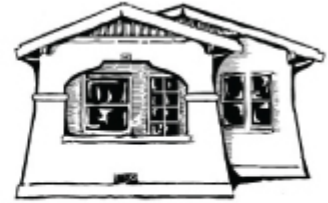


RIDGWAY HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



March 13, 2019

Dear Planning Commissioners and other City staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Green Pen Dispensary - Conditional Use Permit - 353 College Ave - CUP18-080 project that is before you on Thursday March 14, 2019. The Ridgway Historic Neighborhood Association (RHNA) continues to have concerns over this proposed project and the staff recommendation for approval. These concerns were raised in our original comments on this project in April 2018 that we sent to the City. For your convenience, that letter is attached here for your reference.

Given the RHNA concerns are unchanged, I will not go into them at depth again, however, they are briefly:

1. Impact to minors, especially high school students traveling by foot on Glenn Street, directly adjacent to the dispensary, in the Ridgway Historic District.
2. Impact to traffic and parking in the Ridgway Historic District.
3. Impact to crime and public safety in the Ridgway Historic District.

The RHNA still holds that the location of the proposed project is not a preferred or superior location that the City should support. Simply put, there are better places.

The RHNA does acknowledge that the proposed project does technically meet the minimum set back distances, is outside the overconcentration buffers, is in an area of appropriate zoning, and traffic studies have been conducted. That being said, however, we feel the City should hold itself above these minimum standards.

One aspect that doesn't seem to come through in the report or studies, but is known within our neighborhood, is that Glenn Street is also a primary pedestrian corridor for students walking north from the Downtown area, using the College Avenue cross walk, and heading to school at Ridgway or Santa Rosa High School. Permitting a cannabis dispensary in such a location is at odds with our neighborhood values and we expect and hope that the City would respect these values and share that view when all is said and done.

While robust data are not truly ready yet, given the recency of the cannabis industry, studies show the average number of daily customers is approximately 100

people per day. Truthfully, though, we can only conjecture about the potential traffic impact to neighborhood. Many businesses have failed at that location.

While we remain opposed to this project, if the Planning Commission feels that it must approve this project, we encourage the Planning Commission to put in place conditions in the conditional use permit so that the City can assure the RHNA that the measures related to traffic and parking (e.g., parking for employees at City Garage #1) are being followed by the applicant. Additionally, we request that the security patrols that are required (both during hours of operation and outside those hours) per the use permit be documented in such a way that the City or RHNA may review and ensure compliance with the use permit.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project and hope the Planning Commission hears our concerns and does not approve this conditional use permit.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryan Much", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Bryan Much, Chair
Ridgway Historic Neighborhood Association

RIDGWAY HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



April 19, 2018

Amy Nicholson, City Planner
City of Santa Rosa Planning and Economic Development
100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 3, Santa Rosa, CA 95404
anicholson@srcity.org

Re: Proposed Retail Cannabis at 353 College Ave, Project File PRAP18-032

Dear Ms. Nicholson,

The purpose of this letter is to express the opposition of the Board and membership of the Ridgway Historic Neighborhood Association (RHNA) to the cannabis retail location at 353 College Avenue proposed by the applicant Green Pen LLC.

Thank you for chairing the neighborhood meeting in Room 7 of City Hall on Monday April 16 in regard to application. I was happy to see some 30 neighbors from the RHNA in attendance, all of whom expressed their opposition to this application.

One of our members, Dustin Maxam, has individually submitted a letter to you (dated April 16, 2018) opposing this application. Dustin's letter does an excellent job in identifying many of goals and policies from the City's General Plan which are in conflict with the presence of a cannabis retail store at this location. The Board of the RHNA fully endorses the objections raised in Dustin's letter. My goal in this letter is to highlight and reinforce three main points in opposition:

1. Impact to minors, especially high school students, in the Ridgway Historic District
2. Impact to traffic and parking in the Ridgway Historic District
3. Impact to crime and public safety in the Ridgway Historic District

Impact to minors

The Ridgway Historic District abuts three high schools to the north – Ridgway High School, Santa Rosa High School, and Mesa High School (on the campus of Santa Rosa High School). Additionally, at-risk youth are housed and/or served at several locations in the neighborhood, including the Center for Social

and Environmental Stewardship at 401 Mendocino Avenue (directly across Glenn Street from the location in question), the Coffee House Teen Shelter at 1243 Ripley Street, and the TLC Child and Family Services Transitional Housing Program at 821 Mendocino Avenue.

Glenn Street is a primary route for high school students walking or driving to and from school. Hundreds of students every school day pass by the proposed cannabis shop location on the way to and from school. Indeed, the Santa Rosa City Bus pick up and drops students off on the corner of Glenn and College, directly in front of the proposed location.

While cannabis may be legal in California and relatively benign for adult consumption (controversial), it is illegal for minors to possess and a large body of research, as well as common sense, suggests that developing adolescent minds are at risk of being harmed by cannabis usage. Despite this, I can tell you that a number of high school students are seen daily in the Ridgway neighborhood smoking cannabis before, during and after class. Nobody wants to promote recreational cannabis usage for minors, especially while they are at school.

Because the shop would exclusively sell cannabis products, the mere presence of the shop and its signage will constitute an advertisement for cannabis. Even with innocuous signage, the teenagers will know the store is selling. This advertisement for cannabis at that location with all the foot traffic from adolescents walking to high school would represent a risk to the minors in the area by promoting a substance which is illegal and probably harmful for them to have. I argue that this is different from a grocery store, such as Perry's Delicatessen (across Mendocino from Santa Rosa High School), which sells alcohol and tobacco, but is primarily a food retail store.

Impact to traffic and parking

Glenn Street is a narrow street with parking allowed on both sides of the street. Even at low traffic times it is difficult for two cars to pass going in opposite directions. Traffic is especially congested when school is in session because of the many students heading to and from the high schools at the north end of Glenn Street. Additionally, traffic associated with the Santa Rosa Junior College utilizes the cross streets of Carrillo Street and Ridgway Avenue which leads to unbearable congestion during the morning and afternoon when school lets in and gets out. This high traffic load in our residential neighborhood severely negatively impacts the quality of life of neighbors living in the Ridgway Historic District, especially those living on Glenn Street and on Carrillo Street, which is also very narrow.

The presence of the proposed retail cannabis shop is likely to generate many vehicle trips which will further aggravate congestion in our neighborhood. It is already extremely difficult to turn north onto Glenn Street from College Avenue during peak times. Customers turning in and out of the small parking lot at 353 College will surely make the traffic situation at this corner even more unbearable.

The number of parking spots in the lot connected to the building at 353 College is very likely to be insufficient to accommodate the business' clientele. This will result in customers parking on the side

streets of Glenn and Carrillo which are already heavily over utilized. Many of the older homes in the Ridgway Historic District have only one or none off-street parking spaces.

The RHNA Board requests that a traffic study be performed during a representative time period (i.e. during the school term, not summer vacation) to assess the impact of this proposed cannabis retail store to the traffic and parking situation in the Ridgway Historic District.

Impact to crime and public safety

Cannabis is high value, easily transportable product that is primarily sold through cash transactions. This makes cannabis businesses especially attractive targets to criminals. Many violent robberies of cannabis businesses (both legal and illicit) have been covered in the local media recently, including robberies where victims were murdered and where criminals have mistakenly gone to a neighboring building and shot the occupants.

The presence of the proposed cannabis retail shop at this location will attract criminals' attention to the large amounts of cash and valuable cannabis products stored in the building. Additionally, the location's proximity to the freeway makes it an attractive robbery target for getaways. Stray bullets and mistaken identity during botched robberies represent an unacceptable risk to the neighbors who live adjacent to the building, including some families with small children.

Closing

At our Second Quarter RHNA meeting on April 18 we discussed this proposal and the RHNA membership was again unanimous in opposition to the application. For the reasons I detailed above, as well as the additional reasons outlined in Dustin Maxam's letter, I strongly urge the City on behalf of the Ridgway Historic Neighborhood Association to deny any application for a use permit to a cannabis retail business at 353 College Avenue, or anywhere else within the Ridgway Historic District.

Regards,

Maxwell Wilmarth, Chair

cc: Chris Rogers, Santa Rosa Vice Mayor, City Councilmember
Chris Coursey, Santa Rosa Mayor, City Councilmember
Ernesto Olivares, Santa Rosa City Councilmember
Julie Combs, Santa Rosa City Councilmember

Jack Tibbets, Santa Rosa City Councilmember
Tom Schwedhelm, Santa Rosa City Councilmember
John Sawyer, Santa Rosa City Councilmember

From: [Bryan Much](#)
To: [Ross, Adam](#)
Cc: [Rogers, Chris](#); ridgwayhistoricna@gmail.com
Subject: RHNA comments - Green Pen Dispensary - 353 College Ave - CUP18-080
Date: Wednesday, March 13, 2019 8:55:37 PM
Attachments: [RHNA Comments on Green Pen Dispensary CUP18-080.pdf](#)

Dear Planning Commissioners and other City staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Green Pen Dispensary - Conditional Use Permit - 353 College Ave - CUP18-080 project that is before you on Thursday March 14, 2019. The Ridgway Historic Neighborhood Association (RHNA) continues to have concerns over this proposed project and the staff recommendation for approval. These concerns were raised in our original comments on this project in April 2018. For your convenience, that letter is attached here for your reference, along with a more formal version of our comment for the March 14, 2019 meeting.

Given the RHNA concerns are unchanged, I will not go into them at depth again, however, they are briefly:

Impact to minors, especially high school students traveling by foot on Glenn Street, directly adjacent to the dispensary, in the Ridgway Historic District.

Impact to traffic and parking in the Ridgway Historic District.

Impact to crime and public safety in the Ridgway Historic District.

The RHNA still holds that the location of the proposed project is not a preferred or superior location that the City should support. Simply put, there are better places.

Permitting a cannabis dispensary in this location is at odds with our neighborhood values and we expect and hope that the City would respect these values and share that view when all is said and done.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project and hope the Planning Commission hears our concerns and does not approve this conditional use permit.

Bryan Much, Chair
Ridgway Historic Neighborhood Association
bryanmuch@gmail.com
707-332-1117

From: [Lisa Oray](#)
To: [Ross, Adam](#)
Cc: [Lisa Oray](#)
Subject: Green Pen Dispensary, corner of Glenn & College
Date: Thursday, March 14, 2019 9:29:46 AM

Mt. Ross,

.

Please do not approve this permit.

I fear the many negative impacts on the neighborhood for dwellers and SRHS students.

Sincerely,

Liss Oray
1265 Ripley St, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

From: [The Annex Galleries](#)
To: [Ross, Adam](#)
Subject: Green Pen Dispensary, 353 College Avenue
Date: Thursday, March 14, 2019 10:25:52 AM

Dear Mr. Ross,

I have lived in the neighborhood which is now known as the Ridgway Historic Neighborhood since 1986. I work a full week but there are times during the day that I have to travel home (from 604 College Avenue) and at various times of the day the traffic flow on our streets is severely impacted by the traffic for the high schools and SRJC. Sometimes after work I attempt to turn right onto Glenn Street from College Avenue and the narrowness of the street combined with parked cars makes for a hazard ridden drive on my neighborhood streets.

I am opposed to the Green Pen Dispensary proposed for the location at 353 College Avenue. That the process has come to a meeting after one year (which I cannot attend because I work as do most of my neighbors!) tells me that the City is not listening to our concerns about a cannabis business at that corner. I have read that the City is offering parking passes for City Garage #1 and I find that appeasement to our concerns almost insulting. How do you plan to regulate the employees to insure that they are parking blocks away and walking to work and crossing the very dangerous College Avenue (even with crosswalks and flashing yellow pedestrian warnings)? In this day and age, we seem to require scooters and bikes to move about city sidewalks--anything but walking. The cars that are supposed to be parked in a city garage will be parked on our streets along with the cars belonging to the customers for that business and you and every neighbor know that!

I realized that the City has to embrace this new industry but I don't want our neighborhood to be an experiment for the City or the industry. I hope you have done the research on established cannabis businesses to understand the number of customers that would be parking on our neighborhood streets. We are a very small neighborhood close to downtown and we are trying to live comfortably but the City seems to keep squeezing the life and beauty from our streets. This business could have a huge negative impact on our streets.

Gala Chamberlain

(Out of pocket provider of plants, food, and mulch, and hand watering to the roundabout garden at Glenn and Benton)

340 Benton Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Montoya, Michelle

From: Montoya, Michelle
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2019 1:11 PM
To: _PLANCOM - Planning Commission
Cc: Ross, Adam
Subject: CUP18-080 Late Correspondence 353 College Avenue

Information only – please do not reply to all

Chair Cisco and Members of the Planning Commission:

Question: Commissioner Carter asked if the delivery service vehicles and distributor delivery vehicles will use any of the six (6) on-site parking spaces and how that will effect the parking availability during hours of operation.

Answer: There is a short-term loading space striped and signed on the east elevation for the project that was approved and installed by City Traffic Engineering that was not included in the Staff Report or Project Description. The loading space was approved by City Traffic Engineering after the previous use was already permitted. The loading space could be used for distributor delivery and delivery services. Therefore, the loading space will carry over for the proposed use, should the use be approved. Additionally, the Applicant has provided the following response: *The delivery vehicle will park for short periods of time in the parking lot when loading and unloading. We are planning to have one of the spots marked for 15 minute parking to encourage turn over so a spot would be available, but as we discussed, without onsite consumption, long-term parking by customers is rare. Deliveries to the store (UPS, etc) will use the 15 minute on-street loading zone if the store is open. It is our intent for these spots to be used only by customers. This is important for our operation. As such, any commitment related to this the staff or commission feels codifies these spots as being for customers is acceptable by the applicant.*

Statement: Commissioner Carter provided a comment regarding the use of the nearest city parking structure for employee parking and mentioned the option for pre-tax transit passes for employees. The applicant should be encouraged to exercise the transit option when possible to reduce overall VMT and local congestion.

Response: The Applicant is willing to provide the pre-tax transit passes, although it was not mentioned in the Project Description or the Staff Report. There are also 12 covered bicycle parking spaces proposed at this site that would further encourage public transportation.

Question: Commissioner Carter asked how is long-term compliance with state and local operational requirements monitored? The applicant provided materials indicating that records will maintained on site. Are the records submitted to the City for CUP compliance on an annual basis? Are security logs kept which can be reviewed for on-site security activity? Are SRPD data available to track police activity at permitted dispensaries?

Answer: The Planning and Economic Development Department processes Use Permits, and in this case as well as other dispensaries, would have to be approved by the Planning Commission. The approval is based on the applicant complying with all Conditions of Approval in the Use Permit. After the business is opened, records are not submitted for CUP compliance on an annual basis. The City of Santa Rosa's Code Enforcement Division is in charge of ongoing compliance. Typically, Code Enforcement would receive a call from a neighbor if the neighbor finds a violation. Code Enforcement would then create a file and reach out the business/property owner letting them know a complaint was filed and a case has been initiated. If there is a violation, Code Enforcement works with the business/property owner to come into compliance. If a solution cannot be met and violations continue, further action is taken. Staff is unsure if the security could be shared dependent on the level of confidential information provided. It is possible to obtain information regarding police responses to a specific address, as well as the neighboring addresses, but there could be confidential

information that would need to be filtered, which could take time depending on the activity. There is also an issue with clarifying if a criminal activity is linked to cannabis or cannabis related businesses.

Additionally, the Applicant has provided the following response: *For state compliance, the Bureau of Cannabis Control will receive and review an application very similar to what the commission receives including details around security and diversion prevention. Inventory management is strictly regulated by the state and discovery of missing inventory must be reported to the BCC within 24 hours. All security camera records are kept for 90 days and records keeping are based on timelines set by the different agencies ranging across multiple years. The BCC, and other state departments, conduct regular inspections. Also, both the City Fire Department and the County Health Department inspect the facility. Ultimately, dispensaries are safe, positive additions to their neighborhoods. While I am not aware of any data monitoring specifically, the Santa Rosa Police Department did provide a report to the City Council Sub-Committee a couple months ago. Here is the direct quote and link from the article:*

"The emerging legal industry does not seem to be generating additional crime within the city, according to Santa Rosa Police Capt. Ray Navarro. He told the council subcommittee during a Thursday morning meeting that officers dealt with "nothing remarkable" from existing businesses or aspiring ones in the city." <https://www.pressdemocrat.com/business/9228688-181/report-new-cannabis-businesses-in-city>

Adam Ross | City Planner

Planning and Economic Development | 100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 3 | Santa Rosa, CA 95404
Tel. (707) 543-4705 | Fax (707) 543-3269 | aross@srcity.org

