



TOWN OF ARLINGTON

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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager
Cc: Jennifer Raitt, Director, Department of Planning and Community Development
From: Ali Carter, Economic Development Coordinator
Date: November 7, 2018
Re: Aeronaut Beer Garden Economic Impact Report

Aeronaut Brewing Company held a total of nine beer gardens at Whittemore Park on Saturdays in July, August, and September, plus one additional beer garden on David Lamson Way on Town Day. The beer gardens scheduled for July 28, August 4, and August 11 were cancelled due to rain, and there was an early closure due to rain on August 18.

Attendance:

At the first beer garden event on July 7, Aeronaut counted over 1,000 attendees aged 21+, plus an additional 500 minors. After this inaugural event, attendance dropped but remained strong throughout the season. On the whole, they welcomed approximately 7,000 attendees over age 21, and an additional 2,000 or more minors (total individual visits; not necessarily unique individuals). They also estimate that on an average day, there were approximately 25% or more repeat visitors, with the remaining 75% being first-time visitors. According to their beer sales data, beer consumption ranged from 1.2 to 1.5 drinks per attendee 21+ on average.

Survey: Online and postcard surveys were distributed to measure community response to the beer garden. The findings were overall positive:

- 80% of survey respondents came to Arlington Center specifically because of the beer garden;
- In total, 210 survey respondents reported over \$12,000 in spending in Arlington on the day of their visit;
- 98% percent of survey respondents said they would tell someone about the beer garden;
- 97% said they would come back to the beer garden on another date;
- 89% of survey respondents were Arlington residents. Some were from surrounding towns and there was one international visitor; and
- 50% of attendees arrived by foot, 33% came by car, 17% by bike.

One of the intended outcomes of the beer garden as set forth in a memo to the Town Manager dated June 20, 2018, was to activate an under-utilized Town property with programs and events, which was a goal of the Arts and Culture Action Plan. Data shows that the intended outcome was achieved, as the beer garden was an attraction that brought increased foot traffic to Arlington Center by providing free entertainment. Arlington residents and visitors from around the region came to Arlington Center

specifically for the purpose of visiting the beer garden and ended up spending money elsewhere in town during their visit.

Costs: The Town charged Aeronaut Brewing Company a fee of \$400 for siting the beer garden in Whittemore Park on weekends throughout the summer. Their total expenses paid to the Town to cover that fee plus costs of police details and staffing of the Cutter Gallery were nearly \$6,000.00, which amounts to approximately 17% of their operating costs.

While each event operated at a gross profit, the entire season resulted in a net loss for Aeronaut, as they were unable to recoup their start-up costs for the series. Nevertheless, they consider the event a success and would apply to the Town to run the series again next year. They believe they can adjust their schedule and strategically plan rain dates to reduce their risk of running at a deficit.

Summary: This pop-up beer garden series was popular, and the Department of Planning and Community Development will draft a request for proposals for activations of Whittemore Park on a seasonal basis in the future. The RFP will clearly outline requirements for security, public safety, waste disposal and other considerations. Potential impacts on local businesses will be a major consideration for choosing which events are allowed to be staged in the park. Costs and fees associated with such events would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The Department will submit the RFP to the Select Board for their review.