

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION	*	BEFORE THE ALCOHOLIC
OF MENG LI WANG AND ZHENG HAI	*	BEVERAGE HEARING BOARD
ZHENG ON BEHALF OF SAKE	*	FOR
ELKRIDGE, INC. T/A SAKE JAPANESE	*	HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND
STEAKHOUSE FOR A NEW CLASS B,	*	
BEER, WINE & LIQUOR 7-DAY ON	*	Case No.: 21-04
SALE LICENSE	*	

DECISION AND ORDER

The Board of License Commissioners for Howard County, Maryland (the “Liquor Board”), pursuant to Rule 1.02(A) of the Liquor Board Rules and Regulations, has delegated the authority to hear and decide cases to the Alcoholic Beverage Hearing Board for Howard County, Maryland (the “Hearing Board”).

On December 8, 2020, the Hearing Board heard the application of Meng Li Wang and Zheng Hai Zheng (“Applicants”) on behalf of Sake Elkridge, Inc. t/a Sake Japanese Steakhouse (“Sake Japanese Steakhouse”) for a new Class B Beer, Wine and Liquor, 7-day on-sale for a 3,200 square foot restaurant located at 7260 Montgomery Road, Suite G, Elkridge, MD 21075.

The hearing was properly advertised, and the property was posted pursuant to the Alcoholic Beverages Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The Applicants were not represented by counsel and there were no protestants who appeared in opposition to the application.

All the documents on file were incorporated into the record by reference.

SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

Zheng Hai Zheng, proposed licensee and 90% owner of Sake Elkridge, Inc., was sworn in and testified that there have been no changes to the liquor license application since it was filed and that all information in the application was true and correct. Mr. Zheng

testified that he has never been convicted of a felony and that he has no financial interest in any liquor distributors. Mr. Zheng stated that he has been on other liquor licenses and there have been no liquor violations.

Mr. Zheng testified that if this application is approved, he will become alcohol awareness certified and his staff will also be certified. Mr. Zheng testified that the hours of operation will be Sunday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 9:30 pm. and Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Mr. Zheng testified that anyone ordering alcohol will be required to provide identification. Mr. Zheng also testified that the types of identifications that will be acceptable include green cards, driver's licenses, military state issued IDs, and passports.

Mr. Zheng testified that this restaurant has been open for four months and is located in a shopping center. Mr. Zheng testified that he owns other restaurants that offer alcoholic beverages - one in Howard County, one in Towson for 2 years and one in Glen Burnie for 6 years and has never received a violation. Mr. Zheng testified that the Towson restaurant has two alcohol awareness certified employees and the Glen Burnie restaurant has five alcohol awareness certified employees.

Mr. Zheng testified that he has had previous traffic violations related to failure to present his car registration. As Chairperson Bird expressed concern about Mr. Zheng's consistency and ability to keep adequate records, Mr. Zheng explained that he has had 3-4 annual inspections at his other restaurants with no violations and has always had proper documentation available for examination as required.

Upon questioning by Chairperson Bird concerning unanswered question #13 on page 3 of Mr. Zheng's liquor license application, Mr. Zheng testified that he agrees with the

question that "...no manufacturer, brewer, distiller, distributor or wholesaler has any financial interest in the premise or business".

Matthew Gorman was sworn and testified that he is not an attorney but assisted the applicants in preparation of this liquor license application. Mr. Gorman testified that the applicants are very qualified and experienced as restaurant operators and have operated successful restaurants in other locations.

Meng Li Wang, proposed resident agent, manager, and 10% shareholder, was sworn in and testified that she plans to work 40-60 hours per week at Sake Japanese Steakhouse. Ms. Wang testified that she has experience working at other restaurants that did not sell alcoholic beverages, and that she will manage all employees at Sake Japanese Steakhouse. Ms. Wang testified that four employees at the restaurant are currently alcohol awareness certified; however, she is not yet certified but plans to be as soon as possible.

Pursuant to Rule 6.13 of the Liquor Board Rules and Regulations, the Applicants waived their right to request the Liquor Board to hear the case.

Based on the evidence presented at the hearing, the Alcoholic Beverage Hearing Board makes the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Hearing Board finds Meng Li Wang and Zheng Hai Zheng on behalf of Sake Elkridge, Inc. t/a Sake Japanese Steakhouse have applied for a new Class B Beer, Wine and Liquor, 7-day on-sale for a 3,200 square foot restaurant located at 7260 Montgomery Road, Suite G, Elkridge, MD 21075.

2. The Hearing Board finds that the Applicants are fit and proper persons to hold an alcoholic beverage license.

3. The Hearing Board finds that Meng Li Wang lives in Howard County, is a 10% shareholder and will be a full-time manager at this restaurant.

4. The Hearing Board finds that the granting of the application is necessary for the accommodation of the public.

5. The Hearing Board finds that the granting of this application will not unduly disturb the peace and safety of the residents of the neighborhood.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Hearing Board concludes that Meng Li Wang and Zheng Hai Zheng on behalf of Sake Elkridge, Inc. t/a Sake Japanese Steakhouse have applied for a new Class B Beer, Wine and Liquor, 7-day on-sale for a 3,200 square foot restaurant located at 7260 Montgomery Road, Suite G, Elkridge, MD 21075.

2. The Hearing Board concludes that the Applicants are fit and proper persons to hold an alcoholic beverage license.

3. The Hearing Board concludes that Meng Li Wang meets the State of Maryland requirements concerning resident agent qualifications.

4. The Hearing Board concludes that the granting of the application is necessary for the accommodation of the public.

5. The Hearing Board concludes that the granting of this application would not unduly disturb the peace and safety of the neighborhood.

ORDER

For the foregoing reasons, it is this 3rd day of March, 2021, by the Alcoholic Beverage Hearing Board of Howard County, **ORDERED**, that the application of Meng Li Wang and Zheng Hai Zheng on behalf of Sake Elkridge, Inc. t/a Sake Japanese Steakhouse for a new Class B Beer, Wine and Liquor, 7-day on-sale for a 3,200 square foot restaurant located at 7260 Montgomery Road, Suite G, Elkridge, MD 21075, be and the same is hereby **GRANTED**, subject to the following conditions:

- (a) That the Applicants comply with all State and County laws and regulations;
and
- (b) That Meng Li Wang and Zheng Hai Zheng submit to the Alcoholic Beverage Hearing Board their Alcoholic Awareness certifications prior to issuance of the liquor license;
- (c) That the Applicants submit to the Howard County Liquor Board office a revised page 3 of their application answering question #13; and
- (d) That the Applicants satisfy any requirements necessary to obtain the license by April 5, 2021, unless that deadline is extended by the Board upon good cause shown; and
- (e) Failure to comply with these conditions shall render this Proposed Decision and Order null and void.

ATTEST:

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE HEARING
BOARD OF HOWARD COUNTY,
MARYLAND**



Robin Regner
Board Administrator



Mary Bird, Chairperson




Harry Evans, Vice Chairperson

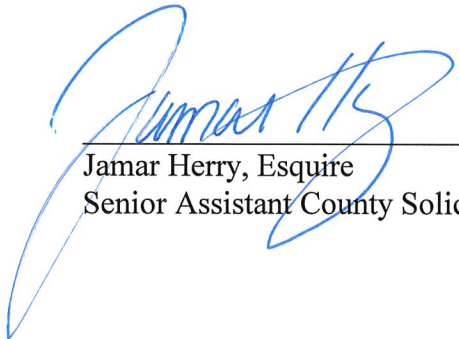
**REVIEWED BY HOWARD COUNTY
OFFICE OF LAW
GARY W. KUC
COUNTY SOLICITOR**



Steven Chen, Member



Claire Kim, Member



Jamar Herry, Esquire
Senior Assistant County Solicitor



Charley C. Sung, Member