



September 9, 2022

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY (BPDArpz@Boston.gov)
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02201

RE: TEXT AMENDMENT TO ZONING CODE FOR CANNABIS ESTABLISHMENTS

To Whom It May Concern:

WalkUP Roslindale is pleased to submit this **Letter of Support** to the BPDA for the proposed Text Amendment to the Zoning Code for Cannabis Establishments. As proposed, this amendment to the Boston zoning code would remove the Zoning Board of Appeal (ZBA) from the regulatory process for cannabis establishments and vest sole decision-making authority in the Boston Cannabis Board (BCB). We believe this is a sound policy change to remove a duplicative regulatory process for cannabis establishments seeking to open in Boston.

Voters overwhelmingly legalized cannabis in 2016 and there are a dozen cannabis establishments open around Boston now. In Roslindale, we have watched multiple cannabis establishments gain licensing approval from the ZBA and BCB in the past few years yet none have opened their doors to date. Certainly not all this delay can be attributed to the City regulatory process, but we believe any effort made to reduce the overall amount of red tape surrounding this permitting in general is worthwhile.

In particular, we wish to highlight the positive effect this proposed zoning amendment would have for local equity applicants and neighborhood business districts. The more barriers and hurdles in place for cannabis permitting, the more the system will continue to favor those with access and means to afford years of permitting prior to actually opening. We have seen in Boston the current system has tended to advantage more established, disproportionately white cannabis proprietors, a particular problem given the historical discrimination and incarceration faced by people of color as a consequence of the war on drugs. In Roslindale Square, we have a current local resident that is also an equity applicant preparing to open a cannabis-infused bakery on the Birch Street pedestrian Plaza. We believe this establishment will benefit the entire business district and contribute to the walkable

business district so many have worked to cultivate in Roslindale Square through the years. We believe every neighborhood can benefit from such locally-owned establishments and that this zoning change will make it that much easier for local equity applicants to get through the process to open more quickly.

In closing, we wish to reiterate our Support for the proposed Text Amendment to the Zoning Code for Cannabis Establishments. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shubert", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chair, Housing and Development Committee and Board of Directors Member
Resident @ 112 Roslindale Avenue, #1, Roslindale, on behalf of the WalkUP Roslindale Board

About WalkUP Roslindale

WalkUP Roslindale, which takes its name from the international movement to foster “Walkable Urban Places,” is a non-profit organization of residents and local business owners dedicated to making Roslindale the most walkable neighborhood in Boston. We advocate for a dynamic, livable streetscape and we support positive changes to our public and private built environment that strengthen walkability and other forms of active mobility as means toward better personal and public health, safety, social capital, economic development, and environmental sustainability. We are led by a board of directors and have nearly 1,000 additional supporters. More information about WalkUP Roslindale and our initiatives can be found at www.walkuproslindale.org. We recognize that no single group of people can be said to speak for our entire neighborhood – instead, please take these comments as representing the collective support and opinions of our board resulting from our mission and principles.