



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

# PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date:	October 22, 2013
Subject:	Medical Marijuana Zoning Petition
Recommendation:	The Planning Board recommends ADOPTION, with minor changes.

To the Honorable, the City Council,

The Planning Board strongly supports the adoption of zoning requirements that will allow a Registered Marijuana Dispensary (RMD), as regulated by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, to be sited in Cambridge. Since the distribution and use of marijuana for medical purposes has been allowed by a voter-approved state law, and a regulatory system now exists to permit a limited number of RMDs across the state, it is in the interest of the City to allow Cambridge residents to have access to the services authorized by these laws and regulations.

The proposed zoning includes requirements to ensure that an approved RMD would conform to all applicable state laws and regulations as well as any local regulations that may be enforced by local authorities. An RMD would be allowed within a proposed Medical Marijuana Overlay District by special permit from the Planning Board, which would allow for a review of urban design and transportation considerations to mitigate any potential impacts on the area.

RMDs will be unique businesses serving a limited client population at a regional scale. The general public will not be allowed to enter or even view the interior of an RMD, so they are not expected to contribute to street-level activation. Therefore, the proposed districts are those with access to regional roadways and public transportation but do not include traditional neighborhood-scale business districts. The only concern raised at the public hearing is whether the proposed districts would provide too few options to identify a viable RMD site in Cambridge. The Board has no suggestion for other areas, but if the proposed zoning is adopted, it could be amended in the future to allow RMDs in other districts if that is deemed appropriate.

The Board's only recommended modification to the proposal is to eliminate the requirement of a loading bay in proposed Section 20.703.6, and to leave the approval of loading facilities to the discretion of the Planning Board. Since RMDs will be required to have a comprehensive security plan that will be reviewed at the state and local levels, the Board does not see a need to impose specific requirements or limitations on the facility's operation.

Respectfully submitted for the Planning Board,

Hugh Russell, Chair.