



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

TRAFFIC, PARKING, + TRANSPORTATION

MEMORANDUM

To: Cambridge Planning Board

From: Joseph E. Barr, Director 

Date: January 9, 2020

Subject: Proposed Cannabis Retail Store at 966 Cambridge Street – Advesa (PB357)

The Cambridge Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department (TP+T) has reviewed the Special Permit Application and the Transportation Logistics Plan from Advesa MA, Inc. (“Advesa”) to operate an approximately 2,137 square feet Cannabis Retail Store at 966 Cambridge Street (previously “Harvard Glass” site). The project proposes to reuse the existing building for a recreational retail cannabis store. TP+T offers the Planning Board the following comments for your consideration.

- The Special Permit Application included a transportation analysis and Summary Form from Howard Stein Hudson, which followed the Transportation Logistics Plan Guidelines recommended by TP+T for Cannabis Retail Stores.
- A bus stop for the MBTA Bus Route #69 is located on Cambridge Street directly in front of the site and bus stops for Routes #85 and #CT2 are within a few-minute walk. When the MBTA Green Line Extension (GLX) is completed in approximately 2021, the new Union Square Green Line Station will be approximately 0.4-mile walk, which will significantly help improve transit access for this site and the surrounding area.
- The City’s Municipal Parking Lot #11 (Windsor Street Lot) is located about a block away and has about 11 parking spaces at \$1.25/hour from 8 AM to 10 PM, 2-hour maximum parking. The Lot also has 3 Zipcar parking spaces and there is a Bluebikes bikesharing station located a few blocks away at the Cambridge Street/Columbia Street intersection.
- Howard Stein Hudson estimated that the Project will have a peak parking demand of about 10 parking spaces. A parking utilization study was conducted on Wednesday, June 12, 2019 and Saturday, June 8, 2019. Detailed tables and a map are presented by Howard Stein Hudson in their Transportation Analysis. Overall, they found that on-street parking and Lot #11 was well-utilized with 57%-78% occupancy on Wednesday, June 12th, resulting in 11-22 available spaces. The parking occupancy on Saturday, June 8th ranged from 49% to 92% or between 4 and 26 available spaces. Based on these findings, TP+T believes that parking will likely be a challenge for this project at this location. TP+T also believes a peak parking demand of about 10 spaces may be optimistic, at least initially until other cannabis retail stores open and demands decrease at individual locations. As discussed later in this memo, the best way to minimize parking demand is to provide Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures.

- The current building has an existing loading bay that the Applicant proposes to maintain and use. Accommodating loading and service needs on-site is generally considered positive by TP+T, instead of using curb space. TP+T recommends that the Project install a vehicle exiting warning device to notify pedestrians of vehicles exiting the loading bay to minimize the conflicts between pedestrians on the sidewalk and vehicles exiting the loading bay
- In addition to service and deliveries of cannabis products, money, and trash one to two times per day, the Applicant should clarify if they plan to have deliveries of cannabis products from this site to customers (i.e. home deliveries), which would increase the number of vehicle trips.
- There is an existing loading zone on Windsor Street adjacent to the site that Howard Stein Hudson indicated was not used during their study period. TP+T will monitor the use of the that loading zone and consider changes to the regulation as appropriate for traffic flow and vehicle and pedestrian safety. However, a Loading Zone is a good location for drop-off/pick-up activities, such as from ridehailing services.
- TP+T believes that there should be no lines permitted on the existing public sidewalks in this area.
- TP+T also recommends that the Applicant work with TP+T and the Cambridge Police Department on an operations plan which should be approved by TP+T prior to issuance of a Building Permit. This plan should address in greater detail how the Applicant is intending to manage sidewalk crowding in a manner that maintains safety and access to adjacent buildings, parking and transit, and other key uses, especially during initial opening period. The draft summary operating plan in Howard Stein Hudson's transportation analysis listed an initial starting point for discussions, such as Appointment-only scheduling, police details, and marketing to customers against driving, etc.
- The Applicant proposed 2 long-term bicycle parking spaces for employees and contribute to the City's Public Bicycle Parking fund for 1 bike space (i.e. 1 bike rack) for short-term bicycle parking. TP+T supports and recommends that at a minimum, the Applicant should contribute to the City's Public Bicycle Parking Fund for 2 short-term bicycle spaces (i.e., 1 bike rack) and should provide at least 2 bicycle spaces for employees on-site. These items should be completed prior to the issuance of an Occupancy Permit.
- As mentioned above, TP+T believes that the best way to minimize any traffic and parking impacts from a Project in Cambridge is for the Applicant to provide robust Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures to advise and encourage employees and customers to travel by sustainable modes, such as walking, bicycling taking public transit, and carpooling. TP+T recommends the following baseline TDM measures and monitoring program, which are routinely recommended by TP+T as conditions for special permit approval and are consistent with approved Cannabis Retail Stores in Cambridge.
 1. Provide 100% MBTA T-Pass subsidies to all employees. (may be pro-rated for part-time employees) The program shall be administered by the employer through the MBTA Corporate Pass/Perq Program.
 2. Offer all employees Gold-Level Bluebikes bikeshare membership, to be administered through the Bluebikes Corporate Program by the employer.

3. Provide lockers for employees that walk or bike to work.
4. Have available an air pump and bicycle repair tools for employee and customers to use when needed.
5. Designate an employee of the facility as a Transportation Coordinator (TC) to manage the implementation of TDM measures and a transportation monitoring program if required. The TC will:
 - a. 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:
 - i. Available pedestrian and bicycle facilities near the Project site.
 - ii. MBTA maps, schedules and fares.
 - iii. "Getting Around Cambridge" map (available at the Cambridge Community Development office).
 - iv. Locations of bicycle parking.
 - v. Bluebikes regional public bikeshare system.
 - vi. Carpool-matching programs.
 - vii. Other pertinent transportation information.
 - Instead or in addition to posting paper MBTA schedules, provide a real-time transportation display screen in a central location to help people decide which mode to choose for each trip.
 - b. Compile and provide up-to-date transportation information explaining all commuter options to all employees. This information should also be distributed to all new employees as part of their orientation. Transportation information packets may be obtained from the Community Development Department.
 - c. Provide customers with sustainable transportation information to access the site.
 - d. 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.
 - e. Participate in any TC training offered by the City or local Transportation Management Association.
 - f. If requested by TP+T or the Community Development Department (CDD), the Applicant should provide TP+T and CDD information on employee and customer travel modes and where they customarily park, as well as information on loading and delivery operations. Surveys of employees and customer shall be designed and conducted in a manner approved by TP+T and CDD.
- Prior to the issuance of a Building Permit, the Applicant should provide a loading and service delivery management plan that includes all delivery activity to TP+T for TP+T's approval. No offsite deliveries should be made from this location to customers.
- Provide a one-time contribution to the City toward transportation, parking, transit and/or bicycle improvements to support non-automobile travel modes for employees and customers and to mitigate the Project's traffic and parking impacts on the surrounding area. As an Economic Empowerment Applicant, **TP+T recommends the Applicant contribute \$35,000 to the City with half due prior to the issuance of a Building Permit and half due prior to the issuance of an Occupancy Permit to help improve transportation services, operations, and information in the immediate area.**