SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

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1624/1626 White Bear Ave N Commercial Development District

Council Consideration:

Creation of a Commercial Development District at 1624/1626 White Bear Ave N to allow Cups and Cheers to apply for appropriate on-sale liquor licenses for operating until 2:00am

Background:

- Given the potential of neighborhood livability and public health and safety impacts, alcohol is highly regulated
- City Charter and ordinance place geographical restrictions on the type and number of on-sale liquor licenses allowed
    - E.g. outside of downtown and Commercial Development Districts (CDDs), Saint Paul ordinance only allows for the issuance of on-sale liquor licenses to restaurants, hotels, and private non-profit colleges (for on-sale liquor licenses, restaurants are required to close by midnight)
- CDDs are Charter and Council created "districts" which allow for the issuance of on-sale liquor licenses without regard to geographical restrictions on type and number of on-sale liquor license allowed
    - The provisions allow for and support the creation of appropriately located districts with land uses that align with and support higher intensities of liquor and entertainment activity
    - There are currently 15 CDDs within the City
        - The first six were created within the Charter and encompass larger districts
        - Recent CDDs are smaller, sometimes only encompassing a single parcel
    - Note: CDDs are not tied to specific businesses, and should be considered accordingly
- In 2015, changes in the restaurant market created a strong interest for restaurants to seek on-sale liquor licenses. Given Charter and ordinance restrictions, restaurant owners began to seek CDDs
    - Charter and Ordinance changes were made to greatly addressed this need, by allowing for unlimited number of on-sale liquor licenses to be issued to restaurants (with midnight closing) city wide
    - That effort also recognized the outstanding need to address the interest in late night (after midnight) restaurants as well as bars for properties outside of downtown
        - City staff began work on identifying and proposing CDDs to provide equitable economic opportunities in a planned manner to support public health and safety as well as neighborhood livability and community vibrancy
        - Several CDDs were identified for University Avenue, but work stopped during COVID
- The owner of Cups and Cheers is requesting a CDD so they can apply for necessary licenses to serve liquor until 2:00am, and contribute to their overall business operations during this time
- Cups and Cheers submitted the required petition of property owners within as well as within 100 feet of the proposed 1624/1626 White Bear Avenue N Commercial Development District (2/3 consent is required of both groups of owners)
- On May 30, 2025, the Planning Commission reviewed and recommended approval of the proposed CDD
- As required, the June 18, 2025 City Council Public Hearing was properly noticed to property owners and through the official paper of the City