



## CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

# TRAFFIC, PARKING, + TRANSPORTATION

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Cambridge Planning Board

**From:** Joseph E. Barr, Director

**Date:** February 19, 2019

**Subject:** 229-231 Third Street RMD (SP#345)

The Cambridge Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department (TP&T) has reviewed the Special Permit Application from Native Sun Wellness Inc. for a Project to operate a Registered Marijuana Dispensary (RMD) in a 2,355 square foot building located at 229-231 Third Street. TP&T offers the Planning Board the following comments for your consideration.

- Overall, TP&T is most concerned about the Project's parking impacts, for an RMD project at this location, because the Project has only 1 on-site parking space in the rear of the site. However, it is important to acknowledge that many businesses in Cambridge have limited or no parking spaces, which help encourage travel from sustainable modes, such as walking, bicycle and transit.
- According to the Project's Planning Board Special Permit Application, the Project will need about 3-4 parking spaces for clients and they expect to have 8-12 staff on-site at any given time. Clients and employees that need to drive will need to park at legal on-street parking spaces or at Commercial parking facilities in the area.
- On page 42 in the Special Permit Application, it said the Project is in negotiations to acquire parking spaces to serve the parking demand generated by the Project. Based on TP&T's recent discussion with the Applicant, TP&T understands that no parking agreements have been secured. We advise the Applicant that any parking space agreement must not violate the City's zoning and parking regulations, such as the City's Commercial Parking Space Permits Municipal Code Chapter 10.16.
- On page 35 in the Special Permit Application, the Applicant proposed a Special Permit Condition requiring each patient to obtain a scheduled appointment for any visit to the dispensary during the first 12 months of operation. TP&T believes that scheduled appointments could help control and minimize the Project's traffic and parking impacts. On the other hand, because there is no guarantee that there will be available on-street parking spaces when a client arrives for an appointment, it could become troublesome for clients to meet their scheduled appointment times, especially since the Project has no parking spaces for their clients. It would also be difficult for City staff to monitor and enforce such a Condition. TP&T supports scheduled appointments, but we are neutral about requiring scheduled appointments as a Planning Board Special Permit Condition.
- The Project site plan has 1 on-site parking space in the rear of the site. Access to the parking space is from an 8-foot wide right-of-way off Bent Street. The parking space would be best used for an employee parking space because conflicts could occur if two client vehicles enter and exit the driveway at the same time. The Application provided no turning movement diagrams or vehicle sightline analysis (i.e., Could a vehicle turn-around on-site and not need to back-out onto Bent Street?). How functional the 1 parking space will be is not clear and will require additional discussions prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

- In TP&T's discussion with the Applicant after the Project submitted its Special Permit Application, we discussed installing 3 on-site bicycle lockers in the rear of the site to accommodate long-term bicycle parking spaces and 1 or 2 short-term bicycle racks in the front of the site on the project site. The final number of long-term and short-term bicycle parking spaces should meet the city's Bicycle Parking zoning requirements.
- TP&T believes that the Traffic Assessment by Howard Stein Hudson slightly under-estimated the Project's trip generation because it estimated an average of 30% of staff and clients will access the site by a vehicle and 70% by non-automobile modes (transit, walking or bicycling). A 2018 survey for an existing RMD Project at 1001 Massachusetts Avenue found that 49% of staff and 57% of patients used a vehicle to access that RMD Project. Data from another existing RMD Project located in Harvard Square found that 17% of staff and 42% of clients traveled by vehicle to that RMD Project. It makes sense that the RMD Project in Harvard Square, which is located closer to an MBTA station, had less staff and patients driving than the one located on Massachusetts Avenue which is farther away from an MBTA station. The mode shares for the proposed 229-231 Third Street RMD will likely be more similar to the RMD Project at 1001 Massachusetts Avenue. However, because registered marijuana dispensaries are a relatively new use in Cambridge there continues to be little data on its traffic and parking impacts. It is therefore very difficult to predict with any certainty how much traffic and parking impacts the proposed 229-231 Third Street RMD Project will create.

#### **Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Measures**

The Project's Special Permit Application committed to implementing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures to minimize the traffic and parking impacts from this Project by encouraging staff and patients to travel by sustainable modes, such as walking, bicycling, and taking public transit. If the Planning Board approves a Planning Board Special Permit for the Project, TP&T recommends the following transportation mitigation and TDM measures, which are consistent with other approved registered marijuana dispensaries in Cambridge as described below.

1. Provide a minimum of 65% MBTA T-Pass subsidies, up to the federal fringe benefit limit, to all employees (may pro-rate incentive for part-time employees). The program shall be administered by the employer through the MBTA Corporate Pass Program.
2. Provide employees and clients access to the shuttle buses as provided by the Charles River Transportation Management Associations (TMA) (e.g., EZRide shuttle bus) or a comparable shuttle service between the closest shuttle bus stop from the site (i.e. on Binney Street) to/from the Kendall Square MBTA Red Line Station, Lechmere Station, and North Station. Prior to the issuance of an Occupancy Permit, the Project should describe how exactly employees and clients will be provided access to the shuttle bus and provide a copy the agreement with the shuttle bus operator to TP&T.
3. To support the use of transit for employees and clients, TP&T recommends the Applicant provide a one-time contribution of \$35,000 to the City prior to the issuance of a Building Permit, to help support sustainable modes of travel, such as to improve transit services and information in the area (i.e. Real-time transit display screens at bus stops), or funding toward a Bluebikes station or Bluebikes bikeshare system.
4. Offer all employees Gold-Level Bluebikes bikeshare membership, to be administered through the Bluebikes Corporate Program by the employer.
5. Provide lockers for employees that walk or bike to work.
6. Have available an air pump and bicycle repair tools for employees and customers to use when needed.
7. Designate an employee of the facility as a Transportation Coordinator (TC) to manage the implementation of TDM measures. The TC will:

8. Post in a central and visible location (i.e., lobby for customers, break room for employees) information on available non-automobile services in the area, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Available pedestrian and bicycle facilities near the Project site.
  - b. MBTA maps, schedules and fares.
  - c. "Getting Around Cambridge" map (available at the Cambridge Community Development office).
  - d. Locations of bicycle parking.
  - e. Bluebikes regional public bikeshare system.
  - f. Carpool-matching programs.
  - g. Other pertinent transportation information.
  - h. Instead or in addition to posting paper MBTA schedules, provide a real-time transportation display screen or tablet in a central location to help people decide which mode to choose for each trip.
9. Compile and provide to all employee's up-to-date transportation information explaining all commuter options. This information should also be distributed to all new employees as part of their orientation.
10. Provide clients with sustainable transportation information to access the site.
11. Provide and maintain information on the project's public website, newsletters, social media, etc. on how to access the site by all modes, with emphasis on sustainable modes.
12. Participate in any TC training offered by the City or local Transportation Management Association.

#### **Transportation Monitoring and Reporting Program**

- If requested by TP&T in writing, the Applicant should provide TP&T and the Community Development Department (CDD) information on employee and client travel modes and where they customarily park, as well as information on loading and delivery operations.
- Surveys of employees and customers shall be designed and conducted in a manner approved by TP&T and CDD.
- TP&T recommends transportation monitoring reports be provided only as requested by TP&T, instead of a required annual report similar to other previously approved RMDs, because TP&T believes there should be sufficient information to help inform the development of other future medical marijuana dispensary projects. A monitoring report for the 229-231 Third Street RMD project would be requested if there is specific or unique information needed by TP&T and CDD for this Project at this site, but would not be requested more frequently than once per year.

#### **Loading and Service Delivery Operations and Management Plan**

- TP&T has the following recommendations for the project's loading and service delivery operations:
- The Applicant should provide a loading and service delivery management plan that includes all delivery activity to the facility, to TP&T for TP&T's approval prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.
- At no time shall a vehicle park or stop on any public street in a manner that blocks traffic or impedes the flow of pedestrians or bicycles.
- The applicant should conduct all loading on-site or from legal locations, without using No Stopping zones or Double Stopping.
- If loading, pick-up/drop-off activities cause issues on public users and infrastructure (e.g. vehicles blocking other vehicles, illegal parking, etc.) then the Applicant must work with the City to resolve it.
- The applicant indicated that they will not be operating any deliveries through the 229-231 Third Street site, and they should not be allowed to have deliveries from this location.