



## CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

# TRAFFIC, PARKING, + TRANSPORTATION

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Cambridge Planning Board

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

**Date:** September 10, 2021

**Subject:** Proposed Cannabis Retail Store at 45-51 New Street, Bhari Inc. (PB353)

The Cambridge Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department (TP+T) has reviewed the revised Planning Board Special Permit Application from Bhari Inc. to operate a 3,167 square foot Cannabis Retail Store at 45-51 New Street. TP+T offers the Planning Board the following comments for your consideration.

- TP+T previously submitted a memo to the Planning Board related to this Project (dated September 19, 2019) with various comments. A key outstanding concern is the limited number of parking spaces (4 off-street spaces) to serve customers, given that there are no on-street parking spaces on New Street and a limited number of spaces on Bay State Road. To address this issue, the Applicant has indicated it will extend an appointment only model from six months to twelve months after opening. TP+T remains concerned about the parking supply for customers and employees, as well as what will change substantively once the appointment only service model ends after twelve months. At the same time, TP+T also acknowledges that the number of customer parking spaces is a business decision for the Applicant, and that the limited number of parking spaces may discourage people from driving to the site and encourage customers to travel by non-automobile modes (although an on-site loading space may be needed for ride-hailing services such as Ubers or Lyft, to prevent them from stopping in the bicycle lane on New Street).
- Although the site plan shows 4 parking spaces for the Project (1 employee space, 2 customer spaces, 1 disability space), it is very likely that cars will try to park in front of the trash enclosure and in other space in front of the site, such as in the proposed pedestrian walkway or in the New Asphalt Pavement Space to the left of the disability space. Given the likely demand for more than 4 parking spaces for this site, more design consideration may be needed to clarify and control where cars can legally park. It is also important that the Applicant strongly discourage any customer or employee use of the Danehy Park parking lot located at the north end of New Street.
- TP+T is also concerned that the Project site plan proposes to use head in parking spaces off New Street and maintain the excessively long curb cut. Although this condition exists today it is not a desirable condition for the site. We do not have a suggested solution for this condition (nor has the Applicant suggested one) but want to make sure that Planning Board is aware that approving this Project and site plan will also lead to a continuation of that sub-optimal condition.

- The Project proposes 12 short-term bicycle parking spaces on its site, which is positive. The Applicant should verify that the bike spaces meet the zoning dimensions because the site plan (Sheet A-022) appears to show 6' long bike spaces instead of 8' long bike spaces.
- Although it is not required, the Applicant may want to consider providing a bike shelter for the short-term bike spaces to provide some weather protection.
- The Project proposes an interior employee bike room for 7 bicycles and a bike repair station and lockers, which are all very positive.
- As stated in TP+T's September 19, 2019 memo to the Planning Board, if the Project is approved by the Planning Board, TP+T recommends the following Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures 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 with emphasis on sustainable modes (i.e., walking, bicycling, taking public transportation).
- 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. No offsite deliveries should be made from this location to customers.
  - h. Prior to issuance of a Building permit, the Applicant should provide an Operations plan and Opening Day Plan which should be approved by TP+T. The plan should address in detail how the Applicant is intending to manage employee and customer parking and drop-off/pick-up activities, prevent parking or stopping at any time on a public right-of-way, prevent sidewalk crowding, and maintain safety and access to adjacent buildings, transit and other key uses.
  - i. Prior to issuance of an Occupancy Permit, the Applicant should have a final approved Operations and Opening Day Plan by TP+T and the Cambridge Police Department.
- 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 a non-economic empowerment Applicant, TP+T recommends the Applicant contribute \$70,000 to the City prior to the issuance of a Building Permit to help improve transportation services, operations, and information in the immediate area. However, if the Applicant provides confirmation as a Group A priority applicant for a minority owned business, the one-time contribution can be \$35,000 instead of \$70,000 with half of the payment due prior to the issuance of a Building Permit and the remainder due prior to issuance of an Occupancy Permit.