

B.C. Liquor Review

The Potential for “Unintended Liquor Retail Consequences” in Richmond, B.C.

Prepared for: City of Richmond General Purposes Committee
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Prepared by: The Coalition of Private Liquor Stores in Richmond, BC

BC Liquor Review

- Changes in B.C.'s Liquor Control and Licensing Act introduced April 1, 2015 have made liquor more accessible in Richmond and potentially removed the ability of Council to have full control over the retailing of liquor.
- If Council loses full control over the retailing of liquor in Richmond there may be possible "unintended consequences" in the future (e.g. full service liquor stores opening up in grocery stores without land use and zoning controls by Council).
- These new provincial liquor regulatory changes are something Council may want to examine from a public safety and public health perspective.

Liquor Retail:

access to minors, public health & public safety

- Currently there are 3 government and 16 private liquor stores in Richmond. Provincial liquor regulation requires government and private liquor store to be “one kilometre” from each other.
- The “1 km distance requirement” was put in place to prevent the proliferation of retailers selling a controlled substance (e.g. liquor) and any negative social consequences that may result in regards to minors accessing liquor and other public health considerations.

Wine in Grocery

- There are currently 19 BC VQA licenses in B.C. 16 of these stores are in stand alone locations. Recently 3 Save-on-Foods locations (2: Surrey, 1: Tsawwassen) started selling wines on their shelves. All of the BC VQA wine licences operating in grocery stores to date are Jim Pattison Group grocery stores and none of the grocery stores went through a local rezoning process.
- Potential NAFTA and GATT trade challenges led by foreign liquor manufactures could likely result in these “wine on grocery shelf” VQA licenses being converted into full fledged liquor stores selling beer, spirits and all types of wine.
- A local municipality will have lost the ability to control the placement of full service liquor retail stores if the likely trade challenges are successful. Thus, “wine on grocery shelves” is a long term land use and planning concern.

Land use planning for liquor retail

- External forces (e.g. trade challenges and competing liquor producer lobby) may force Victoria to alter BC VQA wine licenses in grocery stores to permit the sale of beer, all wines and spirits
- At that point Richmond City Council would have lost some ability to control the location of liquor retailing in Richmond.
- Thus, we would ask that long term land use and planning measures be taken to ensure that **BC VQA wine licenses** in grocery stores are classified as liquor retailers and thus operate on a level playing field with other liquor retailers in Richmond.

Our recommendation

1. Enact a “1 KM Separation Rule” for all liquor retailers in Richmond including wine retailers, government and private liquor retailers.
 - Thus, Richmond City Council will have full control over land use and liquor retailing locations to ensure they best limit access to minors and meet public health and safety concerns.
 - Kamloops has enacted a “1 KM Separation Rule” for all liquor retailers and other B.C. municipalities are considering it currently.
2. Pass a bylaw or liquor guideline to ensure that all liquor retailers in Richmond (including BC VQA wine on grocery stores) must go through a rezoning process like government and private liquor stores currently have had to.
 - Nanaimo City Council recently voted to enact a zoning bylaw change to add the definition of wine in grocery store to its bylaw and create criteria for future rezoning applications.
 - City of North Vancouver recently voted to require wine in grocery stores to be subject to a rezoning application.

Thank you from:
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in Richmond, B.C.

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