



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

TRAFFIC, PARKING, + TRANSPORTATION

MEMORANDUM

To: Cambridge Planning Board

From: Brooke McKenna, Acting Chief

Date: February 9, 2023

Subject: Proposed Cannabis Retail Store at 1730 Massachusetts Avenue (The Boston Garden) (PB#392).

The Cambridge Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department (TP+T) has reviewed the Special Permit Application (PB#392) and the Transportation Logistics Plan from 1730 Mass Ave, Inc. DBA The Boston Garden, to operate an approximately 5,748 square feet Cannabis Retail Store (including a 2,124 square feet basement) at 1730 Massachusetts Avenue. TP+T offers the Planning Board the following comments for your consideration.

- The Project is in a one-story building of approximately 17,940 square feet that houses multiple commercial uses. The portion of the building (5,748 sf) to be occupied for the Boston Garden Retail Cannabis Store was a Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage office.
- According to TP+T's records, there are 36 registered on-site parking spaces that serve the businesses at the 1730 Massachusetts Avenue site. The Project will exclusively use 7 of the 36 parking spaces. The Application's Transportation Logistics Plan Summary Form estimates a peak hour automobile parking demand of approximately 23 spaces for customers and employees. With parking turnover, TP+T believes the 7 parking spaces will be adequate to meet the Project's parking demand. If parking demand is not met on-site, customers will need to find alternative legal parking locations in the area, leave and return at a time when on-site parking is available, or walk, bike, or use public transportation to access the site.
- The project is a 1–2-minute walk to MBTA bus stops for routes #77 and #96 and is located approximately 0.3 miles from the Porter Square MBTA Red Line Station which includes a commuter rail stop the Fitchburg Commuter Rail line. There are also two Bluebikes stations located within one-quarter mile of the site.
- Loading and deliveries for the Project will occur during outside of peak operating periods by utilizing one of the 7 on-site parking spaces.
- The Project will provide at least one long-term bicycle parking space via a bike locker in the parking lot behind the building or bicycle parking space within the building.

TP+T will work with the Applicant on the final location and design during the Building Permit process.

- Because the existing building has no property-line setback along Massachusetts Avenue, the Applicant considered providing short-term bicycle parking in the parking lot behind the building. But, after discussing it with TP+T it was felt that short-term bike parking behind the building would not be very useful and instead the Applicant committed to contributing to the City's Public Bicycle Parking Fund for one (1) bicycle rack (2 bicycle spaces). There is one existing bike rack on the sidewalk near the building entrance and the City can use the funds to install additional racks. The contribution should be made prior to the issuance of an Occupancy Permit.
- As required by zoning for Cannabis Retail Stores, if the Project is approved by the Planning Board, the Applicant will work with TP+T and the Cambridge Police Department on an Operations plan to be approved by the City prior to issuance of an Occupancy Permit. This plan should address in detail how the Applicant is intending to manage bicycle lane infringement and sidewalk crowding in a manner that maintains safety and access to adjacent buildings, transit, and other key uses. TP+T also recommends that the Applicant be required to work with TP+T and the Cambridge Police Department on a specific plan for the initial opening period, to identify and respond to any unexpected situations (i.e., sidewalk crowding, blocking bike lanes, or other safety issues).
- As with other Cannabis Retail Stores, 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. If the Project is approved by the Planning Board, 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 purchased 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.
- g. 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. As approved by TP+T the Operations plan may include a provision for 6-months Appointment only to manage parking and transportation impacts.

Consistent with Planning Board Special Permits that have been issued for other Cannabis Retail stores, TP+T recommends that the Applicant 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. Because the Project is 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 area.

TP+T acknowledges that there are ongoing policy discussions around funding contributions and other requirements for Cannabis Retail Stores. Depending on the outcomes of these policy discussions TP+T may make different recommendations for Cannabis Retail Stores in the future. If the Planning Board grants the special permit with the above condition and TP+T's recommendations regarding Cannabis Retail Stores change in the future, then this Applicant (along with other permitted Cannabis Retail Stores with similar requirements) may in the future apply for an amendment to the special permit consistent with the established City policy at that time.