

AAA Dispensary
2641 Quadra St
Victoria BC V8T 4E3
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alternativearomaticapothecary@gmail.com

February 27, 2017

Dear Madam Mayor Helps and Victoria Councillors,

As an independent local business owner, I welcome this opportunity to describe AAA Dispensary's operation for the Mayor and Council in support of my application for rezoning.

Description of Proposal

I opened AAA Dispensary at 2641 Quadra Street on October 27, 2015, after applying for a business licence from the City of Victoria. The premises had been leased from the landlord with the express purpose of housing a Storefront Cannabis Retail operation, as specified in the lease contract. Today, after a year and a half, I have ten employees who enjoy wages well above local retail rates and employee insurance benefits. AAA Dispensary reports all sales, remits GST and source deductions for all employees, and has done so since opening.

AAA Dispensary displays a clean, comfortable, well-lit and secure storefront. Our range of products include smokable marijuana, concentrates, edibles and targeted medicinal products, which are displayed in secure glass cases. All our products are individually labelled with both content and concentration, as well as the effects. Staff members give further advice and expand on appropriate uses. Staff members are very proficient at managing chronic pain safely and our customers trust them to match our products with their specific needs.

Security is a top priority of AAA Dispensary. We have experienced no break-ins or unwanted activity on the premises at any point. The store has monitored security and fire alarm systems, 24-hour video surveillance in all rooms, and a reinforced locked storage room for product. AAA Dispensary has dedicated off-street parking shared with the other two shops in our small building here in Quadra Village.

Proximity to Schools and Dispensaries

AAA Dispensary is located 750 metres from Quadra Elementary (at Quadra and Fisgard), and 600 metres from SJ Willis Educational Centre (at Topaz and Blanshard). The only other dispensary in Quadra Village is Meltown, which opened across the street from us on August 3rd, 2016.

City Policy

AAA Dispensary's opening hours and signage comply with bylaw regulations. Windows are unblocked and several employees are in attendance at all times.

No one under 19 years of age is permitted in the shop and a sign to that effect is displayed on the front door. No consumption is permitted on the premises. No other business or activities are conducted on the premises.

A full air filtration/exhaust system with carbon filter has been professionally installed.

A copy of our monitored security and fire alarm contract has been submitted to the City of Victoria as part of our business license application, along with our security plan, copies of police security checks for myself and all managers, and a copy of my lease specifying use of the premises as a Storefront Cannabis Retailer.

We have an extensive 24-hour video monitoring set-up which records activity for 14 days.

All product is stored in a strong-room secured with two digital deadbolt locking systems, one of which is engaged at all times. During hours of operation, the strong-room can be accessed by staff members with individual codes to the first lock. Upon closing, all product is removed to the strong-room and managers engage the second lock as well, which only they are able to disengage, further securing stock. A safe in the strong-room is bolted to the concrete floor.

Project Benefits and Amenities

AAA Dispensary employs a staff of ten, most of whom have health issues that have negatively impacted their ability to work in other industries. Here, they are valued for their product knowledge and proficiency at managing pain. As an independent retailer, I can accommodate employees who have health-related requirements involving physical restrictions, hours of work, duties, time off for medical treatments, etc,

Our clientele skews towards adults who deal with chronic pain. Many customers deal with work-related injuries but choose not to use opioids, the only medical treatment offered to them by physicians. Our employees are well informed and our customers trust them to match our products to customers' specific needs.

My staff are paid well above the going rate and enjoy employee insurance benefits. I report all income and remit all taxes and source deductions, and have done so since opening.

We have developed relationships with our clientele here in Quadra Village. We also enjoy a cordial and supportive relationship with police. On several occasions we have

been visited by members of the Victoria Police Department and the Saanich Police Department who were doing "welfare checks" - searching for people known to frequent the area who had fallen out of contact with friends and family and were the object of concern. We always co-operate fully with such requests, to the extent of reviewing weeks of surveillance footage in an attempt to help.

Police have never attended my business regarding a complaint of any kind.

Environmentally, we encourage all customers to return product packaging to us for recycling and proper disposal.

Neighbourhood and Impacts

We are a part of Quadra Village and it matters to us that our neighbourhood is a safe and inviting place. Our hours of operation, our well-lit premises and our volume of foot traffic complement this pedestrian-friendly neighbourhood. The other two stores in our small building, a T-shirt screen printer and a pizza restaurant, have enjoyed a significant uptick in business since our arrival according to the owners.

We give generously to the annual Quadra Village Day, an all-ages, volunteer-organized event. We lend our parking lot to an annual cycle rally and encourage promotion of local events through posters and literature displayed at AAA Dispensary.

On our block alone, Quadra Village is home to five restaurants, a theatre, a large grocery store, a convenience store, a bookstore, an ethnic butcher and numerous other small businesses.

The Village is a hub for health and wellness management and our block has a pharmacy, a walk-in clinic, a therapeutic massage spa, and a Chinese herbal store. We offer a congruent product and service to people seeking such wellness management.

Design and Development Permit Guidelines

We needed no changes to the exterior of the building, nor to the site. All changes to the property were to the interior only and generally involved the installation of security measures.

Safety and Security

All areas of concern identified in CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) have been reviewed and addressed and numerous strategies adopted to lessen the likelihood of criminal activity.

Our windows allow unobstructed views of the interior of the store. Bars are bolted to the interior of the large front windows and the double entry door, a legacy of the store's previous life as a computer store. There are no blind spots or entrapment areas on the store's exterior.

The front door has a professionally installed deadbolt system and the same smash-proof security film used on the RCMP building. There is a security plate on the outside of the door to prevent jimmying of the lock.

The store is well lit.

The public retail area of the store is separated from the private work area at the back of the store by a wall and anteroom with doors that can be closed.

There is a 24 hour monitored security system and extensive recorded video surveillance of all interior areas. A large split screen monitor sits prominently in front of the staff work table in the private back half of the store. Every area of the store can be seen at a glance from any point.

All product other than that displayed in the retail cases is secured in a fortified strong-room at the back of the store. The strong-room has a metal security door and frame and sports two digital deadbolt locks, one of which is locked at all times. The second deadbolt is deployed during the hours the store is closed.

Transportation

The premises comply with Schedule C – Off Street parking as it pertains to C-1 Zone QV. We do not have dedicated bicycle parking.

Heritage

Our building was built in 1971 and has not been designated as a heritage site.

AAA Dispensary provides a useful and desired service in our neighbourhood in a careful and responsible manner. I comply with all regulations and strive to be good citizen, both corporately and individually. I look forward to continued operation in this location.

Regards,



Mary Anne Emmott
Owner, AAA Dispensary
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