

**Rehoboth Beach Main Street  
Restaurants and Retail Utilizing Sidewalks and Parking Spaces for Shopping/Dining  
May 18, 2020**

**Executive Summary**

**Background:**

- The Rehoboth Beach Board of Commissioners has received feedback from local establishments across the City regarding business impacts of the current crisis. RBMS was asked to get feedback from businesses.
- Rehoboth Beach Main Street representatives and Commissioner Chranowski conducted zoom sessions and walking tours of Rehoboth Avenue and other streets closest to the beach to assess the feasibility of providing outdoor spaces for businesses (restaurants, retail stores) reopen.
- As indoor spaces will have a limit of 30% of their fire code maximum capacity, it will be beneficial to allow downtown businesses to expand their seating/retail spaces to accommodate Spring and Summer visitors to Rehoboth.
- Goal Today (May 19, 2020) during Commissioners Special Meeting: Discuss and obtain consensus on recommendations

**General Feedback from Businesses**

- There needs to be clear communication about the rules during recovery-lots of ambiguity for business owners
- Restrictions on second homeowners and short-term rentals impacting the businesses
- People need seating on the sidewalks, boardwalk
- Restaurants cannot survive at 30% or 50% indoor capacity
- Retail cannot survive without allowing customers into stores
- If we are all in this together, everyone needs to tighten their belts

**Recommendations for Consensus**

1. Provide a blanket approval to allow establishments to modify floor plans and expand service (to include food and alcohol) to on-premise or public property outdoor seating. If necessary, require restaurants to submit a simple schematic as to their plan, to include their plan for ensuring compliance with state health orders. Ensure this is a quick-turnaround process.
2. If a change to liquor licenses is required to expand to outdoor service, recommendation is that the City, working with ACT members, send a letter to the Governor requesting a blanket waiver from the Delaware Alcoholic Beverage Control Commissioner (OABCC).
3. Allow businesses to work together to share space.

**For Discussion and Potential Consensus**

1. Option A: Remove parking spaces from sidewalk sides of Wilmington, Baltimore, Rehoboth for outdoor seating-must be clear rules (keep it clean, must be seated by establishment, hand sanitizer, etc.)
2. Option B: Rather than eliminating all parking on the right side of Rehoboth Avenue, business owners could choose to block off the parking spaces in front of their business for outdoor dining and shopping or to continue allowing parking in these spaces. Each business will decide if they want to participate in repurposing the parking spaces for dining or shopping, or not, and notify the city regarding their decision.

3. For both options: Put up barriers to protect diners; Come up with a one-page of the rules; Retain spaces for take-out at the horseshoe. Allow full service at outdoor tables – to include alcohol service.

### **A Summary of Suggestions:**

- Create a new pattern for vehicular traffic on the following streets:
  - One-way traffic down Wilmington Avenue (toward the ocean) onto 1<sup>st</sup> street, two-way traffic on the beach block of Wilmington Avenue.
  - One-way traffic down Baltimore Avenue from 1<sup>st</sup> street, two-way traffic on the beach block of Baltimore Avenue.
- One-way traffic on 1<sup>st</sup> street, crossing over Rehoboth Avenue from Wilmington to Baltimore Avenue.
- Close the entire right-hand side of Rehoboth Avenue to parking, including the loop around the bandstand. Continue use of parking spaces in the center island.
- Note that some businesses want to maintain parking for their customers on the loop around the bandstand.
- One suggestion: Rather than eliminating all parking on the right side of Rehoboth Avenue, business owners could choose to block off the parking spaces in front of their business for outdoor dining and shopping or to continue allowing parking in these spaces. Each business will decide if they want to participate in repurposing the parking spaces for dining or shopping, or not, and notify the city regarding their decision.
- Another suggestion: Eliminate parking on the right (southern) side of Rehoboth Avenue around the loop, however, there are at least three parking spaces on the left side of the loop near the restrooms. One space could be used for parking for vehicles with a handicap permit and the other two for pickup, with a parking time limit of 10 or 15 minutes. Use the same system for parking on the other (northern) side of the loop. Businesses would still have spots for pickup around the loop.
- For restaurants utilizing outdoor spaces, ensure that tables and chairs are 8 feet apart (chair-back to chair-back).
- Charge each business owner a fee of \$5.00 or \$10.00 a day for use of the parking spaces in front of their business.
- Request a waiver from the city and state for alcohol to be served with outdoor dining.
- On the [state's protocol for reopening](#), pages 16 and 17 address reopening phase 1 regarding inside/outside space of retail/restaurant space: Not sure if the reference is to the business' floor plan vs. blue print. The protocol is not clear, and we need to request a clarification of this issue. (Pages 16-17 of the protocol are attached for reference.)

### **RBMS Survey Results:**

As discussed at the May 12 meeting, RBMS conducted a survey and coordinated establishment owner walk-arounds. In the Survey:

- Over 1800 responses, mix of residents, business owners, and other
- 60% said benches should be returned
- 78% supported allowing restaurants to put tables on sidewalks to create open-air dining
- 80% said they trusted downtown businesses to follow safety measures
- 85% said they think retail businesses using proper safety guidelines should be opened
- 79% said they think restaurants using proper safety guidelines should be opened

## Food & Drink Establishments

The following guidance is for providers of food or drink, such as restaurants, breweries that provide table service, taverns, and bars that provide table service, in addition to the general guidance that applies to all businesses:

- Staff and customers must follow the general guidance on the wearing of cloth face coverings at all times, except for customers seated at a table to eat or drink, who may remove the cloth face covering while seated at the table in order to do so.
- Tables and booths must be arranged in a way that ensures seated customers at one table are at least six feet apart from seated customers at another table. For booths, this typically will mean seating customers at every other booth. For freestanding tables (with pull out chairs), there should be eight feet apart to ensure that a seated guest is six feet from seated guests at other tables. Inside and outside seating must both comply with these standards. Outside seating areas must be confined to their pre-State of Emergency footprints. Tables must be disinfected in between each party.
- Only members of the same household unit may be seated at a table, and guests must all have seats, be seated, and remain seated unless going to the restroom. Orders must be placed from the table, and both food and drink must be delivered to the table by the staff of the facility, a guest should not leave the table to retrieve food or drink.
- For restaurants that provide table service: diners must have a reservation in order to sit down in a facility (takeout can still continue under pre-Phase 1 guidelines, but should be done without those ordering entering the dining facility when picking up order). Signage must be posted to remind people not to enter restaurant without a reservation and provide a number to call from their car in order to place a reservation.
- For restaurants that do not provide table service: Counter service locations must be spaced 6 feet apart. Signage and floor markings must be present to guide patrons in appropriately spacing while in line. Staff must be designated to monitor patrons entering facility, monitor lines and ensure social distancing throughout facility.
- The total number of guests within a facility shall at no time exceed 30% of the fire code occupancy.
- Guests should be provided with single use, paper, disposable menus. All condiments (salt, pepper, ketchup, mustard, mayo, sugar, etc.) must be provided directly to diners in single-use disposable containers or reusable containers that are cleaned between each party.
- Cups, lids, napkins, and straws must be delivered to the table after the party has been seated.
- Proper precautions must be taken when handling ready-to-eat foods. Variances or other allowances for bare hand contact are void until these restrictions are lifted.
- Self-service food and buffet options may not reopen.
- Bar service and seating at a bar may not reopen. The bar of a restaurant may open to prepare drinks to be brought to diners at their tables.
- Any to-go containers for food guests bring home after dining must be protected from possible contamination.
- Every restaurant is expected to have its own reopening plan and must follow DPH guidance.
- Customers should be guided to seats by staff to control traffic in, out, and through restaurant to ensure that safe social distancing is maintained as much as possible. If guiding to a table is not practical or safe, restaurant should provide clear signage and instructions to control the flow of traffic through the facility.

- No activities, outside of those guests engage in while seated at a table, may take place, and any common areas where people would typically stand must be off limits if not otherwise occupied by tables with seated guests. This includes dance floors, arcade/bar game areas, pool tables, and similar spaces.

## **RETAIL**

The following guidance is for businesses primarily engaged in retail services with the general public. This includes, but is not limited to, grocery, pharmacies, clothing, shoe, jewelry, sporting goods, books, florists, and department stores. In addition to the general guidance, the industry specific guidance for this sector falls into two categories:

1. Guidance for interactions between employees and other employees or vendors, and
2. Guidance for interactions between employees and customers.

### **Employees**

- Close common areas such as breakrooms, cafeterias.
- Prohibit gatherings or meetings of 10 or more during work hours.
- Employees should be permitted to take breaks or lunch outside, in their office or personal workspace, or other areas where proper social distancing is possible.
- Restrict interactions between employees and outside visitors or delivery drivers; implement touchless receiving practices if possible.
- Adjust training/onboarding practices to limit number of people involved and allow appropriate spacing. The use of video and audio training is encouraged.
- Discourage the use of shared phones, desks, workstations, radios, wearable technology. If these are unavoidable, they must be cleaned after each use.
- Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, and change layout of workspaces to ensure all individuals remain at least 6 feet apart

### **Customer Control**

- Stores may permit entrance up to 30% of their fire code occupancy. The responsibility of strictly enforcing this lies with the store owner/manager.
- Signage required at entrances and high traffic areas alerting staff and customers of occupancy limits, physical distancing requirements, and face covering policy.
- Retailers, especially essential businesses, are encouraged to establish specific hours for high-risk populations.
- Mark six feet of spacing in check-out lines.
- Ensure six feet of space between cashiers.

**Risks and Mitigation:**

- Pedestrian Safety along dining area, crossing street from median – put strong barriers to block parking spaces,
- Loss of Parking Revenue – cut expenses, delay non-essential capital projects

<b>Analysis: Estimated Parking Revenue Impact of Removing Spaces for Outdoor Dining</b>	
Rehoboth Ave. Spaces (excludes median)	225
Wilmington Ave. (South Side Only)	70
Baltimore Ave. (South Side Only)	73
<b>Total Impacted Spaces</b>	<b>368</b>
Total Days (60 estimates, June-Jul)	60
Max Per Day	\$36
Total Max Rev per day per Space	\$2,160
Total Revenue Loss	\$794,880