce it.

6 MR. WILDER: The private events we  
7 do are based on consumption. So if we charge  
8 \$30.00 a head for a 250 person event for a  
9 local business from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.,  
10 \$25.00 a head of that is for food consumption,  
11 \$5.00 a head of that is for alcohol  
12 consumption.

13 And then we normally would do a  
14 rental fee for DJ and equipment, and rental  
15 equipment, et cetera. So that is pretty much  
16 how we would be calculating our event  
17 business, which is a large component of the  
18 success of District's restaurant business.

19 MEMBER ALBERTI: I'm going to be  
20 honest with you. The easy part of your  
21 business, from my perception, having seen many  
22 licensed establishments.

1           The easy part of your business is  
2           the late night Fridays and Saturdays, all  
3           right. You're selling alcohol, there's no  
4           food to be worried about.

5           I mean, it's a different model,  
6           all right. It's the most easy in a way. Let  
7           me put it this way, maybe not the easiest, but  
8           the more profitable, is really where I'm going  
9           from.

10           MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Well that's a  
11           given. Because that's --

12           MEMBER ALBERTI: Wait, let me  
13           finish. So I'm trying to balance, are we  
14           going, trying to understand, are we going to  
15           have a balance between the income you're  
16           getting on the alcohol from 10:00 p.m. to 3:00  
17           a.m. every Friday and Saturday, as you're  
18           telling me with, are you going to be a  
19           restaurant the rest of the time?

20           MR. TAPPER: We're going to do  
21           \$15,000 dollars a week just in brunch, just in  
22           food sales in brunch, sir.

1 MEMBER ALBERTI: \$15,000 dollars a  
2 week in --

3 MR. TAPPER: Just brunch.

4 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- two days?

5 MR. TAPPER: Right.

6 MEMBER ALBERTI: That's \$7,500  
7 dollars -- How many seatings is that?

8 MR. TAPPER: Two, three.

9 MEMBER ALBERTI: What is it.

10 MR. WILDER: Well it's --

11 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: I mean, you  
12 always see --

13 MEMBER ALBERTI: How many  
14 seatings, and what is your average cost per  
15 seating to make that figure?

16 MR. WILDER: It's \$30.00 a head.

17 MEMBER ALBERTI: \$30.00 a head.

18 MR. WILDER: Two hundred plus on a  
19 Saturday we would expect.

20 MEMBER ALBERTI: So that's 250  
21 seatings?

22 MR. TAPPER: That's two seatings.

1 MEMBER ALBERTI: But it's 250  
2 patrons --

3 MR. TAPPER: Correct.

4 MEMBER ALBERTI: -- a seat, okay,  
5 right. That's two seatings filling the place?

6 MR. TAPPER: Correct.

7 (Off microphone comments)

8 MEMBER ALBERTI: What's it a week,  
9 Mike. Mike's giving me some weekly figure,  
10 monthly figures in food a year.

11 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: Well \$2  
12 million a year is \$5,480 dollars a night. And  
13 that includes Mondays. Good luck.

14 MR. TAPPER: Thank you.

15 MEMBER ALBERTI: That's a week?

16 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: That's a  
17 night, \$5,500 a night. That will be about  
18 \$37,000 --

19 MEMBER ALBERTI: Plus \$35,000,  
20 \$40,000 dollars a week --

21 MR. TAPPER: But I might do \$8,000  
22 or \$9,000 on a Friday for dinner, sir.

1                   MEMBER ALBERTI: Sure, right. I  
2 got you. No, I understand that. So that's --  
3 What's your --

4                   MR. WILDER: We'll probably do  
5 about \$1,000 in total sales on a Monday.

6                   MEMBER ALBERTI: What's your lunch  
7 plan? What's your lunch plan?

8                   MR. WILDER: No lunch.

9                   MEMBER ALBERTI: So during the  
10 week, except for brunches, all right, what's  
11 your average tab per person do you expect?

12                   MR. TAPPER: I'm sorry, I didn't  
13 catch that.

14                   MR. WILDER: Average tab per  
15 person.

16                   MEMBER ALBERTI: Yes.

17                   MR. WILDER: Including, I mean,  
18 between food and beverage we average around  
19 \$25.00 to \$35.00 a head.

20                   MEMBER ALBERTI: And food you  
21 think --

22                   MR. WILDER: Twenty five of that.

1 MEMBER ALBERTI: Twenty five.

2 MR. WILDER: The beverage side is  
3 the inexpensive portion. The food is a little  
4 bit more costly.

5 CHAIR MILLER: I'm just not sure  
6 how much longer we should go in this area.  
7 Because we have another fact finding reading.  
8 Because, I think that they have their business  
9 models, their plans.

10 I'm not sure if we're -- We have  
11 the information, and you can take it under  
12 advisement. But I think a lot of this fact  
13 finding was about seeing who the new owners  
14 were, what the plan is. And we have that  
15 information. So I'm not sure if we can take  
16 too much more time, grilling on their  
17 likelihood of success.

18 MEMBER ALBERTI: Madame Chair,  
19 I'll defer to you.

20 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. All right.  
21 Then I guess, if there aren't any other major  
22 questions that the Board member needs in order

1 to, you know --

2 MEMBER BROOKS: Just a couple of  
3 questions, and I'll be finished, Madame Chair.

4 CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

5 MEMBER BROOKS: And I thank Board  
6 member Alberti for talking about the food  
7 requirement. Because the last restaurant we  
8 had there, doing an audit was a nightmare, an  
9 absolute nightmare.

10 And so I'm glad to see that you  
11 have a former auditor, is that correct,  
12 helping you. And that's very encouraging to  
13 me. But the final question I have, do you  
14 intend to have request entertainment  
15 endorsement?

16 MR. TAPPER: I believe it's part  
17 of the license already.

18 MEMBER BROOKS: It is?

19 CHAIR MILLER: Yes.

20 MEMBER BROOKS: Okay. But do you  
21 guys plan to --

22 MR. TAPPER: Use it?

1 MEMBER BROOKS: -- offer

2 entertainment?

3 MR. TAPPER: Yes.

4 MR. WILDER: Yes.

5 MEMBER BROOKS: What type?

6 MR. TAPPER: DJ.

7 MR. WILDER: Just DJ for the most.

8 MS. NJOROGÉ: Just DJ for the most

9 part.

10 MEMBER BROOKS: I'm sorry, I

11 didn't hear you.

12 MR. WILDER: A DJ. So for, a DJ

13 just on Friday and Saturday nights, every

14 Friday and Saturday. And then a DJ for

15 special events and parties.

16 So like, that's part of the rental

17 fee when we book a private event or a buy out,

18 for instance. We have a \$250 or \$300 dollar

19 DJ that plays music for three hours while

20 we're serving food and beverages for the

21 event.

22 MR. TAPPER: I believe it's all in

1 the application.

2 MEMBER BROOKS: Well, so let me be  
3 clear now. So are you going to have a DJ  
4 every weekend, or just special events?

5 MR. TAPPER: Every weekend.

6 MR. WILDER: Every weekend.

7 MEMBER BROOKS: Every weekend.

8 MR. WILDER: Just Fridays and  
9 Saturdays.

10 MEMBER BROOKS: Fridays and  
11 Saturdays, from what time to what time?

12 MR. WILDER: 9:00 p.m. to 10:00  
13 p.m.

14 MR. HAJALIGHOLI: I believe it's  
15 in the license.

16 CHAIR MILLER: The application  
17 says 7:00 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Monday through  
18 Thursday. Friday and Saturday until 2:30 a.m.

19 MR. WILDER: We will only be using  
20 it, sorry.

21 MR. TAPPER: We have it in the  
22 situation that we need to use it.

1                   MR. WILDER: Yes. Like Sunday --  
2                   to be completely honest with you. Sunday  
3                   through Thursday we do not plan on being open  
4                   late night, ever, unless there's a special  
5                   event.

6                   But during the evening hours, if  
7                   we have a buy out for instance, or a sporting  
8                   event, a fight, et cetera, on the commercials  
9                   and whatnot we'll have music in between.

10                  Or if the party that we book, or  
11                  event that we book requires or demands a music  
12                  DJ, et cetera, we will accommodate that. But  
13                  only on Fridays and Saturdays do we intend on  
14                  being open with, until last call with a DJ.

15                  MEMBER BROOKS: Think on that too.

16                  MR. WILDER: Because the demand  
17                  doesn't support a venue this size Sunday  
18                  through, Monday through Sunday with live, with  
19                  a DJ.

20                  MEMBER BROOKS: Okay.

21                  MEMBER ALBERTI: Did you know what  
22                  your license says in terms of service of

1 alcohol for weekends?

2 MR. TAPPER: I'm sorry?

3 MR. WILDER: I'm sorry?

4 MEMBER ALBERTI: Do you know what  
5 your license says in terms of the hours for  
6 alcohol beverage sales on weekends?

7 MR. TAPPER: Of course. It's  
8 until last call every day.

9 MEMBER ALBERTI: What time.

10 MR. TAPPER: 1:30 a.m. Sunday  
11 through Thursday, 2:30 a.m. on Friday and  
12 Saturday.

13 MEMBER ALBERTI: Okay. So we're  
14 clear on that?

15 MR. TAPPER: Yes.

16 MR. WILDER: Yes.

17 MEMBER ALBERTI: Thank you.

18 CHAIR MILLER: I just want to  
19 follow up a question on this entertainment.  
20 Just because we will be considering that  
21 application as well. When you have like a  
22 Christmas party, or whatever, you're going to

1 have entertainment?

2 MR. TAPPER: Of course.

3 CHAIR MILLER: So it's not just  
4 Friday and Saturday night?

5 MR. TAPPER: Right.

6 MR. WILDER: No.

7 CHAIR MILLER: You may have a  
8 Christmas party on a Thursday night.

9 MR. TAPPER: That's my point.

10 MR. WILDER: Just for events.

11 MR. TAPPER: The "Iron Chef" thing  
12 that will happen once a month on Thursdays  
13 will also have a DJ.

14 MR. WILDER: And we'll probably  
15 have someone --

16 MEMBER ALBERTI: I'm a little  
17 confused.

18 MR. TAPPER: I'm not a, you know,  
19 I'm not implying that having a DJ means that  
20 there's kids with glow sticks and, you know,  
21 jumping around.

22 CHAIR MILLER: Right.

1 MR. TAPPER: That's not, in my  
2 opinion, that's not what a DJ necessarily is.

3 MEMBER ALBERTI: Ms. Miller, just  
4 to avoid any confusion, we're not going to  
5 separately consider entertainment.  
6 Entertainment was always part of the  
7 endorsement of this license.

8 And the matter before us, whether  
9 it's the transfer of this entire license, and  
10 for whatever reason, we can't bifurcate the  
11 endorsement from the approval of this license.

12 MEMBER BROOKS: Right.

13 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. And that  
14 wasn't --

15 MEMBER ALBERTI: So there's  
16 another page here.

17 CHAIR MILLER: It wasn't really  
18 the focus of this fact finding hearing. But  
19 since it was a part of the application, and  
20 you all were here --

21 MEMBER ALBERTI: Right.

22 CHAIR MILLER: -- I thought we

1       could get that straight. So, okay. I think  
2       that should complete this fact finding  
3       hearing. Thank you very much.

4                       MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Thank you very  
5       much.

6                       MR. TAPPER: Board members, thank  
7       you. Have a wonderful day.

8                       MR. WILDER: Thank you.

9                       CHAIR MILLER: Okay.

10                      MEMBER ALBERTI: Thank you for  
11       coming. And good luck, gentlemen.

12                      MR. HAJALIGHOLI: Thank you.

13                      MR. TAPPER: Thank you.

14                      MR. WILDER: Thank you.

15                      CHAIR MILLER: Mr. James, do you  
16       have --

17                      MR. JAMES: I wish to be heard.

18                      MEMBER ALBERTI: Mr. James, good  
19       luck.

20                      (Off the mic comments)

21                      CHAIR MILLER: We don't have a  
22       quorum at this moment. Did you contact our

1 staff that you wanted to participate in the  
2 fact finding hearing?

3 MR. JAMES: No, I didn't. But  
4 there's no requirement that I do so.

5 CHAIR MILLER: We don't have a  
6 quorum. So I can't do anything at this  
7 moment.

8 (Off mic comments)

9 (Whereupon, the hearing in the  
10 above-entitled matter went off the record at  
11 10:51 a.m. and back on the record at 10:54  
12 a.m.)

13 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. All right.  
14 Mr. James, do you want to introduce yourself  
15 for the record?

16 MR. JAMES: Yes, I do. My name is  
17 Denis James. I'm a 43 year resident of Adams  
18 Morgan. I'm also the President of the  
19 Kalorama Citizens Association. I have great  
20 familiarity with the neighborhood, and in  
21 particular this location.

22 I've been throughout both of the

1 establishments that are located at these  
2 addresses. Had tours given to me by various  
3 previous applicants.

4 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Let me just  
5 say this. We called this fact finding hearing  
6 in order to get more information from the  
7 applicant about their application to remove  
8 the license from safekeeping.

9 You listened involving who are  
10 going to be the new owners, what that transfer  
11 might involve. So I'm not sure that we need  
12 information from the public. It's not a  
13 protest hearing or anything.

14 However, I know you're here and  
15 you want to say something. So I just wanted  
16 you to understand that the context was not  
17 having a hearing on them. It was just get  
18 supplemental information about, for the makeup  
19 of the new owners, et cetera, and the business  
20 plan.

21 MR. JAMES: I can be responsive to  
22 that. I don't understand the point.

1 CHAIR MILLER: Okay, I'm not --

2 MR. JAMES: Fact finding on taking  
3 it out of safekeeping. That's what we're  
4 talking about, all right? Okay. First, I  
5 really want to say something about Mr.  
6 Alberti's statement, good luck, Mr. James.

7 It was on the record. You hadn't  
8 ended that. I'd like what in the world he was  
9 talking about? You know, that shows  
10 absolutely no judicial temperament to speak --

11 CHAIR MILLER: Okay, right --

12 MR. JAMES: Walking away from the  
13 dais as somebody in the community wishes to be  
14 heard.

15 CHAIR MILLER: I can't speak for  
16 Mr. Alberti at all. And he has stepped away.

17 MR. JAMES: Very good.

18 CHAIR MILLER: But if you have --

19 MR. JAMES: Okay.

20 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: Sir, that's  
21 not in contention here. And that's not the  
22 purpose of this hearing. We were here to gain

1 information. This is not a contested hearing.

2 MR. JAMES: I understand that.

3 MEMBER SILVERTEIN: Okay.

4 MR. JAMES: All right. So the  
5 establishment was built to be a nightclub.  
6 You walk into it from one single metal door,  
7 with no windows in it, from the sidewalk.  
8 That's all the visibility it has on the  
9 sidewalk.

10 The reason it's failed in the past  
11 under other operators is simply because it was  
12 built to be a nightclub, not a place where  
13 people go to eat food.

14 It has very dramatic circular  
15 staircase, and a cutaway third floor that  
16 overlooks the second floor. The license has  
17 entertainment attached to it.

18 The persons who were here, you  
19 know, earlier say that they're going to run it  
20 with entertainment on a regular basis. And,  
21 in fact, Mr. Tapper talked about needing space  
22 for 200 to 1,000 people. Well, I mean, the

1 occupancy is 355. So how are you going to get  
2 more than that into the space?

3 I'm also very troubled by the  
4 notion that you can have a restaurant license,  
5 and have an occupancy on the C of O of 355,  
6 but some lesser number as the number from  
7 which you compute the food sales at a \$2,000  
8 dollar per head rate.

9 But the main point is, you know, a  
10 member of this LLC, Haji and his brother,  
11 Michael McLean, are the same folks who brought  
12 us the failed Chloe. They're involved in this  
13 case.

14 I have complete skepticism that  
15 this operation, as described this morning,  
16 could be successful as a restaurant. And I am  
17 certain that it will be a troublesome  
18 establishment for the neighborhood with the  
19 kind of events they want to bring.

20 There's no parking in Adams  
21 Morgan. They want to bring massive numbers of  
22 people into the neighborhood in the late

1 hours, you know, they have entertainment. It  
2 will be a troubled establishment. That's all  
3 there is to it. It was built to be something  
4 that is not allowed.

5 CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Well thank  
6 you very much.

7 MEMBER ALBERTI: Mr. James, I just  
8 want to clarify my remark about good luck to  
9 you. And that was, I think you completely  
10 misunderstood. And it wasn't very fair. And  
11 I apologize for that.

12 But it really was because your  
13 skepticism about how this building, this  
14 operation can succeed is because of all of the  
15 challenges it faces.

16 I believe the owners are well  
17 meaning. But the space has challenges. Its  
18 location has challenges. And so your concerns  
19 resonate with me.

20 MR. JAMES: I appreciate that.

21 MEMBER ALBERTI: And so I'm  
22 wishing you and the community good luck.

1 MR. JAMES: Thank you.

2 MEMBER ALBERTI: That this owner  
3 comes in and is successful in the way that  
4 they hope they will be. And that's what my  
5 remark was about.

6 MR. JAMES: All right. Well thank  
7 you for that explanation. I do, I mean, the  
8 idea just -- And I think the Board needs to  
9 look at the tip offs that they hear.

10 The idea that they would like to  
11 have just one kitchen for two establishments.  
12 Well what if one of them fails, you know?  
13 What happens then to that establishment, you  
14 know?

15 In the future they might become  
16 separated. Just because they're located in  
17 the same building, that was built in this  
18 fashion. It has a service stairwell, and  
19 access points from the rear, you know. It's  
20 built like a mall sort of, you know, a mini  
21 mall, just in three buildings.

22 So, you know, it's just the, like

1 a previous description that I think the Board  
2 talked about, District Underground operating  
3 in the basement. Well that's part of the Saki  
4 establishment. How is that possibly allowed  
5 to happen, when the District was all an above  
6 ground, you know?

7 It's just, the merging of these  
8 two establishments in some fashion, I have no  
9 doubt will happen. Because people can go  
10 between them without leaving the building.  
11 And the food numbers are just to be looked at  
12 with the most skepticism you can muster.

13 MEMBER ALBERTI: Unfortunately we  
14 didn't get all the food numbers.

15 MR. JAMES: Well it's pretty --

16 MEMBER ALBERTI: Because that  
17 questioning was cut short.

18 MR. JAMES: -- stunning to appear  
19 in front of the Board, saying you're going to  
20 be a great restaurant, and not even be able to  
21 bring your menu with you, or your Excel  
22 spreadsheet about what it's going to be.

1                   Anyway, I appreciate the time.  
2                   And I hope that the Board, you know, the  
3                   Board, I think the Board has the ability to  
4                   not allow them to have parts of what's in the  
5                   license, because of what's happened in the  
6                   past. Take away their entertainment  
7                   endorsement and see if they still want to do  
8                   the transfer.

9                   MEMBER ALBERTI: Thank you very  
10                  much.

11                  CHAIR MILLER: Thank you very  
12                  much, Mr. James. Appreciate it. Appreciate  
13                  your personal knowledge.

14                  (Whereupon, the fact finding  
15                  hearing in the above-entitled matter was  
16                  concluded at 11:01 a.m.)

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