



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

TRAFFIC, PARKING, + TRANSPORTATION

MEMORANDUM

To: Cambridge Planning Board

From: Joseph E. Barr, Director

Date: November 4, 2019

Subject: Proposed Cannabis Retail Store at 541 Massachusetts Avenue, Revolutionary Clinics II Inc. (PB#339 Amendment)

The Cambridge Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department (TP+T) has reviewed the Special Permit Application and the Transportation Logistics Plan from Revolutionary Clinics II, Inc. (RevC2) to Amend Special Permit #339 to co-locate a Cannabis Retail Store with a Registered Marijuana Dispensary (RMD) located at 541 Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square. TP+T offers the Planning Board the following comments for your consideration.

- For background information, RevC2 sought and received a Planning Board Special Permit in December 2018 for an approximately 6,0000 square feet RMD located at 541 Massachusetts Avenue (previously a Blockbuster video store). TP+T submitted comments and recommendations to the Planning Board, dated October 12, 2018, for that Project, such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures, which were incorporated as Conditions for Special Permit #339. The renovation of the site for an RMD use is essentially completed but the RMD has not yet open for operations. RevC2 is now seeking to co-locate a Cannabis Retail store at the site.
- The Project has no automobile parking spaces of its own. Existing parking facilities in the area include; metered parking spaces, municipal parking lots and garage (i.e., Municipal Lot #5 and Green Street Parking Garage), and private commercial parking facilities (i.e., 55 Franklin Street Parking Garage). Central Square is well served by transportation options, including the MBTA Central Square Red Line Station, MBTA bus routes #1, #47, #64, #70, #83, #91, and #CT1, four Bluebikes Stations and carsharing parking spaces.
- The existing project site has 4 long-term bicycle parking spaces for employees located in the back room receiving area.
- On page 2 of the Application for Special Permit the Applicant indicated they would contribute to the City Public Bike Fund for 6 short-term bicycle parking spaces. **TP+T appreciates and supports the offer. Funding for the 6 bicycle spaces (i.e., 3 bicycle racks) should be provided to the City prior to the issuance of the Project's Building Permit for the Cannabis Retail Store use.**
- The Transportation Logistics Plan estimated the Project's Trip Generation (i.e., 78 PM peak hour vehicle trips, resulting in about 9 - 20 peak hour parking spaces needed at a time because of parking turnover). Given the limited information

available about trip generation for cannabis stores, it is difficult for TP+T to evaluate whether they provided good estimates for the trip generation and parking needs, particularly upon initial opening. **As a result, TP+T recommends that the Applicant work with TP+T and the Cambridge Police Department on an operations plan which should 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 traffic, parking, 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., traffic, parking, transit and bicycling accommodations, and any safety issues).**

- The Transportation Logistics Plan also estimated that three Cannabis Retail Stores in Central Square could have a combined peak parking demand of 59 to 75 parking spaces. The Parking Utilization study found that the availability of nearby on-street and off-street parking ranged from 27 spaces to 206 spaces during the weekday and between 131 and 158 spaces during the weekend. The study concluded that the most difficult time to find parking spaces would be between 10 AM and noon during weekdays. TP+T notes, however, that because the weekday parking occupancy study was on Wednesday, June 12, 2019, TP+T believes that parking may also be difficult to find during late Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings as well (i.e. after 7 PM) when bars and restaurant occupancies and parking demands are high. On the other hand, TP+T agrees with the study that the constrained parking in the area can help reduce automobile travel and encourage alternative modes of transportation to the area.
- **No offsite deliveries should be made from this location to customers.**
- **At no time should a delivery vehicle stop or park on Massachusetts Avenue or any other public street, in any way that blocks emergency vehicle access or impedes the flow of vehicle, pedestrian or bicycle travel. Loading and deliveries shall occur in legal loading zone or parking spaces with access through the Project's secure door on Norfolk Street.**
- The Application stated that if necessary, during the initial 6 months of adult use operations, RevC2 will use an on-line pre-purchase and appointment only scheduling system. TP+T thinks this could be a good way to manage traffic impacts, but **TP+T also recommends that commitment not be tied to only an initial 6-month period but be required at any time such management is deemed necessary by the City to minimize any adverse transportation impacts.**
- RevC2 currently provides Transportation Demand Management measures (TDM) as part of their original Special Permit #339 for their RMD project. If the Planning Board approves the Amendment to co-locate a Cannabis Retail Store use, TP+T recommends that the Applicant continue to provide the TDM measures to employees and customers for the Retail Cannabis Store to minimize any traffic and parking impacts from this new use. At a minimum, the TDM should include the following measures:
 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.
 - 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.
 - h. Maintain membership in the Alewife TMA and provide employees and patient's access to the shuttle bus to/from the Alewife MBTA station, as provided by the TMA or a comparable shuttle service approved by TP+T and CDD.
- 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' traffic and parking impacts on the surrounding area. As an applicant to co-locate an existing RMD with a Cannabis Retail Store **TP+T recommends the Applicant contribute \$70,000 to the City due**

prior to the issuance of a Building Permit to mitigate the new traffic impacts that the project is expected to create to help improve transportation services, operations, and information in the area.