

Cannabis Shop Update 11-30-22

Dear Neighbors:

Approximately 40 residents attended Monday night's planning and zoning meeting regarding the proposal for a cannabis shop at 755 Boston Post Rd (the original Cindy's location). Many residents voiced the same message that they didn't have an issue with cannabis shops but did have significant concerns about this location. Two individuals spoke in favor of the proposal and one of those two individuals was an Old Saybrook resident. **The planning and zoning commission chose to leave the public hearing open regarding the cannabis shop and to reconvene on Monday, December 19th at 7:00pm in Teresa Mulvey Municipal Building, 866 Boston Post Rd.** At that time, the public will continue to have the opportunity to share their feedback about this proposal. An overview of public comments is below.

If the commission passes this proposal, it will set the standard for other similar businesses to enter Westbrook. As you may know, Old Saybrook rejected a similar proposal. According to the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection, every town around Westbrook has enacted a moratorium or an outright prohibition of recreational cannabis retailers. To see that data, follow this link: https://portal.ct.gov/cannabis/Knowledge-Base/Articles/Municipal-cannabis-zoning-changes-reported-to-DCP?language=en_US .

The commission will be using the regulations found at the following link to make their decision on this proposal. Please see "Special Permit Considerations" on pages 235-236: <http://www.westbrookct.us/DocumentCenter/View/2706/Adopted-Zoning-Regulations---Effective-05-01-2019?bidId=>

It is essential that you attend the meeting on December 19th if you have strong feelings on this issue. The town will only have one opportunity to make this decision.

Concerns raised by residents (about 40 residents):

- Increased traffic on a busy and dangerous section of Route 1 thereby exacerbating traffic entering Post Ave. and exiting Bellstone, as well as businesses in the area. It was reported that the cannabis retailer will bring 300-500 cars per day.
- Safety concerns were raised about the current property. It was given a certificate of occupancy yet incomplete and unsafe conditions exist in the parking areas.
- The proposed property does not have adequate parking.
- Residents shared concerns about adverse impacts on property values.
- The proposed cannabis shop will be located in a building that includes apartments and numerous other residences are in close proximity. Children will be living in close proximity to this business.
- Numerous residents shared concerns about how the business will change the character of the town. Concerns were raised about how this business will not attract the kinds of

business, like restaurants, art shops and cafes, that will help to create a more vibrant community.

- Concerns were raised about security and limited policing in Westbrook. Deliveries will be made in unmarked trucks by drivers who may be armed. In addition, the Westbrook Police Department does not have adequate resources to manage the increased traffic that this business will create.
- Concerns were raised about having more individuals and drivers under the influence at and near the cannabis store.
- Town hall currently has programs for children, seniors, teens and the proposed store will be in close proximity. Evening hours raise concerns with lighting and safety.

A resident was in support and shared the following (a second individual spoke but he was not a Westbrook resident):

- The proposed cannabis shop will bring increased revenue to the town.
- Other businesses bring traffic to the town and the cannabis store should be considered like any other business.