



Cathedral City

Agenda Report

File #: 2016-425

Item No: 4.D.

Planning Commission

MEETING DATE: 10/19/2016

CASE NO. Conditional Use Permit No. 16-023

APPLICANT: WCCC - West Coast Cannabis Club, Kenneth Churchill

LOCATION: 68828 Ramon Road, Suite A2 (APN: 678-312-024)

REQUEST: Consider a Conditional Use Permit Application to operate a medical cannabis business (dispensary) within an existing multi-tenant commercial building in the PCC (Planning Community Commercial) Zoning District and Specific Plan No. 1-022, located at 68828 Ramon Road, Suite A2.

STAFF PLANNER:

Pat Milos, Community Development Director

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE an exemption to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section No. 15301, Class No. 1 (Existing Facilities).

APPROVE Conditional Use Permit No. 16-023 subject to the attached Conditions of Approval and based on the findings contained in the staff report.

FINDINGS:

APPROVAL OF AN EXEMPTION TO CEQA based on the finding that the project qualifies as Categorically Exempt under Section No. 15301, Class No. 1 (Existing Facilities) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

APPROVAL OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 16-023, subject to the attached conditions of approval, and based on the following findings:

1. The medical cannabis business to be located at 68828 Ramon Road, Suite A2 in the PCC District is authorized as a conditional use per the City of Cathedral City Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 9.30.
2. The medical cannabis business as well as all operations as conducted therein, fully complies with all applicable building, electrical, zoning and fire codes, accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), and all relevant City and State Law. Staff has reviewed the site and floor

plans submitted and determined that, as conditioned herein, the medical cannabis business will comply with all relevant building codes, zoning, and the ADA.

3. The medical cannabis business fully complies with and meets all operating criteria required pursuant to State Laws, Chapter 5.88 of the City Municipal Code (CCMC), any other provisions of the CCMC, and any specific, additional operating procedures and measures as may be imposed as conditions of approval in this conditional use permit. The applicant has been granted a local license (MCL 16-023) in accordance with Chapter 5.88 of the CCMC, and in granting the local license the City Manager determined that the medical cannabis business was in compliance with all applicable laws regarding the operation of the business.

4. The number, type, and availability of dispensaries located in or near the proposed licensed premises is such that the issuance of a conditional use permit to the Applicant will not result in or add to an undue concentration of Dispensaries and/or result in a need for additional law enforcement resources. There is one approved/open dispensary in the vicinity of the proposed dispensary.

5. The medical cannabis business is necessary or desirable for the development of the community, is in harmony with the various elements or objectives of the general plan, and is not detrimental to existing uses or to uses specifically permitted in the zone in which the proposed use is to be located. By allowing medical cannabis businesses in certain zones, the City Council has determined that medical cannabis businesses are necessary and desirable for the development of the community, is consistent with the general plan, and will not be detrimental to other uses in the zones.

6. The site for the medical cannabis business is adequate in size and shape to accommodate such use and any and all of the yards, setbacks and walls or fences, landscaping and other features required in order to adjust such use to those existing or permitted future uses on land in the neighborhood. The medical cannabis business meets all site development standards.

7. The site for the medical cannabis business relates properly to streets and highways which are designed and improved to carry the type and quantity of traffic generated or to be generated by the proposed use. The medical cannabis business is on Ramon Road, which has adequate capacity to serve the limited traffic that will be generated by the use.

8. The applicant agrees to comply with any and all of the conditions imposed by the Planning Commission or be subject to a revocation hearing.

BACKGROUND:

As the Planning Commission is aware, the City Council recently enacted a number of ordinances allowing for the establishment of medical cannabis businesses (dispensaries, cultivation sites and manufacturing sites) within certain zoning districts of the City, subject to a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The ordinances regulating medical cannabis businesses are codified at CCMC Chapters 5.88 and 9.108 (the "Ordinance").

Under the ordinance, medical cannabis businesses are required to obtain both a medical cannabis license (local license) and CUP. For the local license, applicants are required to submit various documents such as the ownership structure of the medical cannabis business, a general description of the products and services to be provided and security and delivery plans (if delivery is proposed). In addition, all owners, directors, officers and persons who are managing or otherwise responsible for the activities of a proposed medical cannabis business must submit to a background check. The City Manager, or his designee, shall decide whether to approve or deny a local license application.

The Local License application for a dispensary, with delivery, was submitted on May 2, 2016. The Conditional Use Permit application was submitted on June 22, 2016. The Local License application was reviewed by staff including the Police Department, the background check completed and the license was granted on August 29, 2016 (see Attachment 4).

There are no exterior changes proposed to the building. Therefore, no review from the Architectural Review Subcommittee is needed. The Planning Commission will take final action on this matter unless it is appealed to the City Council.

ANALYSIS:

The project site is located within the PCC (Planned Community Commercial) zoning district. The surrounding uses include retail, office and service commercial. The commercial center where the dispensary will be located is comprised of three multi-tenant buildings. The other buildings and suites are primarily occupied by office uses. Pursuant to CCMC section 9.108.090, a dispensary may only be located within the I-1 (Light Industrial), CBP-2 (Commercial Business Park) or PCC (Planned Community Commercial) Zoning Districts.

Furthermore, no dispensary shall be located: a) within six-hundred (600) feet of a school, day care center, or youth center; or b) within two-hundred and fifty (250) feet of East Palm Canyon Drive or a residential zone. Staff has confirmed that the subject location does not violate any of the applicable location restrictions set forth in the CCMC.

As an item of note, two letters were received related to the project, one from an adjacent tenant (Farmers Insurance) in opposition of the project (see Attachment 6) and the other from the property owner (see Attachment 7). The primary concern is the proximity of the proposed dispensary to the nearby Cathedral City Dance Academy (a potential “youth center”). Staff has reviewed the pertinent facts and has determined that the Dance Academy does not meet the criteria of a “youth center”. As defined in Section 9.108.030, a “youth center means any facility that is operated by a public agency or non-profit entity with the sole purposed of providing educational and/or recreational services to minors.” The Dance Academy is not a public agency or non-profit and offers classes to adults as well as minors.

Furthermore, the letter from the property owner outlines the process of notice that was undertaken with the Dance Academy regarding the proposed dispensary, prior to signing their lease.

Specific Plan 1-022 prescribes development regulations and standards particularly related to new development or construction. There is no new exterior construction proposed to the existing building. Therefore, the project complies with the Specific Plan.

For security, the applicant is proposing to install rolling metal gates/grilles on the inside of the windows and doors. A wall will be constructed on the interior of the southerly facing windows. Dark tint will be installed on all windows so that the interior security wall and metal grilles are not visible from Ramon Road. However, a condition of approval has been added to ensure that all window and door security devices are properly screened from the public street.

The multi-tenant building is approximately 3,200 square feet. The dispensary will occupy approximately 1,215 square feet. The suite will include a reception/waiting area, office, and dispensary retail/storage area. The existing landscape for the site is of a desertcape palette and is in compliance with City design standards.

The applicant is not proposing exterior changes or the addition of square footage to the building. However, upon inspection of the site, there were a number of other concerns that the applicant has agreed to address and these have been incorporated into the Conditions of Approval:

1. The existing trash enclosure shall be retrofitted to City standard.
2. The existing building address numbers shall be internally or externally illuminated.
3. The parking stalls, including ADA stalls, within the parking area for this building shall be restriped and properly signed, and a compliant path of travel added.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

Categorical Exemption under Section No. 15301, Class No. 1 (Existing Facilities) of the State CEQA Guidelines, which allows tenant improvements in existing buildings to be exempt. Since there is no outside expansion, this qualifies for a Class No. 1 Exemption.

NOTE: The City of Cathedral City Planning Department is custodian of the documents or other material, which constitute the record of proceedings upon which this decision is based.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION:

This project and the environmental determination were noticed in accordance with the City Municipal Code and CEQA (see Attachment 5).

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Conditions of Approval

- Attachment 2: Site Plan
- Attachment 3: Floor Plan
- Attachment 4: Local License
- Attachment 5: Public Hearing Notice
- Attachment 6: Letter from Farmers Insurance
- Attachment 7: Letter from the Property Owner