

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Building & Planning Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Waiver of Township Code § 111-4.2

Prepared By: Charlie Doyle, Assistant Director, Building & Planning

Date: July 25, 2025

I. Action to Be Considered by The Board:

Recommend a waiver of Township Code § 111-4.2 as requested by the applicant, Ardmore Music Hall (AMH), to permit patrons to possess open containers with alcoholic beverages and serve alcoholic beverages on public rights-of-way within regulated areas on August 10, 2025, between the hours of 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. subject to AMH providing the required insurance certificate documenting adequate coverage as required by the Township.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

The Board of Commissioners must approve waivers of the Township Code. This event requires a waiver of Township Code § 111-4.2 to serve and consume alcohol in public right-of-way and to possess open containers in a public place for this day and event.

Township 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 in public right-of-way. This code provision has been waived for this and similar special events in Ardmore and other commercial districts in the Township.

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

AMH has partnered with Narberth Ambulance to promote the annual bike race, featuring activities like beer gardens and live musical entertainment throughout the day. AMH will be selling alcoholic beverages in designated outdoor areas, including the beer garden at Schaufele Plaza (11:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.), Lancaster Avenue toward Ardmore Avenue (11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.), and the privately-owned St. James Place in Suburban Square (12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.).

To ensure safety and security, trained event security personnel, as well as Lower Merion Police, will be present to enforce alcohol regulations and maintain crowd safety.

Responsible Alcohol Management Program-trained (RAMP) employees will oversee the vending of alcohol on-site. All volunteers and employees will receive contact information for police, medical, and emergency services, and will be equipped with walkie-talkies for efficient communication.

In the beer garden, individuals aged 21 and above will be required to present identification before being served alcohol. Additionally, each patron in the beer garden will be provided with a wristband for identification purposes. The Police Department has been actively coordinating with the various groups involved in this event and will have officers available as needed on August 10th for the bike race and associated events. In addition to coordination with the Police Department, this event has been reviewed by other Township staff and approved for a special event permit.

V. Impact on Township Finances:

The Township will not receive meter revenue from the metered spaces along Coulter Avenue and Station Avenue and in Schaufele Plaza during the event. The Township provides staff from Police and Public Works to assist in hosting the event.

VI. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the alcohol waiver be approved as requested subject to Ardmore Music Hall providing the required insurance certificate documenting adequate coverage as required by the Township.