

Amendment Bylaw (No. 1182) No. 19-026
Cannabis Retail Store in the Fairfield Plaza

I am concerned that a cannabis retail store will be opening in the Fairfield Plaza in the near future. Fairfield Plaza is a local strip mall located in a family residential neighbourhood.

As a pediatric health care professional, I feel it is my responsibility to inform the City of Victoria Council with my health care concerns if a cannabis retail store opens in a family neighbourhood mall.

Over the past year I have witnessed several young children admitted to the Victoria General Hospital with acute cannabis intoxication due to accidental ingestion of cannabis either from the traditional form or in the form of candies or gummies. I have also witnessed several older children admitted with severe nausea and vomiting due to chronic cannabis use, a condition called cannabis hyperemesis syndrome. In addition, we have had a dramatic increase over the past two or three years in hospital admissions of adolescents with mental health conditions such as psychosis and depression. A large percentage of these children and adolescents are urine toxicology positive for cannabis. This relationship is well documented in the medical scientific literature. All of these acute care hospital admissions are expensive and add strain to an already overburdened health care system.

The effects of cannabis on the developing fetus during pregnancy and brain development of the young child during breastfeeding are of concern to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) as outlined in a recent 2018 publication. The AAP recommends avoidance of cannabis products during pregnancy and breastfeeding due to brain development concerns.

When cannabis was legalized by the government of Canada last year, the Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Pediatric Society recommended that it not be legally approved for anyone under 25 years of age due to concerns of cannabis on the developing brain. Development and maturation of the human brain begins in utero and is not complete until 25 years of age. The last stage of brain development is maturation of the frontal cortex, which is responsible for executive and intellectual function. Cannabis has been shown to interfere with brain maturation during this important period of time. Several studies have shown that regular weekly cannabis use in teenagers and young adults can result in Intelligent Quotient (IQ) score reductions. One large study from New Zealand demonstrated a decline of up to eight points, from an average of 100 down to 92. Current evidence shows that this decline in IQ score is probably not recoverable even after cessation of cannabis use.

The medical uses of cannabis have been vastly overstated to date and are not supported by well conducted clinical studies. This major issue is that there is not a credible placebo for tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). Ironically the best evidence for the use of a cannabis product for a medical condition is the use of pharmaceutical grade cannabidiol for two severe seizure

conditions in children. Cannabidiol has been shown to reduce the incidence of seizures in Dravet's Syndrome and the Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome in randomized clinical trials published in two prominent medical journals, The Lancet and The New England Journal of Medicine.

Due to the above potential health concerns, I recommend that the City of Victoria Council reject the application for a cannabis retailer in the Fairfield Plaza which is located in a family residential neighbourhood. There are currently more than enough cannabis retail stores within the boundaries of the City of Victoria.

Thank you.

Pamela Martin

From: Peter Davis [REDACTED]
Sent: February 28, 2019 11:31 AM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Fairfield Plaza Public Hearing

Attn Mayor Helps and Council:

As a resident of Fairfield, I wish to voice my support for allowing retail cannabis at the Fairfield Plaza.

I frequently visit the shopping centre, and have no issue with this type of use being included. The plaza already contains a wide mixture of retail, and this new use best fits into a large/busy shopping centre.

Thank you for considering my input. Please keep my email address confidential.

Much appreciated,

Peter Davis
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