



**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
TOWN OF NEW MARLBOROUGH PLANNING BOARD  
807 Mill River Southfield Road, Mill River, MA 01244**

February 10, 2019

**A Statement of the 2019 Cannabis By-Law Strategy for the New Marlborough Planning Board**

During 2018, a survey conducted by the Cannabis Ad-Hoc Committee made clear one preference held by the residents of New Marlborough who responded: there is a strong desire for specific bylaws regulating Cannabis businesses in the town. In response to this feedback, the Planning Board is undertaking a process to write bylaws that reasonably regulate Cannabis businesses with the goal of maximizing their economic benefit while minimizing their negative impacts. Other feedback from this survey is also important: residents prefer smaller-scale businesses and prefer some business types over others, and these preferences along with others that will no doubt emerge during the public process will be incorporated into the final regulations offered to the town to vote on.

Regulating marijuana businesses effectively involves considering many different aspects of commercial operations. There are different types of businesses that may need to be addressed specifically, and the Planning Board will coordinate its efforts with the Board of Selectmen who will hold a vote on April 8, 2019 to allow the town to consider completely barring some of these. Determining an appropriate scale and number for these businesses is essential, and the Planning Board intends to study the size of current non-cannabis businesses in order to write bylaws that require cannabis businesses to fit alongside these. Effective regulation of Cannabis businesses includes a geographic context that recognizes that certain types of these businesses, such as retail stores, are more appropriately located in existing village centers and other types, such as cultivation, outside of them. Since much of the work of defining village centers has already been done by the Planning Board, and because having clear and specific definitions for 'village centers' is necessary for locating cannabis businesses appropriately, the Planning Board will revisit previous efforts and build on the extensive work that has already been done in order to formalize these definitions for use in these and other future bylaws. Finally, the manner of operations, including setback, signage and screening, will be reviewed to ensure consistency with other local commercial enterprises.

The public process to develop cannabis-specific bylaws has already begun with the work of the Cannabis Ad-Hoc committee and it is the goal of the Planning Board to continue this work and have these regulations written, passed, in effect before the expiration of the temporary moratorium on June 30, 2019. While some elements of this work may at times be presented separately to voters, it is the goal of the Planning Board in this letter to present them as different aspects of a single coherent plan to regulate an emerging industry to the greatest benefit of our town.