

IN THE MATTER OF THE	*	BEFORE THE ALCOHOLIC
APPLICATION OF GEORGE	*	
LOUIS STROTT AND ALAN	*	BEVERAGE HEARING BOARD
DONALD STROTT ON BEHALF	*	
OF JCS FOOD GROUP, LLC T/A	*	FOR
IRONWOOD KITCHEN FOR A	*	
NEW CLASS B BEER, WINE	*	HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND
AND LIQUOR 7-DAY ON/OFF	*	
SALE LICENSE + WINE CORKAGE	*	Case No.: 26-15
PERMIT	*	
	*	

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 May 12, 2026, the Hearing Board heard the application of George Louis Strott and Alan Donald Strott (the “Applicants”), on behalf of JCS Food Group, LLC t/a Ironwood Kitchen (“Ironwood Kitchen”), for a new Class B Beer, Wine, and Liquor, 7-Day on/off sale License for a 2,240 sq. ft. restaurant with a 760 sq. ft. patio located at 13380 Clarksville Pike, Highland, MD 20777.

The hearing was properly advertised, and the property posted pursuant to the Alcoholic Beverages Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Mr. Martin Johnson was hired as a consultant for the Applicants and there were no protestants who appeared in opposition to the application. Additionally, there were several people in attendance in favor of the application.

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

SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

Martin Johnson, consultant for the applicants, was sworn in and testified before the Hearing Board.

Mr. Johnson testified as to the location and photos of the restaurant. Mr. Johnson stated that there have been several previous restaurants in the building at this location that were licensed to sell alcohol.

George Louis Strott, 50% interest holder and proposed resident agent, was sworn in and testified before the Hearing Board.

Mr. Strott testified that he is a Maryland resident, that he has worked in the restaurant industry since he was 14 years old, that the location is 6 minutes from his house and that the restaurant concept is American cuisine with a French flair. Mr. Strott stated that the restaurant will have 17 tables with seating for 55 customers and a bar with 18 seats. Mr. Strott stated that the bar has a back area for people to mingle, that a host will seat people inside and outside, and that signage will indicate where alcohol is permitted. Mr. Strott stated that the menu is still being developed and that alcohol sales will be about 35% of the total gross sales. Mr. Strott stated that he was a general manager and chef at Michael's Pub in Columbia for about 18 years, and that he previously worked as the executive chef at Silo Falls in Montgomery County and as the kitchen manager at Howard County General Hospital. Mr. Strott stated that he has never held a liquor license and that he has never been involved in any alcohol violations.

Mr. Strott stated that he will be managing the business, that he plans to work about 80 hours a week and that he is not employed elsewhere. Mr. Strott stated that alcohol will be stored in the bar area in locked cabinets and in a locked walk-in cooler. Mr. Strott stated that he is Alcohol Awareness Certified and that he is familiar with the Howard County Liquor Board Rules and

Regulations. Mr. Strott stated that he will card anyone appearing under the age of 35 and that he will usually not accept vertical IDs. Mr. Strott stated that he will have an ID checking guide at the restaurant and that staff will not serve anyone who appears intoxicated. Mr. Strott stated that he understands his role as the resident agent and that he plans to hire about 17 employees with 8 to 12 involved in alcohol service. Mr. Strott stated that any employee handling alcohol will be Alcohol Awareness Certified, and he stated that he will have an in-house alcohol training program. Mr. Strott stated that the patio area is fenced in, that he will add signage and that the outdoor area will be monitored. Mr. Strott stated that the hours of operation will be 7 days a week from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Mr. Strott stated that he will offer carryout food and alcohol to go in sealed containers. Mr. Strott stated that he understands the regulations of a wine corkage permit, that the restaurant will have live acoustic music and outdoor speakers, and that residential housing was not nearby.

Alan Donald Strott, 50% interest holder and proposed licensee, was sworn in and testified before the Hearing Board.

Mr. Strott stated that he will work 20 hours a week at the restaurant and that he owns a hair salon in Columbia. Mr. Strott stated that he is Alcohol Awareness Certified and that he has over 20 years of experience in the restaurant industry. Mr. Strott stated that he previously worked with his brother, George, at Michael's Pub.

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 that George Louis Strott and Alan Donald Strott (the “Applicants”), on behalf of JCS Food Group, LLC t/a Ironwood Kitchen (“Ironwood Kitchen”), have applied for a new Class B Beer, Wine, and Liquor, 7-Day on/off sale License for a 2,240 sq. ft. restaurant with a 760 sq. ft. patio located at 13380 Clarksville Pike, Highland, MD 20777.

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 George Louis Strott, the resident agent applicant, meets the requirements of Rules 1.10(S), 1.10(T), and 2.06 of the Liquor Board Rules and Regulations concerning resident agent qualifications.

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 the application will not unduly disturb the peace and safety of the residents of the neighborhood.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Hearing Board concludes that George Louis Strott and Alan Donald Strott (the “Applicants”), on behalf of JCS Food Group, LLC t/a Ironwood Kitchen (“Ironwood Kitchen”), have applied for a new Class B Beer, Wine, and Liquor, 7-Day on/off sale License for a 2,240 sq. ft. restaurant with a 760 sq. ft. patio located at 13380 Clarksville Pike, Highland, MD 20777.

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 George Louis Strott, the resident agent applicant, meets the requirements of Rules 1.10(S), 1.10(T), and 2.06 of the Liquor Board Rules and Regulations 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 the application will not unduly disturb the peace and safety of the residents of the neighborhood.

ORDER

For the foregoing reasons, it is this 6th day of July, 2026, by the Alcoholic Beverage Hearing Board of Howard County **ORDERED** that the application of George Louis Strott and Alan Donald Strott (the “Applicants”), on behalf of JCS Food Group, LLC t/a Ironwood Kitchen (“Ironwood Kitchen”), for a new Class B Beer, Wine, and Liquor, 7-Day on/off sale License for a 2,240 sq. ft. restaurant with a 760 sq. ft. patio located at 13380 Clarksville Pike, Highland, MD 20777, 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;
- (b) That the Applicants satisfy any requirements necessary to obtain the license by November 12, 2026, unless that deadline is extended by the Hearing Board upon good cause shown; and
- (c) 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**

Kel Berg
Kel Berg
Board Administrator

/S/
Steven Chen, Chairperson

ABSENT
Steve Hunt, Vice-Chairperson

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

/S/
Ed Coleman, Member


Hyunjae Shin, Esquire
Senior Assistant County Solicitor

/S/
Beth Johnson, Member

/S/
Claire Kim, Member