

# Bar The Hour Inc. / d.b.a. High Rollers Company

Liquor Commission



John Swain. November 14, 2024

# **Introduction**

## **Overview of High Rollers Company**

Bar The Hour Inc., d.b.a. 'High Rollers Company Worldwide,' is dedicated to serving the Wheaton community with a full-service experience focused on food, family-friendly entertainment, and community engagement.

# Clarifying Our Business Model

Our goal is to create a social space that offers substantial, made-to-order food and beverage options in a relaxed, community-oriented environment.

- Full-service model with table service
- Variety of hot and cold menu options from each food group
- Focus on quality dining, not fast food

***It's about the type of food & service available,  
not about the type of equipment in the kitchen***

# Response to Fast Food Classification

**High Rollers Company does not meet the criteria of a fast food restaurant.**

<b>Fast Food Criteria</b>	<b>Our Response (we're not Fast Food)</b>
Patrons ordering from a counter	✓ We provide table service
Pickup from counter or service window	✓ We have food runners/waitstaff delivering food
No waitstaff	✓ We have servers
Pay when order	✓ Pay when complete
Menus limited to food items with minimal prep	✓ Our items are chef made to order and require significant preparation
Limited menu not all major food groups	✓ We have Dairy, Vegetables, Protein, Fruit, Grain
Carry-out	✓ Our focus is our full service Dine-in tables, not Carry-out
Drive-up Facilities	✓ No Drive-up Lane

*It's about the type of food & service available, not about the type of equipment in the kitchen*

# Response to Fast Food Classification

**High Rollers Company does not meet the criteria of a fast food restaurant.**

Fast Food Criteria	Our Response (we're not Fast Food)
Patrons not paying gratuities	✔ We accept gratuities (and smiles) 😊
Restaurants not having waiters or waitresses	✔ We have waitstaff
Food/Bev not in permanent utensils	✔ We have Dine-in w/permanent utensils
Not having individual menus for each patron	✔ Individual menus & plan to have custom menus for guests
Patrons bussing their own tables	✔ We have waitstaff
Food prepared in area not entirely separated from patrons	✔ Our Trending Open Kitchen Concept is separate from patrons; allows them to see food made
Trash containers in eating area	✔ We do not have trash containers in the eating area

*It's about the type of food & service available, not about the type of equipment in the kitchen*



# Restaurant Equipment & Facilities

**Our kitchen and dining setup meets restaurant standards**

- Turbo chef\*, crepe irons, cold plates for hot and cold items
- Installation of grease trap, 7-foot sink for DuPage Health compliance
- Urinal added to support increased staff and customer capacity



\* Bruce Allen indicated it would be difficult to allow a hood/ ventilation, therefore, ventless technology was selected

# Robust Menu Offering

## Diverse menu that exceeds fast food classification

- Small Plates/ Lunch/ Dinner: Charcuterie boards, savory crepes, pizza, roasted vegetables, shrimp, salmon, lean protein
- Breakfast: avocado toast, banana egg crepes, etc.
- Desserts: Rolled ice cream, cotton candy, novelty shakes, ice cream flights

# Commitment to the Wheaton Community

**Our family has lived in Wheaton for over 20 years. We're deeply invested in the community's success and values**

- Local residency and community involvement (e.g. Wheaton Lion's Club, Economic Development Consortium, Downtown Wheaton Association participant)
- Attending local events and participating in economic development efforts
- On-site management ensures quality and connection with patrons
- Industry experience (e.g. Hyatt Corporate Innovation Lab, Mobile Dining/ Poolside Drinks)



# Supporting the Wheaton Economy

**We align with Wheaton's goals of building community and supporting small business growth**

- Commitment to enhancing local dining and social experience
- Not a remote franchise or corporate entity - decisions are made locally & we support DWA events
- We support sustainable, long-term community development

# Summary and Closing

**In summary, Bar The Hour Inc., D.B.A. High Rollers Company Worldwide meets the standards for a restaurant and qualifies to receive a liquor license under Wheaton's criteria and is positioned to be a positive addition to the community**

- Full-service dining experience with waitstaff and made-to-order food
- Significant investment in appropriate restaurant equipment and compliance with health and building standards
- Long-standing commitment to and investment in Wheaton

# Thank You

Thank you for considering our application. We look forward to working together to bring Bar The Hour Inc./ DBA High Rollers Company Worldwide

## Contact Information:

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- High Rollers Company
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# Outcome of Liquor Commission

## Bar The Hour™ Denied Liquor License Recommendation

- What seemed to be against their desire, the City Of Wheaton Liquor Commission, sided with the City of Wheaton Planning Department and decided Not Recommend a Liquor License for Bar The Hour Inc.
- It appeared the main concern for the City's denial was the kitchen's capacity to keep up with a 68 seat restaurant.
- Bar the Hour's™ current kitchen max capacity is ~348 servings per hour

# Post liquor commission mtg debrief

## Current status denied

- Interpretation of the code is based on type of food offered (e.g. all food groups) and type service (waitstaff) it's not based on the bandwidth or how fast food can be produced
- We were denied the Liquor Commissions Recommendation based on kitchen capacity (e.g. which is materially important factor to Fast Food not full service)
- There are venues with liquor licenses on our block that have significant less food choices on their menu than ours
- Those making the recommendations do not have food industry expertise to make a qualified recommendation. We pass the city building plan. We pass the Dupage Health Department criteria. We have not found any definition of a quantifiable metric for food volume or throughput in order to obtain a liquor license.



# Post liquor commission mtg debrief

Fast Food Restaurants are not allowed Liquor Licenses. We don't want special variances to the rules, we simply want to be judged on the same criteria  
Throughput or Volume of Food Production is not a criteria for a quality restaurant or to have a liquor license (it's more of a fast food metric)

<b>Fast Food (lower score means similar to fast food)</b>	<b>Bar the hour</b>	<b>Tasting Devine</b>	<b>Subourban</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>Sweet Chilango</b>
<b>(1)Patrons ordering food from a counter area or service window</b>	1	1	0	0	0
<b>(2)Patrons picking up food or beverages from a counter area or service</b>	1	1	1?	0	1
<b>(3)Payment for food or beverages at the time they are ordered</b>	1	1	?	0	0
<b>(4)Menus limited to food items requiring minimal preparation</b>	1	0	0	1	1
<b>(5)Menus not offering a wide variety of foods from all major food groups</b>	1	0	0	1	1
<b>(6)Food and beverages being available for carry-out</b>	1	1	1	1	1
<b>(7)The presence of drive-up facilities</b>	1	1	1	1	1
<b>(8)Patrons not paying gratuities</b>	1	1	1	1	1
<b>(9)Restaurants not having waiters or waitresses</b>	1	1	?	0	0
<b>(10)Food and beverages not being served with permanent utensils</b>	1	?	?	0?	0
<b>(11)Not having individual menus for each patron</b>	1	1	1	0	0
<b>(12)Patrons bussing their own tables</b>	1	1	1?	0	0
<b>(13)Food being prepared in an area not entirely separated from patrons by full</b>	1	?	0	1	0
<b>(14)Trash containers being contained within the restaurant eating area.</b>	1	1	1	0	0
<b>Quantity of passing criteria</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>

# Volume Output of Kitchen

Shrimp Skewers								
Item No.	Product	Weight/ portion	Oven Temp	MW %	Air %	Cook Time	Vessel	Notes
0729	Tail-On P&D Shrimp Kabob, 7-ct.	1 skewer	525°F	75	75	1:45	Sheet Pan	Spray Item With Oil
0762	Tail-On P&D Shrimp Kabob, 10-ct.	1 skewer	525°F	75	75	2:00	Sheet Pan	Spray Item With Oil

The City Planning Department doesn't think our kitchen has the capacity to support a 68 seat restaurant

We know our kitchen can support a 68 seat restaurant, here proof we are right...

- Turbo Fire Capacity: 45 to 60 pizzas per hour
- Turbo Double Oven (Impingement Ovens):
  - Chicken: 6 min per cook cycle (or 10 cycles per hour); 24 servings per cycle
    - $10 \times 24 = 240$  servings per hour
  - Shrimp: 2 min per cook cycle (or 12 cycles per hour); 24 servings per cycle
    - $12 \times 24 = 288$  servings per hour

**Kitchen Capacity:  
285 to 348 servings per hour**

Liquor commission chair person compared her experience of a home pizza oven, which leads me to believe she does not have adequate commercial kitchen experience.

If she had, then she would know the extreme difference between a \$16-19k commercial kitchen impingement oven verse a \$50 residential consumer product application. We cannot find any material proof this board has the experience required to overturn the commercial industry expert's opinion on equipment capacity, and make a decision based on this novice experience. We hope the data on this slide clarifies the output capabilities of our impingement ovens that can support a 68 seat restaurant.

We recommend the City Council follow the recommendation from a commercial industry expert and not that of an inexperienced commission board.

# Post liquor commission debrief

## Current status denied

- Even after this recommendation for denial we still feel positively about the Wheaton economic development team
- We are dislexic. We don't have pride issue and directly work collaboratively towards a solution. We question all authority that doesn't pass the smell test, and this doesn't pass the smell test
- We pass all criteria called out in the liquor ordinance to qualify as a restaurant that should be granted a liquor license, yet we are being denied a liquor license based on the volume or throughput of our kitchen. This is more of a fast food metric and not a metric for a restaurant
- We want to stress we don't want special rules given to us. We simply want the same criteria and rules applied to us as everyone else.

# Post liquor commission mtg debrief

## Neighboring restaurants with Approved Liquor Licenses

Existing Liquor Licenses	Variations	Notes
Tasting Devine	Only 1 food type and not all food groups	Only Charcuterie boards, not enough options
Sweet Chilangos	Garbage receptacle in eating area, patrons clear their own tables in a majority of seating area, plastic utensils, paper boat plates, pay when you order,	All attributes of Fast Food
302	Garbage receptacle in eating area, patrons clear their own tables in a majority of seating area, plastic utensils, paper boat plates, pay when you order,	All attributes of Fast Food
Suburban	No Kitchen	Orders all food from Maypole (requested same)

# Inclusion

## We expect to be judged using the same rules as you've judged others

- Legally and Fairly, you cannot subjectively tell us 'No,' when you've told others 'Yes' using the same criteria (when we rank more favorable using the same judgment criteria)
- It is clear that Bar The Hour Inc. passes all the criteria to receive a liquor license. If the City Council chooses against issuing a liquor license to them, then we no longer have a fair governing body, but a dictatorship govern by a single City Manager
- Operational Capacity is the business' problem to solve, not the government's
- What we hear the City Planning Department say is they are refusing to go on a road trip vacation to Florida, until guaranteed that all the Stop Lights Will Be Green
- Come on, let us play with the big boys... they can't be so afraid of us, that they leverage you, to not let us play with them... where's the fair competition?