



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE TRAFFIC, PARKING, + TRANSPORTATION

MEMORANDUM

To: Cambridge Planning Board

From: Joseph E. Barr, Director

Date: November 27, 2019

Subject: Proposed Cannabis Retail Store at 31 Church Street (Charles River Remedies LLC (PB352))

The Cambridge Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department (TP+T) provided a memo to the Planning Board dated September 12, 2019, with our comments on the proposed Cannabis Retail Store at 31 Church Street by Charles River Remedies LLC.

The Applicant has provided a Revised Application, which TP+T has reviewed. We offer the Planning Board the following comments for your consideration:

- The revised Traffic memo dated October 25, 2019, corrected the mistake that there is a loading zone adjacent to the front entrance to the project site on Church Street. That update memo provided a map that shows the locations of existing loading zones on both sides of Church Street near Massachusetts Avenue and near Brattle Street. Loading zones may be used for general use in accordance with Traffic Regulations, including loading and delivery services as well as for drop-offs and pick-up activities, such as ridehailing services.
- Although the October 25, 2019 Traffic memo corrected the error about a loading zone in front of the site, the application's Summary of Operating Plans and Procedures still contains the mistake about having a loading zone in front of the site. However, the Operating Plans and Procedures corrected the previous mistake that referenced Pearl Street in Central Square.
- The Operating Plan and Procedures continues to propose that during the initial 6-12 months of operation there will be additional staff to monitor lines as concierge/security to maintain order in the public way. **TP+T believes that there should be no lines permitted on the existing narrow public sidewalk in this area. There is also a crosswalk directly in front of the 31 Church Street site with a pedestrian ramp landing that must not be blocked.**
- The revised application indicates that the project will have a maximum of 365 customers per day and a maximum of 14 customers in the facility at any one time. TP+T appreciates the Applicants acknowledgement of concerns about large crowds of people, especially during the opening days and months, however, it is unclear if and how the City will be able to monitor and enforce the commitment of no more than 354 customers per day and a maximum of 14 customers in the facility at any

one time. If the Planning Board approves the project, the Cambridge Police Department will need to support a final Operations Plan and Procedures.

- TP+T's September 12, 2019 memo indicated that the Applicant proposed no long-term bicycle parking spaces for employees, and we recommended the Applicant make a at least 2 long-term bicycle spaces available within the building for employees. The revised application and site plan continue to not provide any long-term bicycle parking spaces. **TP+T believes this continues to be an issue and the Applicant should accommodate the bicycle parking needs for its employees onsite, like other recently approved Retail Cannabis Stores in Cambridge.**
- In addition to the comments above, TP+T continues to recommend the comments and recommendations in our September 12, 2019 memo.



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Subject: Proposed Cannabis Retail Store at 31 Church Street (Charles River Remedies LLC (PB352))

The Cambridge Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department (TP+T) has reviewed the Special Permit Application and the Transportation Logistics Plan from Charles River Remedies LLC to operate an approximately 1,100 square foot Cannabis Retail Store at 31 Church Street located in Harvard Square (previously a Starbucks coffee shop). TP+T offers the Planning Board the following comments for your consideration.

- The proposed Charles River Remedies LLC Transportation Logistics Plan and Summary Form are attached.
- As stated in previous memos to the Planning Board for Cannabis Retail Stores in Cambridge, TP+T believes the key concerns are potential impacts from vehicle drop-off/pick-ups directly in front of the site and potential long lines of people on the public sidewalk especially given the small reception area for this project.
- Harvard Square is a transit-oriented location served by the MBTA Harvard Square Red Line station, 13 MBTA bus lines, two nearby Bluebikes bikesharing stations, and on-street and off-street vehicle parking, including a private commercial parking lot located at 41 Church Street.
- The Logistics Plan indicated that there is a Loading zone adjacent to the front entrance onto Church Street that it is exclusive to the dispensary and expected to be utilized 20 times per week. The Planning Board may want to ask for clarification because there is no loading zone directly in front of the project and any existing on-street loading zones are available for general use in accordance with the Traffic Regulations and is not exclusive to the proposed project.
- TP+T recommends that the Applicant work with TP+T and the Cambridge Police Department to address the issues above and that an acceptable operations plan 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, transit, and other key uses, especially during initial opening period. The draft summary operating plan in the Special Permit Application appears to be copied from another Retail Cannabis Store Special Permit Application because it talks about overflow of customers onto Pearl Street in Central Square. This should be corrected.

- The Applicant proposed no long-term bicycle parking spaces for employees and no short-term bicycle parking spaces for customers. TP+T recommends that at a minimum, the Applicant should contribute to the City's public bicycle fund for 2 short-term bicycle spaces (i.e., 1 bike rack) for transportation mitigation, and make space available within the building to accommodate employees bicycle parking for at least two bicycles. This should be provided prior to the issuance of an Occupancy Permit.
- 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 Retail Cannabis 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.**