

COUNCIL APPROVES FURNACE ROOM PATIO, LICENCE APPLICATION

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Halton Hills council has given its support to the Furnace Room Brewery's application for an expanded liquor licence and an outdoor patio despite the opposition of some residents in the area.

Furnace Room had been operating under a manufacturer's licence, which allowed it to serve samples. However, the licence was suspended following a complaint to the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) that full glasses were being served. The brewery is now applying to the AGCO for a licence that would allow it to serve full glasses.

Cheryl Sim, who lives across the street from the Elgin Street brewery, addressed council at the June 13 meeting on behalf of 18 neighbours living on King, Sarah, Elgin and Union streets. Sim said after private events held at the brewery, people leaving at midnight or 1 a.m. made a lot of noise

and urinated on lawns in the neighbourhood. She said noise from the patio was also disruptive for neighbours with young families.

"I understand that a business needs to make money, but I find it disappointing a business has chosen to ignore the obligations to the community and have their activities impact the neighbourhood," she said. "While I do not oppose the continued operation of the brewing and retail store operation, this application seeks to expand the part of the business that has caused the most issues."

Moya Johnson, the councillor for the ward, and Furnace Room co-owner Mike Dykstra said they had not received any complaints. Susie Spry of the town's bylaw department confirmed one noise complaint was received in the fall of 2021 because of people gathering outside the brewery.

Appearing at the July 4 council meeting, Dykstra said the brewery has set conditions on its application he hopes will address the

neighbours' concerns. They included limiting the patio's operation to three days a week, to 9 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and 6 p.m. on Sunday. He said only non-amplified live music would be performed, and no later the 5 p.m., even though town bylaw allows it until 11 p.m.

Furnace Room has also had discussions about renting 16 parking spaces from Metrolinx in non-peak hours to support the patio.

Dykstra said the application with the conditions "gives us a chance to show we're going to do this the right way."

Sim said in her earlier delegation that the brewery should not be able to operate like a bar or pub in a residential area, but Coun. Clark Somerville pointed out a bar — the Station House — operated on the property for more than 100 years and that almost every bar in Halton Hills is adjacent to residential areas.

Councillors brought up the tourism aspect of brewery.

"There is a huge tourism boom



Herb Garbutt/Metroland

Halton Hills council unanimously supported the Furnace Room Brewery's application for licence to serve more than samples at the Elgin Street brewery as well as its plans for patio.

with microbreweries and having a local one is a tremendous plus," Somerville said.

"It is becoming a tourist attraction," said Coun. Wendy Farrow-Reed, who said she spoke to residents in the area about the brewery. "People are talking about it and it is becoming well known.

They are a fair employer in our town and we would like to see them succeed."

Council voted unanimously to support Furnace Room's application to the AGCO, as well as its application for a patio through the town's el fresco program, which allows for temporary patios.

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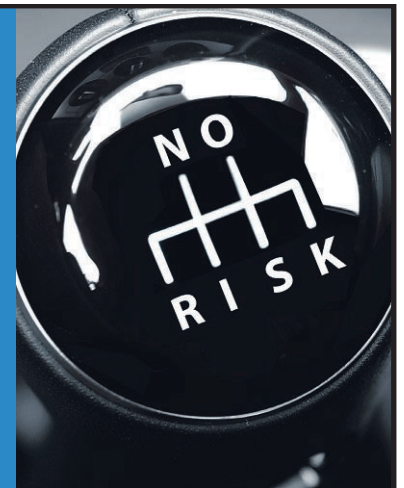
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