

South End NRZ Zoom Minutes
June 11th, 2024

Draft

Present: **14 Participants**

The meeting began at 6:30 pm

David Salinas presented his proposal for an Adult 21+ and Cannabis retail facility at the old Demott Auto shop location. David is a thriving entrepreneur that have established several businesses in other Connecticut cities and now he is looking to open a proposed Cannabis Facility in the Stamford South End. Rather than go to the zoning board and file the application he wanted to first reach out to the community. David's goal is to understand if the community is opposed to the idea of a Cannabis facility and go from there.

Question: What Exactly will you be doing at the facility?

Answer: The facility will be a package store for adult use of Cannabis products. Customers would need legitimate identification and must be 21. The facility would not be growing or manufacturing anything or parking trucks. There would be no products on the shelf, all patrons would have to meet with a guide to order products and once the product has been bagged and sold the patrons are not allowed to use the products on site. If allowed the facility would employ 35 to maybe 60 employees.

Question: Would there be medical marijuana?

Answer: A Hybrid License could be requested which would allow medical and adult use of the product. A Pharmacist would be required to be on-site, and tax would not be charged for the medical marijuana.

David advised that the tax revenue from the business would be generous, and the revenue could be targeted for use in the South End, if a request is put in with the city.

Sue Halpern mentioned that the Stamford Zoning regulations prohibit Cannabis dispensaries with 1000 ft of public or private schools. The Lathan Wider Community Center is 600-800 ft and provide programs for children, The Children Learning Preschool Center is located at 122 Henry Street, The Busy Bee is less than 1000 ft and Waterside Elementary School is 1200 ft away.

Question: Have you checked with Land Use based upon the zoning regulations for a Cannabis facility at the Demott location?

Answer: Lathan Wider is not considered a school since it services 5-months to 5-year old's nor is a daycare considered a school considering the ages of those children.

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The rest of Lathan Wider Community Center houses the DMV and a Dental office, so the building is more like a piece of real estate than a school.

Question: Why not use the space to continue working with young people rather than a dispensary?

Answer: Working with young people would require significant capital and partners to allow the curriculum to be brought to the table.

John Wooten mentioned that a dispensary is not an amenity the community needs as it doesn't increase property values. The South End is going through development trying to come back to being an amicable community.

David gave an overview on the schedule for illegal drugs. The schedules are 1,2,3,4,5 with 5 being the lowest. Cannabis is a schedule 1 being shared with Heroin a more potent drug. Schedule 2 is Cocaine and currently Cannabis is on a schedule that is worse than cocaine. Cannabis is being rescheduled to a 3 -low harm factor which will allow more research to be done on the effects of Cannabis. Currently research is not allowed for cannabis due to it being ranked as a schedule 1.

The South End NRZ members opposed the dispensary based on the following reasons:

- They feel there are enough dispensaries in the city of Stamford that are within traveling distance. Although David mentioned that Stamford has been approved for 5 dispensaries to be opened.
- The location is close to facilities that have programs for children.
- The dispensary is not a positive factor since the South End is amid new development that has revitalized the area and removed a lot of unwanted activities.
- They Feel the Old Demott location should be used for a more positive venture that would blend in with the upbeat of the community.
- Many members stated that prolong use of Cannabis have adverse effects on young adults. One member mentioned that she sees the effect that cannabis have on her son

ANNOUNCEMENT: BOOK BAG GIVE-A-WAY on August 17th 12-4 pm at the Lathan Wider Community Center.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm