



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date: June 9, 2021

Subject: Cannabis Delivery Zoning Petition

Recommendation: The Planning Board recommends **ADOPTION**.

To the Honorable, the City Council,

The Planning Board (the “Board”) held a public hearing on May 11, 2021, continued to May 18, 2021, on a Zoning Petition (the “Petition”) by City Council (the “Petitioner”) to Amend Articles 2.000, 4.000 and 11.000 of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Cambridge to create new land use definitions and associated regulations for home delivery of cannabis products.

This Petition is similar to another petition considered by the Planning Board in October 2020. At that time, there was a desire by both the Planning Board and City Council to expand the districts where cannabis delivery uses would be permitted, and generally make the Ordinance more permissive. CDD Staff, in collaboration with the Law Department, submitted this revised Petition in early 2021.

The revised Petition would establish two new land uses, “Cannabis Courier Establishment” and “Cannabis Delivery Operator Establishment”. A Cannabis Courier establishment would function like a delivery dispatch office and would facilitate delivery from an existing retailer to a home consumer. The Cannabis Delivery Operator Establishment would function more like a warehouse, and would be able to purchase cannabis products wholesale and sell and deliver directly to consumers, but would not be permitted to have a storefront at the warehousing location.

The Cannabis Courier Establishment would be permitted by-right in all business, office and industrial districts, whereas the Cannabis Delivery Operator Establishment would be permitted in all business, office, and industrial districts by Planning Board Special Permit. A Cannabis Delivery Operator Establishment would be further limited in size to not exceed 10,000 square feet of gross floor area and would be required to have a minimum buffer of 300’ from schools and parks/recreation areas. Both uses would be required to submit a transportation logistics plan, subject to review and approval by the Traffic, Parking & Transportation (TP&T) and Police Department. Existing definitions for Cannabis Microbusiness would be amended to enable delivery of cannabis products directly to consumers if so licensed by the Cannabis Control Commission (CCC).

At the May 18th hearing, the Planning Board discussed the Petition. Board Members generally felt that if these delivery uses would be permitted in surrounding communities, then they should also be permitted in Cambridge; particularly if there are no limitations for Cambridge residents to order delivery from surrounding communities. Board Members also agreed that the CCC's adopted delivery regulations appear extensive and therefore Cambridge's ordinance should be as clear and simple as possible to not provide additional barriers to these types of uses from locating within Cambridge. While some Board members were concerned that having these types of uses in vacant storefronts in commercial and mixed-use districts might detract from the City's broader goal of supporting a more vibrant and active public realm, other Board Members believed that Cambridge's comparatively higher rents and land values would make this outcome less likely. Board Members also noted a few areas where the zoning language could be clarified, and suggested that staff examine them further.

At the conclusion of Board discussion, the Board voted unanimously to transmit a favorable recommendation on the Petition.

Respectfully submitted for the Planning Board,



Catherine Preston Connolly, Chair