

**Warrant Article Questionnaire
Citizen Petitions Articles**

Section III – Questions with Response Boxes – To Be Completed By Petition Sponsor

Article # 56	Date Form Completed: 9/22/2017
Article Title: Registered Marijuana Dispensaries Bylaw	
Sponsor Name: Tara Hopper Zeltner	Email: thopperzeltner@gmail.com

Question	Question
1	Provide the article motion exactly as it is intended to be voted on by the Finance Committee.
Response	<p>To see if the Town will vote to amend the Natick Zoning Bylaws as follows:</p> <p>Add the following language to Section 323.8.4.1 after the words “RC District” and before the words “by special permit”: “or on a parcel of land located at 2-6 Worcester Street, Assessors Map 21, Lot 1”</p> <p>And to delete the following language in Section 323.8.4.8: “a Town of Natick boundary line, or” or otherwise act thereon.</p>
2	At a summary level and very clearly, what is proposed purpose and objective of this Warrant Article and the required Motion?
Response	To ensure residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts better health care access by allowing medical marijuana in a more accessible and safe location in Natick.
3	What does the sponsor gain from a positive action by Town Meeting on the motion?
Response	The sponsor is a health lawyer, civil rights advocate, social worker, and co-owner of CannaShare Consulting and Development. The sponsor focuses on cannabis law and advocacy, and may benefit indirectly through an increased business reputation for successful advocacy efforts that may lead to future monetary business benefits if a positive action is taken by Town Meeting on this motion. The sponsor is currently receiving some monetary compensation to advocate for this change in the Natick Zoning ByLaws.
4	Describe with some specificity how the sponsor envisions how: the benefits will be realized; the problem will be solved; the community at large will gain value in the outcome through the accompanied motion?

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Response	The Town of Natick’s residents will benefit by having an accessible medical marijuana dispensary on a heavily trafficked road in Natick as it gains an even more inclusive and progressive reputation within Massachusetts. Natick’s reputation will continue to flourish and grow as it sets an example for providing accessible health care by being one of the first towns to embrace the importance of providing a better quality of life for individuals who require medical marijuana for various medical symptoms. Medical marijuana acts as a pain medication to substitute for opioids that have become an epidemic throughout the country. Studies show that medical marijuana has allowed individuals to stop using opioids and have a better quality of life and build better relationships with their family and community at large. The benefits that these families within the Town of Natick may receive in this regard are priceless. By having an accessible medical marijuana dispensary in Natick, this will likely deter individuals from having this legal product delivered from outside the town parameters, and may keep a more inclusive community.
5	How does the proposed motion (and implementation) fit with the relevant Town Bylaws, financial and capital plan, comprehensive plan, and community values as well as relevant state laws and regulations
Response	Currently, medical marijuana dispensaries are only zoned in Natick within the RC District which is within the same zoning overlay as adult entertainment. Many residents have expressed negative feelings that the placement of a medical marijuana in a more “hidden” and less accessible area for medical patients, continues to stigmatize people who are medical marijuana patients as people who do not get the same respect as those who may visit one of the many urgent care medical centers that are allowed on route 9 in Natick. See ‘Registered Marijuana Dispensaries Bylaw 323.8.’ This location is currently a liquor store that has been in operation for over 18 years. I am not aware of any cost implications for the Town of Natick by changing the liquor store to a medical marijuana dispensary. This project would benefit Natick by eliminating a liquor store at this location, and instead, using this building to provide medicine to medical marijuana patients.
6	Have you considered and assessed, qualified and quantified the various impacts to the community such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town infrastructure (traffic, parking, etc.) • Neighbors (noise, traffic, etc.); • Environment and green issues (energy conservation, pollution, trash, encouraging walking and biking, etc.);
Response	Yes, we have thought about the impact to the community. In fact, the proposal will impact the community in a positive way. As a liquor store, the current hours of operation are longer than

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	<p>they will be within the medical marijuana dispensary. Thus, there will be reduced traffic in the area during these times. This proposed action also has a neutral effect in regard to parking. parking is currently abundant, with 37 spaces, and this will not change under the new proposal. The trash will also be greatly reduced within this proposal, as the Department of Public Health (DPH) has previously been very strict in regard to proper waste disposal for medical marijuana. However, the Cannabis Control Commission is currently changing and refining the medical marijuana regulations which are expected to continue to be similar to those that were previously within DPH. Thus, waste disposal will likely continue to be heavily regulated by the state in a much more stringent manner than has been required for alcohol. The proposed property is abutted next to a conservation area, therefore there is no expectation or plan to expand the additional building. The owner and operator of the current business property has been there for the past 18 and a half years and has never received any complaints from neighbors or from the town. The current liquor store business at this property has outside cameras that the police have found helpful and have used footage in the past for any needed investigations within the community. As a medical marijuana dispensary the outside security would actually be expanded and increased to comply with medical marijuana regulations that are being developed by the Cannabis Control Commission to somewhat mirror those that were previously provided for within DPH.</p>
7	<p>Who are the critical participants in executing the effort envisioned by the article motion?</p> <p>To this point what efforts have been made to involve those participants who may be accountable, responsible, consulted or just advised/informed on the impacts of executing the motion?</p>
Response	<p>The owner of the building and business, Natick Town Officials, and anyone who wishes to work with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to ensure that all project developments are within compliance with the Town of Natick and Massachusetts laws and regulations.</p>
8	<p>What steps and communication has the sponsor attempted to assure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested parties were notified in a timely way and had a chance to participate in the process, that • Appropriate town Boards & Committees were consulted • Required public hearings were held
Response	<p>The Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator were met with on September 5, 2017, and an additional meeting will be set in the near future for follow-up. The Planning Board has been notified and a meetings has been set to discuss this matter on October 11, 2017.</p>

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9	Why is it required for the Town of Natick AND for the sponsor(s)?
Response	Natick is a trend-setter for both strong community values and creating an inclusive and welcoming community. As Massachusetts has already seen strong community success within the dispensary within Brookline, there is no reason why Natick should not be next in line within the Commonwealth to set a precedent for accessible health care.
10	Since submitting the article petition have you identified issues that weren't initially considered in the development of the proposal?
Response	Yes. It has been mentioned to me by some members of the community that perhaps the boundary line exception should only apply to the Town of Wellesley and not to the City of Framingham. The Planning Board is aware of this variable and it will be addressed within the Planning Board Meeting on October 11, 2017 if it is found to be an issue that requires an amendment in the proposed motion language.
11	What are other towns and communities in the Metro West area, or the Commonwealth of MA doing similar to what your motion seeks to accomplish
Response	The Town of Brookline has placed a medical marijuana dispensary on a main road at 160 Washington Street, Brookline, MA 02445, and this dispensary has been very successful. Other towns are moving quickly to make progress for medical marijuana, but there are only a limited amount of licenses available within the state, and allowing this proposal will put Natick ahead of other towns and cities within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
12	If this Warrant Article is not approved by Town Meeting what are the consequences to the Town and to the sponsor(s)? Please be specific on both financial and other consequences.
Response	The consequence of this Warrant Article not being approved by Town Meeting is that a liquor store would remain in a location that could be providing medicine to individuals within a very accessible and heavily trafficked area (a five year old study by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation shows approximately 58,000 cars pass this location every day, and these numbers have likely greatly increased since the road has been expanded through construction since this study was recorded).

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