

# Article 12 voters reject acquisition of a third full liquor license

BY AMANDA LARIVIERE · THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2021

Voters decided that two full liquor licenses were enough for Harvard at Fall Town Meeting Saturday, where the majority rejected an article that proposed the acquisition of one additional off-premise all-alcohol license for the town.

In August, the Select Board approved an off-premise liquor license permitting the sale of wine and malt beverages by Stony Brook Market, a convenience store set to open next to the Dunkin' Donuts on Ayer Road in the spring. The store's owner, Fadi Kassouf, said at a Select Board meeting on Aug. 31 that a full liquor license would help his business plan succeed and was critical to opening the store.

"We would hope he'd still give it a go and become a member of the community here," said Select Board member Rich Maiore during an interview with the Press. While Maiore said residents of Harvard had valid concerns about the acquisition of a third full liquor license in such a small town, he said Kassouf should still open the store and "demonstrate his value in the potential the town could change its mind."

During Town Meeting, residents said Harvard did not need another liquor license and that it would create competition with the General Store. Other residents said small businesses are already hard to keep alive, and that the third full liquor license should be pursued if it would help the business.

Daigneault's Liquors owner Chris Green, whose business was granted the town's second full liquor license by the Select Board in July, said he was pleased that the town voted against adding an additional license.

"We were just going to be spreading the business between three people instead of the two existing stores," said Green, referring to Daigneault's (formerly The Grape Vine, which Green now owns), and the General Store, which holds the other full liquor

license. “I think we’ll have a better chance of succeeding with just the two liquor licenses in town that there already are.”

Charles Oliver, a wine distributor, said during Town Meeting that the new owners of The Grape Vine should be given a chance to provide service for the town before another full liquor license is granted. “The Grape Vine went for years with only a beer and wine license and they were a sustainable business,” said Oliver, adding that a beer and malt license would be a “good start” for Kassouf’s business if he still wants to open in Harvard.

The Press reached out to Kassouf for comment, but did not hear back.

In an effort to understand Kassouf’s business model better, Maiore visited his store in Sudbury before Town Meeting. While Maiore said the Select Board did not have a strong opinion one way or the other on Article 12, he wanted to give people more context about who Kassouf was as a business owner. “He has demonstrated he’s a good business citizen in the Sudbury and Southborough market communities,” said Maiore, adding that the store’s aesthetics align with what he thinks Harvard residents like. “He had artisanal wines and cheeses, and local products featured in a nice setting.”

#### Leave a comment

Comment:

Add comment

**Logged-on paid subscribers  
may browse the ARCHIVES for older news articles.**