# SO YOU WANT TO OPEN A RESTAURANT ...

horation between Leaved Economic Development



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# **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

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#### **Role of the Health Department**

Responsible for the permitting of new food establishments

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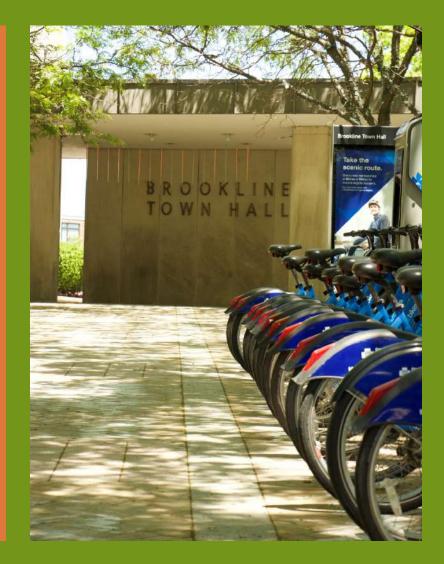
- Often the first point of contact for potential restaurant applicants
- Receives many inquiries about business processes/regulations that can be time-consuming to answer and outside the purview of the Department
  - In need of external support to help restaurant applicants navigate the regulatory process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

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BROOKLINE PUBLIC HEALTH CENTE

# **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





 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



Select Board's Office
 > Issues licenses



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



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 > Public hearing is held
 > After approval, final walkthrough by the Building and Health Depts.



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



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> Building permits for
interior and exterior
construction
> ADA and restroom
requirements
> On-site inspections during
and after construction



 Health Department

 Responsible for issuing permits to food establishments



- 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



- 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



Police Department

> Provides recommendations to Select Board for issuance of licenses



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



Fire Department
 > public and structural safety



- 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



Fire Department
 > Public and structural safety

> Establishments with 50 or more seats require an approved fire alarm system



- 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



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

