

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Building & Planning Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Request from the Rotary Club of Bala Cynwyd-Narberth to host a Craft and Brew festival event May 12, 2018 on Bala Avenue

Prepared By: Eric Persson, Economic Development Specialist

Date: March 15, 2018

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

The Board is asked to waive Township Code § 111-4.2 to permit patrons to possess open containers with alcoholic beverages and serve alcoholic beverages on a Township property within a regulated area on May 12, 2018.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

A provision in the First-Class Township Code allows for a market on Township property or rights-of-way. This provision allows the Board of Commissioners to permit this event by providing and establishing regulations for the area. This event requires a waiver of Township Code § 111-4.2 to serve and consume alcohol on Township property and to possess open containers in a public place for this day and event.

Code § 111-4.2 states: No person shall drink an alcoholic beverage, nor shall any person, firm, corporation or other organization possess an open container containing an alcoholic beverage, whether inside or outside of a motor vehicle or any part thereof, on or in any public place within the Township of Lower Merion.

III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):

Current policy prohibits the consumption of alcohol in open containers in a public place. Current policy also requires approval from the Board of Commissioners to serve and consume alcohol on Township property. This code provision has been waived for similar special events in other commercial districts in the Township.

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

The proposed event is scheduled from Noon to 5 PM on Saturday, May 12th. The businesses on Bala Avenue have been apprised of the event, and those within its perimeter have posed no objection. In fact, many have planned to participate by providing sidewalk displays. All sidewalks are expected to remain open.

The Rotary Club of Bala Cynwyd-Narberth proposes this event to be a fundraiser for them and several local charities, as well as an image event to allow attendees to see what activity has and will be occurring along Bala Avenue. Cross Properties will also partner with the Rotary to help event coordination and public outreach. The City Avenue Special Services District (CASSD) will support the event and provide Community Service Representatives for crowd management assistance. The Lower Merion Police Department will be on site to assist with vehicle access to and within the event site.

The event will include vendors and music and be open to the public with free access to all areas except where alcoholic beverages will be sold and consumed. The entry-controlled beverage sales area will be in the public parking lot located under the BMW parking garage. The sponsor will provide staff to monitor use of alcoholic beverages and to assure that only those legally entitled to purchase and consume alcohol are able to do so. Only those patrons holding tickets will be allowed in the beverage sales area. Tickets will be sold in advance of the event and there is a cap on the number of tickets that will be sold (1,500). Ticket purchasers will be provided with instructions on where to park. A shuttle will ferry the patrons to and from the event.

Two layers of movable barricades will be erected on Bala Avenue and Highland Avenue. The vehicle barricades define the outer limits of the event. The inner pedestrian barricades will be located roughly half a block toward the event from the vehicle barricades and define the event area, but allow necessary vehicles to pass through the outer vehicle barricades. The vehicle barricades will be erected on Bala Avenue at its intersection with Montgomery Avenue and its intersection with Highland Avenue. Lower Merion Police officers will control those barricades.

For the northern end of Bala Avenue at Montgomery Avenue, only vehicles destined for the BMW dealership or one of the professional service buildings (by appointment only) will be permitted past the barricades. No vehicles will be permitted within the pedestrian barricades with emergency vehicles excepted.

Residents around the perimeter of the event are in the process of being notified and apprised of arrangements. If appropriate, a meeting will be held with the neighbors to review event details. This is not expected to affect the core aspects of the event, but accommodations will be made for special cases as appropriate.

The event sponsor will supply porta-potties for the day of the event. Cross Properties has provided an off-street location to collect refuse and clean up after the event until it can be picked by Public Works Crews on Monday. The event sponsor will supply an updated map delineating all the locations for the activities and barricades described above.

The event sponsors have met with Township staff, including traffic safety. Since Bala Avenue is a State Highway, the sponsors must contact PennDOT to obtain official permission to close a portion of the road for that day.

V. **Impact on Township Finances:**

Vendors will be required to obtain the required business licenses from the Finance Department. The event sponsor may need to purchase the use of public parking spaces in the public Bala Avenue parking garage for the duration of the event. There are no other expected impacts on Township finances.

VI. **Staff Recommendation:**

The special event permit to be filed by the sponsor will be administratively reviewed by staff. Staff recommends that the waiver be approved contingent on PennDOT and PLCB approval to conduct the event. Staff also recommends that all of the design elements and protective measures incorporated into this Issue Briefing listed above become conditions of the event permit.