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Via Town's GeoCivix Online Portal

David Levy, AICP
Director of Planning and Zoning
Town of Vienna
127 Center Street South
Vienna, Virginia 22180

Re: Request for Modification of Parking Requirements – Bear Branch Tavern

Dear Mr. Levy:

On behalf of my client, Bear Branch Tavern (“BBT”), located at 133 Maple Avenue East, Vienna, VA, I respectfully submit this request for a modification of the Town’s parking requirements pursuant to Section 18-830 of the Town of Vienna Zoning Ordinance, which authorizes the Town Council to modify zoning requirements upon a showing of good cause.

Background

BBT currently operates pursuant to the Town’s prior approval under PF-40-18-SM, which permits up to 300 seats to be served by the existing 103 parking spaces on site along with medical and office uses in the same building that utilize very little parking, particularly in the evening with BBT patronage is at its highest.

The restaurant currently has 249 seats on the ground floor. The restaurant seeks to enhance its service offerings by adding an additional 88 seats in the basement for special events such as business dinners, club gatherings, family celebrations, and community-oriented functions. This will bring the total restaurant seating capacity to 337 seats, 37 seats above the currently approved level. This information is set forth on the enclosed Parking Study plan prepared by Hapstak Demetriou Architecture dated January 9, 2026 (the “Parking Study Plan”).

Under Section 18-531 of the Zoning Ordinance, restaurant space requires one (1) parking space per four (4) seats, resulting in a requirement of ten (10) additional spaces to accommodate the additional seating, for a total parking requirement of 113 spaces.

Request

BBT respectfully requests that the Town Council modify the parking requirement of Section 18-531 to allow BBT to meet the additional parking demand through the implementation of valet parking when any of the additional 37 seats are in use. Valet operations will enable the on-site parking lot to accommodate 114 vehicles, thereby fully addressing and slightly exceeding the

incremental parking demand generated by the additional seats. The additional valet spaces are shown in red on the Parking Study Plan.

Commitment to Parking Management

BBT understands the importance of effective parking management in the Town's commercial corridors. To ensure that the proposed modification does not adversely impact surrounding properties or the public, BBT will:

- Provide valet service during all events utilizing the private dining room;
- Maintain valet staffing sufficient to manage parking demand efficiently;
- Ensure that all valet-parked vehicles are stored on-site and not within surrounding neighborhoods or off-site locations unless expressly approved by the Town.

This approach maintains the Town's intended parking standards while allowing a modest and controlled enhancement of dining capacity for the benefit of patrons and the community.

Fire Marshal Review

The valet layout shown in the Parking Study Plan was shared with and approved by the Fairfax County Fire Marshal's office. See the enclosed correspondence between Permit Expediter Kimberly Shanklin and Assistant Fire Marshal Michael Paruti. The required fire lanes are noted on the Parking Study Plan as well.

Conclusion

The requested modification supports a small-scale, event-based enhancement to BBT's offerings without creating adverse parking impacts. The use of valet parking is an established and effective method of addressing higher-demand timeframes and ensures full compliance with the spirit and intent of the Town's parking requirements.

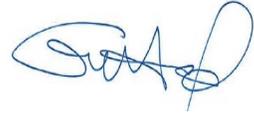
We respectfully request placement of this matter on the next available agenda for consideration.

Please let me know if staff would like to meet to discuss this request in advance of scheduling. A narrative further explaining the proposed new use and a letter from our proposed valet service provider are enclosed in further support of our request.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very truly yours,

Wire Gill LLP



Evan Pritchard, Esq.

Enclosures