



City of Somerville

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

TO: Mayor Curtatone
FROM: Charlotte Leis, MAC Liaison
DATE: November 5, 2021
RE: Update on HCA applications received by October 1, 2021

The Marijuana Advisory Committee (MAC) reviewed one new application that was received by the deadline of 12pm on October 1, 2021. The MAC is not recommending any applications for Host Community Agreements (HCAs) at this time. The MAC's thoughts on their review of the application from this round is below, along with a brief explanation of the review criteria used.

Updated Review Criteria

This is the first round of review where the MAC utilized the updated review criteria first discussed in the Round 4 Recommendation. The updated review criteria requires that the MAC evaluate applications in four categories, rather than three. However, each category continues to be scored out of five points and contributes equally to the final score. This results in applications having a maximum potential score of 20 points rather than 15 points. Therefore, the cutoff score has been similarly scaled up, with the entities scoring more than 16.75 points being recommended for HCAs, and entities scoring fewer than 16.75 points not being recommended for HCAs. This is proportional to the cutoff score of 12.5 points used when the maximum potential score was 15 points.

These entities scored fewer than 16.75 points and are not recommended for HCAs at this time:

Tree Market, 500 Medford St, total score: 16

The MAC previously interviewed this applicant as part of Round 3, and reviewed an updated application as part of Round 5. Since then, Tree Market has submitted a new application and attempted to address the concerns the MAC expressed during the previous rounds of review. The ownership has not changed. The MAC's comments on the current application are below.

Location: 4.25

- The property is in the Mid Rise 4 district on a Pedestrian Street and is within the 0.5mi Transit Area. The location is in Magoun Square, and not far from transit.
- A liquor store has existed at the site for years and has received deliveries from the loading zone in front of the business with no issues.

Physical Space: 4.5

- The floor plan appears to successfully account for the various legal requirements regarding visibility of the sales floor from the exterior of the store.
- There will be a one-way flow of customers through the sales floor, and customers waiting to enter can step aside and not need to block the sidewalk when entering.

Operations/Industry Knowledge: 4

- Multiple member of the team have experience with highly regulated industries, either by experience selling alcohol in Somerville or by selling cannabis in Massachusetts or elsewhere.

Community Involvement: 3.25

- The exterior of and window coverings on the existing liquor store operated by Ms. Naher and Ms. Shah is not well maintained. The MAC had raised this concern previously, but there has been negligible improvement since that time.
- The applicant team made minimal and late connections to the Somerville Office of Prevention, despite this being recommended in a previous interview.
- Ms. Naher and Ms. Shah are active in various non-profits in surrounding communities, but it is not clear how that engagement is connected to their existing or proposed business, or how it will translate to community engagement specifically within the Somerville area.