Dear Marijuana Business Regulation Committee:

Our next schedule Committee meeting will be at 6:00 p.m. Tuesday January 15th at the Town Office.

Please find attached:

1. a brief summary of changes to both the Marijuana License Ordinance and Town’s Zoning Ordinance (to accommodate the Licensing Ordinance)
2. an AMENDED DRAFT LICENSING ORDINANCE
3. a “Red Lined Copy” of the DRAFT OF THE CHANGES TO TOWN’S ZONING ORDINANCE

Hopefully, the brief summary will outline the “protections”/requirements that are located between and within both ordinances.  The Actual Ordinance for changing the Zoning Ordinance is much smaller but the redlined copy will be much easier to understand in terms of the overall zoning ordinance.

These amended ordinances are the result of the last Committee meeting and continued discussions with the Town’s attorney on this.  The zoning ordinance is very long but you only need to look at the changes outlined in Red.  These are the changes to the zoning ordinance to accommodate the licensing ordinance.  Chris and I have spent considerable time working through these changes with the Town’s attorney Amanda Meader.  These basically cover all the changes that were requested except labeling of marijuana packaging which our attorney indicated that the State is going to deal with and we can not require (see attached letter from Amanda).  Also, there was some discussion about requiring any business to be located more than 1000’ from a bus stop (this was not a committee recommendation; just something to look into). The problem with this is that all but one of our bus stops are on private property and they can change (this requirement does not appear in any other ordinance that either Amanda or we have seen).

In addition to reviewing these changes we would like to discuss options for moving forward with recommendations from the Committee to the Selectmen.  The Selectmen have indicated a preference for an “open town meeting vote” whether that happens at all, at the March Town Meeting or later remains to be determined.

In talking with our attorney, both ordinances need to be tied together in one vote (you cannot have one without the other) and you cannot make changes to ordinances at a Town meeting. At some point, if anything is going to move forward there needs to be public hearing(s).  There has been some concerns expressed about allowing cultivation, manufacturing and testing in the Light Industrial District.  Just as a suggestion, we may want to go to public hearings and determine if that is the case and then perhaps eliminate some of these options (again, just a suggestion).  If you have any questions please let us know.   This has been a difficult and time consuming process to date but hopefully, “we can all get through it”.   Thank you for you continued participation.

dave

Dave Cota

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