

Marijuana Advisory Team (MAT) Meeting Minutes



Application Number	CAN180010
Company Name	BCWC LLC, seeking name change to “NovaFarms”
Date of MAT Meeting	January 16, 2019
Location of Meeting	Blumer Room
Type of Application	Marijuana Retail Establishment

Attendance	
Union Twist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derek Ross, Manager, BCWC LLC Meg Sanders, Will & Way Erik Williams, Will & Way Blair Fish, BCWC LLC Patrick Moynihan, McCormack Suny, LLC
MAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thatcher W. Kezer III, COO, Chair Mary Ellen Kelley, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Robin Williams, Department of Public Health Joseph Hicks, Fire Department Officer Keith Strange, Police Department Michael Tusino, Building Commissioner, Department of Inspectional Services Amanda Loomis, Planning Board Administrator
Legal Counsel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attorney Amanda Zuretti, Petrini & Associates

Welcome and Introductions

Thatcher W. Kezer III, Chair, welcomed the group and provided a brief overview of how the Marijuana Advisory Team (MAT) would conduct the meeting, and review the applications and materials provided. Mr. Kezer further stated that the MAT’s function is to provide a recommendation to the Mayor for consideration of Host Community Agreements (HCA).

The members in attendance at the meeting introduced themselves (sign-in sheet attached).

Presentation of NovaFarms

Brett Fish provided an overview of the Nova Farms team, highlighting experience in the industry and their respective roles at NovaFarms. Mr. Fish stated that Ted Grillo and Zach Allen, not present today at the MAT meeting, will be charged with the task of being the Chief

Growers. Mr. Fish also noted that John Kenyon will be a member of the legal team but was not present today.

NovaFarms has two Host Community Agreements (“HCA”) with Attleboro, one for cultivation and one for a marijuana retail establishment. NovaFarms was the first organization to receive HCAs for each of the uses. To avoid costs associated with indoor grow facilities, NovaFarms will be working on an outdoor grow in Sheffield, Massachusetts, which will allow them to grow, produce, and sell their own marijuana. This model will require some partnerships with indoor grow facilities during winter months. However, this model allows NovaFarms to be vertically integrated.

The proposed location for the marijuana retail establishment that has been identified is located at 1151 Worcester Road. The property is set away from the other locations that are presently being proposed in the Golden Triangle area. NovaFarms feels that the location is a shining star since it’s set away from the other locations and there is a centralized turn around for vehicular traffic. The property at 1151 Worcester Road is a standalone location, which poses no impact on other businesses.

Mr. Fish presented the interior build-out plan and stated that they are willing to work with Framingham on the development of the project. The timeline for the project is solely based on the community request. Mr. Fish stated that they are able to work as fast or slow as the City wants to get the business up and running.

NovaFarms has hired Plymouth Armor Group and Internal Inc. for the movement of product to the location.

NovaFarms presented the finances of the company and its ability to start the business. It was noted that NovaFarms has raised approximately \$1.5 million to date and has identified three companies that are willing to collaboratively contribute approximately \$9 million.

NovaFarms presented an overview of cultivation. It was stated that NovaFarms has purchased approximately 90 acres in Sheffield, MA, which will allow them to develop a 100,000sf canopy (Tier 11).

To close their presentation, NovaFarms stated that the team has unmatched cannabis experience, they are retail ready, have developed a top-notch security and safety experts plan, have the required resources, and have the ability to produce.

Marijuana Advisory Team (MAT) Review

Mr. Kezer requested comments, questions, and/or requests for additional information.

Officer Strange requested clarification regarding the parking lot, specifically regarding the design and layout. The Police department would want to see dedicated employee parking and customer parking. Officer Strange stated that the project should include some form of public transportation plan, specifically how will NovaFarms manage people that utilize public transportation waiting for the next

bus or car to come. The Police Department will need to see a snow removal plan, the storage of snow cannot affect the off-street parking. Officer Strange reviewed the close proximity of both Ellis Street and Towner Street, and questioned if the intent was to have a parking lot attendant to manage the parking lot. Officer Strange noted that there are school buses and children in the area, which NovaFarms would need to plan around. Mr. Williams responded that NovaFarms would absolutely have a traffic attendant and would like to hire off-hour police officers, as well as have ongoing communication with the Police Department about traffic and public safety.

Officer Strange address one of the big issues with the site, in that Framingham State University (FSU) students attempt to cross the street. Such efforts to cross Worcester Road are not always successful. Officer Strange stated his concern about the influx of FSU students trying to access the site. Officer Strange identified several other issues within the area, which included the train tracks crossing Worcester Road, pedestrian activity, in addition to issues associated with Maynard Road.

Officer Strange requested that the City's Police Department have an opportunity to ensure that security camera footage is compatible with required City and District Attorney's Office format. Furthermore, the Police Department would want to request that security cameras face east and west on Worcester Road (Route 9), and that interior cameras are at different heights and angles.

Officer Strange requested information on the transportation of products to the property. Mr. Ross stated that Plymouth Armored Group would be hired for the transportation of products to the store. Products would be delivered to the rear of the site depending on the development of the property. The location where product would be delivered would be enclosed for the purposes of safety.

Ms. Kelley reviewed the projected revenue for the business. Mr. Fish stated that NovaFarms would expect \$28 million in revenue for retail and dispensary, which was voted on, on February 5, 2018. NovaFarms is presently not operating in Attleboro at this time, but NovaFarms was the first of 215 applicants to receive permission for the operation of an RMD.

Ms. Williams asked for clarification regarding the requested licensure, in that NovaFarms is proposing to operate an RMD and a marijuana retail establishment as a hybrid license. Ms. Williams informed NovaFarms that the Health Department has its own regulation for both RMD and marijuana retail establishments.

Ms. Loomis requested clarification regarding off-street parking and that the City would not want parking associated with the business to be on side streets such as Ellis and Tower. Ms. Loomis briefly discussed conditions of previous Planning Board decisions regarding off-street parking. Mr. Ross responded that NovaFarms would be managing the parking and traffic during the opening days and months of operation. Mr. Williams stated that NovaFarms would want to work with the Police Department on this.

Ms. Loomis requested clarification regarding the use of the site and the existing structures or whether a new structure would be constructed. Ms. Loomis noted that the structure is older than 75 years of age and would require review by the Historic Commission to determine if demolition was possible. The NovaFarms team responded that they may demo the front and retrofit the rear of the structure.

Attorney Zuretti presented a summary of the questions that she would be asking, which included a request for information relative to the corporate and entity name, lease agreements, hiring and diversity, outdoor grow and cultivation, and the HCA.

Attorney Zuretti stated that she was not able to find the new business known as NovaFarms. Mr. Ross provided clarification regarding the name and that they need to work with the Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) to change the name. The CCC has not developed a process to do this yet.

Attorney Zuretti requested information regarding the lease to the property.

Attorney Zuretti requested clarification regarding banking, stating that there are very few banks in Massachusetts that are banking with marijuana establishments. NovaFarms state that SafeHarbor has partnered with GFA Credit Union in Gardner. Ms. Sanders had one of the first marijuana accounts with SafeHarbor. Ms. Sanders has introduced the NovaFarms team to SafeHarbor. NovaFarms is presently working with Century Bank relative to their RMD. It was noted by the NovaFarms team that Century Bank has given a firm no on expanding into marijuana establishment banking.

Attorney Zuretti requested clarification regarding employment. It was noted that the Mayor has made a point to encourage Framingham businesses to reflect the diversity of Framingham. Attorney Zuretti requested clarification as to what process NovaFarms would utilize for hiring. Ms. Sanders reviewed the marijuana industry in Colorado, noting that the hiring of staff that reflects the community for any retail operation is essential. Ms. Sanders states that it's always a preference and recommendation that any team she works with hire locally. Ms. Sanders further stated that everything NovaFarms does is trainable. Employees are expected to be compliant, to be safe, and to be good co-workers. Ms. Sanders noted that she has worked with various agencies and has offered training. Employees must pass a background check, while NovaFarms needs to encourage upward mobility within the organization.

The NovaFarms team stated that employees are provided an opportunity to volunteer within the community and that NovaFarms wants to partner with the City. Attorney Zuretti questioned if NovaFarms would be hosting job fairs, and provide vendor training, and living wages and benefits. Ms. Sanders stated that the goal is to empower and train employees, and to ensure that employees do not have to work three jobs to support themselves.

Attorney Zuretti requested that NovaFarms provide the HCA from Attleboro for review.

Attorney Zuretti requested clarification regarding the outdoor grow facility, since they are quite an undertaking, especially in New England. Mr. Ross reviewed the cultivation location in Sheffield, MA. Mr. Williams further reviewed the 90 acre parcel of land.

Mr. Ross provided information about hemp operations at his facility in Maine. The parcel is entirely surrounded by a tree lined buffer and natural screening that provides added security along with athletics. Mr. Ross further stated that around the cultivation area there is an eight-foot high fence.

Mr. Ross reviewed the medical marijuana supply and the ability to do an outdoor grow facility. While other operations are working to building their interior grow facility, NovaFarms will already be growing product. Mr. Williams stated that NovaFarms would have a contract with an indoor grow facility to ensure they had enough product.

Chief Hicks requested clarification regarding public safety, traffic flow, and access and egress of the site.

Mr. Tusino requested clarification as to how the City is expected to make a recommendation if the company has not decided to reuse the existing structure or raze it and build new. Mr. Fish stated that NovaFarms wanted to hear what the City wanted, NovaFarms is here to make the City happy. Mr. Ross

stated that NovaFarms' first preference would be to raze the structure but this would take about a year or two. Mr. Fish stated that the construction of a new structure would look a lot more attractive and this is the preferred option. Chief Hick concurred that new construction would be preferred relative to the State Fire Code. Mr. Tusino stated that he has an issue with directing people to construct new or renovate. The structure will need to be evaluated by the Historic Commission if NovaFarms is proposing to raze the structure. Mr. Tusino concluded that the MAT can make a recommendation if NovaFarms does not know what it wants to do.

Mr. Kezer stated that there is a limited number of HCAs but it is important to have the project done right. Mr. Kezer stated that he has a sense NovaFarms is trying to do the right thing. To Mr. Tusino's point, the Mayor is going to expect a solid plan in place prior to anything going to her desk.

Mr. Kezer stressed the importance of engagement with the neighbors. Mr. Kezer requested that public engagement go beyond the 300' state requirements and look at reaching all of the residents on the two dead-end side streets. Mr. Kezer questions if NovaFarms had a willingness to engage and reengage as necessary. Mr. Fish reviewed NovaFarms experience in Attleboro with the MAT. NovaFarms will address any neighbor's concern to ensure that their life is not impacted. Mr. Williams stated that they are not expecting to be the first marijuana retail establishment in Framingham, but rather not be the business that is not wanted. Mr. Williams concluded that it is understood that this is one of the most highly regulated industries in Massachusetts and it's the nature of the neighbors to be concerned about impacts. Mr. Kezer concluded on not remising the importance of working with the neighbors.

Closing

Mr. Kezer thanked NovaFarms for coming in for the MAT meeting. It was noted that any additional submittals, requests, and/or questions should go through Ms. Loomis. Mr. Kezer stated that the MAT will be sending out letters relative to recommendations regarding HCAs and requests for more information.

Voted by the MAT on April 10, 2019 (Vote 7-0-0)