

Swistak, Laura



Subject:

Fay, Pat
RE: Medical and Recreational Marijuana

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Harry Winthrop** <harrywinthrop@gmail.com>

Date: Sat, Jan 18, 2020 at 8:59 AM

Subject: Medical and Recreational Marijuana

To: Jamie Bova <jbova@cityofnewport.com>

CC: Nicholson, Joseph <jnicholson@cityofnewport.com>, Ceglie, Lynn <lceglie@cityofnewport.com>, Napolitano, Jeanne-Marie <jnapolitano@cityofnewport.com>, Susan Taylor <staylor@cityofnewport.com>, <jmclaughlin@cityofnewport.com>, Leonard, Kathryn <KLeonard@cityofnewport.com>, <amccalla@cityofnewport.com>

Hi Mayor,

I've been following the debate about six additional compassion centers in Rhode Island and the legalization of marijuana for recreational use. While I'm rather ambivalent about marijuana I have begun to be concerned that Newport's zoning regulations for retail sales allows marijuana sales in Newport as a matter of right giving the Council little or no control over a retail marijuana operation in Newport.

In a recent discussion with people associated with the Greenleaf Compassion Center in Portsmouth, I was told that on average they serve 800 customers a day. That would be on average about 80 cars coming and going every hour which demands parking for nearly 100 cars when employees are taken into account. Imagine that amount of additional traffic in downtown Newport, Spring Street or Broadway. This amount of traffic sounds comparable to a Stop and Shop or Shaws. As your fully aware we already struggle with parking everywhere in the City.

If someone is granted a Compassion Center license and locates it in Newport this scenario will become a reality. As concerning as a Compassion Center operating in Newport is to me I'm even more concerned with that license being converted for sales of recreational marijuana and then have a Fall River problem on our hands. I'm told that there is a conversion clause in state law if and when recreational sale of marijuana is approved.

I urge the Council to look at this to ensure we have control of businesses operating in our City. I'm hearing the lottery for additional license will happen very soon.

Harry