

SO YOU WANT TO OPEN A RESTAURANT ...

Collaboration between
Health and Economic Development
in the Town of Brookline



Topics to be Discussed

- Brookline snapshot
- Roles of Health Dept. and Economic Development Division
- Regulatory process for opening a restaurant
- Economic Development support, solutions and outcomes



SNAPSHOT

- 7 commercial areas
- ~ 148 restaurants
- ~ 93 liquor licenses
- 11 new applications in 2019



Role of the Health Department

- Responsible for the permitting of new food establishments
- Often the first point of contact for potential restaurant applicants
- Receives many inquiries about business processes/regulations that can be time-consuming to answer and outside the purview of the Department
 - In need of external support to help restaurant applicants navigate the regulatory process and find appropriate resources



Economic Development Division

- One of three divisions within the Planning Department
- Responsible for business support, long-term planning initiatives and a newly-formed sustainability office
- Acts as a liaison between businesses and Town departments
- Staff to the Economic Development Advisory Board
- Does not oversee regulatory functions but rather partners with departments to help support businesses that need to navigate regulations



Regulatory Overview

- An applicant looking to open a restaurant will have to follow a number of steps with a range of Town departments to secure the proper permits and approvals



Regulatory Overview

- **Select Board's Office**
 - > Issues licenses



Regulatory Overview

- **Select Board's Office**
 - > Issues licenses
 - > Food Vendor
 - > Mobile Food Vendor
 - > Common Victualler
 - > Liquor
 - > Entertainment
 - > Outdoor Seating



Regulatory Overview

- **Select Board's Office**
 - > Issues licenses
 - > Food Vendor
 - > Mobile Food Vendor
 - > Common Victualler
 - > Liquor
 - > Entertainment
 - > Outdoor Seating
 - > Public hearing is held
 - > After approval, final walkthrough by the Building and Health Depts.



Regulatory Overview

- **Building Department**
 - > Zoning requirements for business type, number of seats and parking spaces
 - > May require Planning Board and ZBA approval



Regulatory Overview

- **Building Department**
 - > Zoning requirements for business type, number of seats and parking spaces
 - > May require Planning Board and ZBA approval
 - > Building permits for interior and exterior construction
 - > ADA and restroom requirements
 - > On-site inspections during and after construction



Regulatory Overview

- **Health Department**
 - Responsible for issuing permits to food establishments



Regulatory Overview

- **Health Department**
 - > Responsible for issuing permits to food establishments
 - > Retail Food
 - > Food Service Establishment
 - > Catering
 - > Limited Retail
 - > Temporary Food
 - > Special Event – Mass Gatherings
 - > Mobile Food Facilities



Regulatory Overview

- **Health Department**
 - > Responsible for issuing permits to food establishments
 - > Residential kitchens
 - > Required orientations with the Health Department prior to opening
 - > Health Department makes recommendations to Select Board
 - > Pre-operational inspections



Regulatory Overview

- **Police Department**
 - > Provides recommendations to Select Board for issuance of licenses



Regulatory Overview

- **Police Department**
 - > Provides recommendations to Select Board for issuance of licenses
 - > Background checks for applicants and managers seeking a liquor license as well as mobile food vendors including ice cream truck drivers



Regulatory Overview

- **Fire Department**
 - > public and structural safety



Regulatory Overview

- **Fire Department**

- > Public and structural safety

- > Cooking environment must be protected by an approved auto extinguishing or “Ansul” system

- > Cook hood duct system required

- > Free standing fire extinguishers required in specific locations



Regulatory Overview

- **Fire Department**
 - > Public and structural safety
 - > Establishments with 50 or more seats require an approved fire alarm system



Regulatory Overview

- **Fire Department**
 - > Public and structural safety
 - > Establishments with 50 or more seats require an approved fire alarm system
 - > Exits must be kept clear and allow for emergency egress
 - > Heat producing equipment such as boilers and water heaters must be kept clear



Regulatory Overview

- **Planning Department**
 - > Sign & façade review process
 - > **Economic Development division**
 - > New business collaborations and support
 - > How can we attract and retain restaurants by improving these complicated steps?



Current Collaborations

- Provide online guides and resources for business owners
- Work with Building Commissioner to promote flexibility in zoning to allow new business types
- Connect business owners with landlords and property owners who have vacancies
- Oversee sign/facade review applications – Façade Loans
- Zoning amendment to allow staff approval of some signage
- Worked with State Rep to receive additional liquor licenses and outreach to businesses to distribute
- Conduct exit interviews with recently-closed restaurants
- Promote restaurants at outdoor events
- Established café tables program in commercial areas with DPW

Proposed/Upcoming Collaborations

- Collaboration to incentivize food vendor pop-ups
- Possible warrant article to lower parking minimums in commercial districts near transit
- October workshop to explain local plastics ban and help businesses remain in compliance
- Select Board recently formed Small Business Development Committee to attract and promote new business types
- Work to improve and promote digital and print business resource guides and handouts

Outcomes and Successes

- Reduced wait time/delays for applicants at Health and all other Town departments to collect information
- Stimulation of new collaborations and discussions between Town departments
- Increased transparency and accessibility of Town processes and information





THANK YOU!
Q & A