



**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – PLANNING DIVISION**  
**REPORT: Special Permits for Cannabis Cultivation & Product Manufacturing**  
 for consideration September 27, 2022

**STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Planning & Zoning Commission  
**PREPARED BY:** Paul Ashworth, Senior Planner  
[paul.ashworth@hartford.gov](mailto:paul.ashworth@hartford.gov)

**PROJECT:** Cannabis Cultivator & Product Manufacturer  
 121 Wawarme Avenue  
 PARCEL ID: 273-582-017  
 P&Z-COMM-2022-0677

**ZONE:** CX-1, Commercial-Industrial Mix

**TYPE:** Special Permits for cannabis cultivation and cannabis product manufacturing per Section 1.3.4 and Section 3.3.10.

**APPLICANT:** River Growers CT, LLC c/o Evan J. Seeman

**OWNER:** 121 Wawarme Investment Partners, LLC



**Overhead View – Hartford GIS 2022**

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The applicant is requesting special permits to establish a cannabis micro-cultivation and product manufacturing facility within the existing building at 121 Wawarme Avenue. The proposed use will occupy the existing, ~140,000 workshop/warehouse building located on the north side of the property and use the existing parking lot and curb cuts. No changes are proposed to the exterior of the building or to the site. The subject property was previously used as the Hartford Courant distribution warehouse.

There is a second building located on the south side of the subject property adjacent to Elliott Street that is not included in this request. Large vehicles and deliveries associated with the proposed use will be directed to use the Elliott Street curb cut in order to access the primary building, but otherwise the southern portion of the property is not included in this request.

The subject property is not designated historic, or within a local, state or national historic district.

## **KEY APPLICATION TIMELINES**

- Application Submission Date: August 8, 2022
- Date Application Accepted as Complete: August 8, 2022
- Application Date of Receipt: August 23, 2022 (sooner of either: date of next regularly scheduled meeting, or 35 days after acceptance of complete application)
- Public Hearing is scheduled to open on Tuesday, September 27, 2022; Open Hearing Deadline: October 27, 2022.
- Close Hearing Deadline (if opens September 27, 2022): (35 days after opening) Tuesday, November 1, 2022
- CT General Statutes Sec.8-7D allow that the applicant may consent to one or more extensions of time, provided the total extension of all time periods shall not be for longer than 65 days.

## **LEGAL STANDARD**

Standard for Application Type:

The Commission reviews special permits in accordance with Zoning Regulations section 1.3.4. Special permits may be approved, approved with conditions, or denied. Considerations the Commission may weigh in special permit review include: harmony with the plan of conservation & development; compliance with the purposes of the district; effect on existing development; creation of safety hazards in vehicular and pedestrian circulation; effects on traffic; compatibility with adjacent properties; suitability of arrangement of buildings, open space, and provision of light and air; impact on essential services; impact on stormwater runoff; impact on city services and infrastructure; tree and landscape provision; and pedestrian amenities. The Commission may deviate from the minimum requirements for building siting, height, street facades, accessory structures dimensions, tree installation, landscape installation, buffers, fencing, lighting, parking, signage, and street design by up to 15% upon certain findings.

## **STANDARD SPECIFIC TO THE USE**

**Section 3.3.10 Cannabis Uses** – A category of uses involving the cultivation, propagation, processing, extraction, creation, packaging, labeling and retail of cannabis, cannabis products and medical marijuana. Such cannabis and medical marijuana establishments are subject to the requirements of state law and regulations as established by the State of Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection.

All advertising, displays, signage, and visibility requirements must comply with state law and the regulations as established by the State Department of Consumer Protection.

- A. **Cultivator.** A person that is licensed to engage in the cultivation, growing and propagation of the cannabis plant at an establishment with not less than fifteen thousand (15,000) square feet of grow space as defined in state law.
- D. **Product Manufacturer.** A person that is licensed to obtain cannabis extract and manufacture products exclusive to such license type.

**Figure 3.2-A – Table of Principal Uses:** Cultivator and product manufacturing cannabis uses are permitted with a special permit in the CX-1 district.

## **Section 4.9.2 – Workshop/Warehouse Building Type Regulations**

- C. Adult use cannabis uses are permitted on the ground story and upper stories per the district.

## **Plan of Conservation & Development**

**Grow400 – Entrepreneurship:** Hartford has a diverse business ecosystem filled with large anchor institutions, small businesses, and start-ups. Meeting the needs of these diverse enterprises and cultivating an innovation atmosphere will expand economic opportunities and connect Hartford to the region and the world.

**Live400:** Hartford is full of active neighborhoods and institutions. We must forge better connections between people and available resources – and between people across neighborhood and city boundaries. With this City Plan, we hope to ensure equitable and affordable access to a high quality of life and to protect the dignity of all of our residents.

## **FINDING OF FACTS**

### **Subject Property**

- Lot size is ~14.47 acres.
- The lot is occupied by two workshop/warehouse buildings.
- The northern building is ~140,000 square feet and will be occupied by the proposed use.
- The southern building of ~12,000 sf will not be occupied as part of this use.
- Located in the CX-1, Commercial-Industrial Mix district.

### **Proposed Use – Adult-Use Cannabis Cultivator & Product Manufacturer**

- Will start with only 5,000 sf of product manufacturing and ~30,000 sf of cultivation space and expand in phases within the building over the next 24 months.
- No changes proposed to the exterior of the building or the site.
- All business operations will take place on the interior of the building.
- Parking & Site Access
  - Proposing to use existing parking area at northwest corner of the subject property.

- All deliveries or large vehicle are proposed to use the Elliott Street entrance.
  - Employees and visitors will use the entrances and parking lot along Wawarme Ave.
- Signage
  - No signage is proposed as part of this application.
- Security Plan
  - Proposing to use an existing 6’ fence enclosing the premises and existing security access controls on all vehicle entrance gates;
  - Access control mechanisms and alarms on the doors and gates;
  - Have confirmed there will be a security presence on the property at all times, 24/7/365.
- Odor Elimination Plan
  - Proposing the incorporation of air filtration devices into the ventilation system and a plant-based odor absorption method.
- Waste Treatment Plan
  - Proposing a water recycling system which can capture up to 97% of water for re-use.
  - Proposing to use a composter to recycle and keep on-site all waste that may contain a regulated material or byproduct.

Neighborhood Context

- Adjacent Uses

- North – Wawarme Avenue and Colt Park;
- East – A city owned, undeveloped and wooded parcel;
- South – Elliott Street and several commercial and nonresidential uses located in General Buildings;
- West – Ledyard Street and the Bulkeley High School athletic fields.



Figure 1. Subject property as seen from Ledyard Street – Google Maps 2022



Figure 2. View of the subject property looking east on Wawarme Avenue – Google Maps 2022



Figure 3. View of the subject property from the entrance on Elliott Street – Google Maps 2022



The applicant confirmed that they contacted the South End, MARG, CSS/CON and Frog Hollow NRZs. As of this writing, the MARG NRZ has provided a letter of support and the Frog Hollow NRZ has confirmed that they do not need to review the project at this time. The applicant has stated that they received support from the CSS/CON and South End NRZs but no confirmation has been submitted as of this writing. Staff received letters of support from Connecticut State Representative Edwin Vargas and City Councilman T.J. Clarke. Please find all comment letters attached in full to this report as Attachment 2.

The applicant coordinated a review of proposed security measures with the Hartford Police Department (HPD). Lt. Michael Reynolds of HPD responded that the security plan seems “thorough and well thought out”. Lt. Reynolds’ only note was a recommendation to consider upgrading the perimeter fencing and to be prepared to monitor and adjust security precautions over time. Lt. Michael Reynolds’ comments are included in Attachment 2.

### **ANALYSIS**

The proposed adult use cannabis cultivator and product manufacturing facility meets the basic requirements of the Zoning Regulations (the Regulations) in that the use will be completely contained within the building and the use is permitted in the district subject to special permit review. No changes to the site or building are proposed and Staff find that the existing site is well situated to receive the proposed use. The applicant’s narrative (see Attachment 1) describes security, operations and traffic impacts, and water conservation. Staff concur with the applicant’s findings provided in the narrative and find that the provided application meets the requirements of the Zoning Regulations for a Special Permit.

Cannabis cultivators are associated with an odor created by the flowering plants within the facility. Facilities are also equipped with ventilation systems that continuously exchange the air to the outside of the facility possibly spreading the produced odor. To address this potential nuisance the applicant has provided a plan confirming their use of several odor eliminating techniques. Staff find the proposed odor mitigation measures to be sufficient, however, because this is a new use to the city, staff recommend placing a condition of approval requiring the re-evaluation of the odor elimination system should a nuisance be identified later. Nuisance potential is made more relevant considering the nearby sensitive uses. Colt Park and Bulkeley High School are in relatively close proximity to the use and any smell nuisance would have a significant impact on the community. Staff find that the proposed use is appropriate at the subject location but that any potential for nuisance should be monitored closely.

### **Plan of Conservation & Development**

In July 2021, the State of Connecticut legalized adult use cannabis following suit of a national trend. Legalizing the consumption and sale of cannabis is, in large part, to help heal the wounds which disproportionately impacted communities of color. The Social Equity Council was developed in order to make sure the adult-use cannabis program is grown equitably, and ensures that funds from the adult-use cannabis program are brought back to the communities hit hardest by the "war on drugs." All but three of the census tracts in the City of Hartford are considered "disproportionately impacted areas" (or DIAs). DIA’s are census tracts have either a historical conviction rate for drug-related offenses greater than one-tenth, or an unemployment rate greater than ten percent, as determined by the Social Equity Council. The subject property is within a disproportionately impacted area. The location of this business, itself a social equity applicant, within a DIA in Hartford is consistent with both the intention of the state legislation and the Hartford Plan of



Conservation & Development (the POCD). The subject property is an appropriate location for such a use but extreme care should be given regarding any potential nuisance.

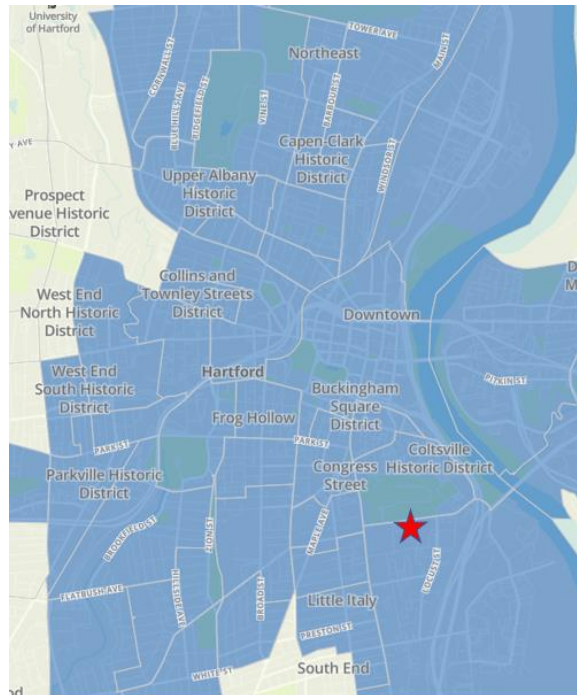


Figure 7. Excerpt of State of CT map of Disproportionately Impacted Areas, all areas in blue are DIAs, subject property is marked with a star – Data.CT.GOV 2022

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of this application with the following conditions:

1. If at any time in the future it is determined that an odor nuisance has developed as a result of adult use cannabis use, the proprietor shall work with the city to eliminate the nuisance; including the installation of additional odor elimination mechanisms.

**A draft resolution follows.**

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Applicant Narrative dated August 5, 2022
2. Compiled Comments

**REVIEWED AND EDITED BY,**

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Aimee Chambers, Director





**CITY OF HARTFORD**  
**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION RESOLUTION**  
**121 WAWARME AVENUE**  
**SPECIAL PERMIT FOR ADULT-USE CANNABIS CULTIVATION AND PRODUCT**  
**MANUFACTURING**

- Whereas,** The City of Hartford Planning & Zoning Commission reviewed the application and attached documents regarding the request for Special Permits for cannabis cultivation and cannabis product manufacturing per Section 1.3.4 and Section 3.3.10.; and
- Whereas,** Section 3.3.10.B defines Adult Use Cannabis Cultivator as “A person that is licensed to engage in the cultivation, growing and propagation of the cannabis plant at an establishment with not less than fifteen thousand (15,000) square feet of grow space as defined in state law”; and
- Whereas,** The applicant has proposed to use an approximately 140,000 square foot, currently vacant, workshop/warehouse building located at 121 Wawarme Avenue; and
- Whereas,** The use will employ several odor elimination mechanisms plant-based absorption and air filters; and
- Whereas,** Deliveries and large vehicles are proposed to access from Elliott street while the Wawarme Avenue and Ledyard Street entrances will be used by employees and vendors; and
- Whereas,** The proposed Adult Use Cannabis Cultivator and Product Manufacturer meets all of the basic requirements of the Zoning Regulations; and
- Whereas,** The Plan of Conservation & Development, specifically the Grow400 element identifies goals that encourage entrepreneurship in innovative industries; and
- Whereas,** The cannabis industry is considered a new, burgeoning, innovative industry; and
- Whereas,** The subject property is located within a “disproportionately impacted areas” as defined by the State of Connecticut and the applicant is considered a Social Equity Applicant as defined by the State of Connecticut; and

**Whereas,** The proposed Adult Use Cannabis Cultivator and Product Manufacturer use is consistent with the POCD and the intention of Public Act 21-1; and

Now therefore Be It

**Resolved,** The City of Hartford Planning & Zoning Commission hereby **denies/approves** the request for Special Permits for cannabis cultivation and cannabis product manufacturing per Section 1.3.4 and Section 3.3.10 with the following conditions:

1. If at any time in the future it is determined that an odor nuisance has developed as a result of adult use cannabis use, the proprietor shall work with the city to eliminate the nuisance; including the installation of additional odor elimination mechanisms.

Be It Further,

**Resolved,** This 27<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2022.

Attachment 1 – Applicant Narrative dated August 5, 2022

Attachment 3

**River Growers CT LLC**  
**Application for Special Permit – 121 Wawarme Avenue/132 E. Elliot Street**  
**(Parcel ID 273-582-017)**

**Application Narrative**

This Narrative is in support of the Application for a Special Permit submitted by River Growers CT LLC (“River Growers”). River Growers is a “social equity applicant” as defined under Public Act 21-1, and as determined by the State of Connecticut Social Equity Council. River Growers proposes operating a cannabis cultivator and product manufacturer at the 121 Wawarme Avenue/132 E. Elliot Street (Parcel ID 273-582-017) (“Site”) in the City of Hartford, Connecticut (“City”). River Growers submits this application for a Special Permit pursuant to Sections 3.2.1 and 3.3.10 of the City’s Zoning Regulations (“Code”). Prior to submitting this Application, River Growers attended a preapplication meeting with Aimee Chambers, AICP, the City’s Director of Planning to discuss the proposed operation and application submission requirements.<sup>1</sup> Following that meeting, River Growers has revised its project plans and materials and is pleased to present them to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

As explained below, the proposed use is consistent with the City’s Plan of Conservation and Development (“POCD”), the all applicable provisions of the Code, and will promote the public health, safety, welfare and sound planning principles.

**Overview of the Site**

The Site is zoned CX-1 (Commercial-Industrial Mix District 1). Cannabis cultivation and manufacturing uses are permitted in the CX-1 District by special permit.

The Site was formerly used as a distribution center for the Hartford Courant and includes two buildings: (a) a warehouse building of approximately 140,000 square feet with associate surface parking to the north along Wawarme Avenue;<sup>2</sup> and (b) a fleet vehicle building/facility of approximately 12,000 square feet to the south along East Elliot Street. The proposed cannabis cultivation and production manufacturing facility will operate from the existing warehouse building along Wawarme Avenue. River Growers will not occupy or use the fleet vehicle building/facility to the south towards East Elliot Street. No changes are proposed to either

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<sup>1</sup> During the pre-application meeting, the special permit application checklist was reviewed with Ms. Chambers. Since there are no changes proposed to the existing buildings or site, it was determined that building elevations and a stormwater management plan would not be required as part of this Application. It was also determined that a recent survey of the Site would be sufficient in lieu of a site plan since no changes to the Site are proposed as part of the cannabis cultivator and product manufacturing operations. It was also determined that a traffic impact study was not required so long as River Growers provided information on the anticipated number of vehicle trips and types of vehicles associated with its proposed operation.

<sup>2</sup> Based on the City’s Property Record Card for the Site, the existing building along Wawarme Avenue was built in 1981 and would therefore be considered a pre-existing nonconforming structure.

building or to the site (including exterior lighting, which we understand does not spill onto adjacent properties).

### **Proposed Operations**

Approximately 128,000 square feet of the 121 Wawarme Avenue building will be used for the cultivation and manufacturing of cannabis products. The operational buildout plan will be completed in a phased approach, with Phase 1 consisting of approximately 30,000 square feet of cultivation space and 5,000 square feet of manufacturing space, and three to five additional phases consisting of 25,000 to 35,000 square feet to be built over the following 24 months. As such, employees of the facility will increase gradually over time. The proposed cannabis cultivator and product manufacturing operation will include measures to minimize impact to surrounding properties and the surrounding community, as outlined in the following discussion. Hours of operation will be Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. River Growers intends to have security present on site 24/7.

River Growers is committed to being a good neighbor and has taken great care to be sensitive to nearby properties and the neighborhood in the following ways:

- **Ventilation:** The facility will use a high-efficiency HVAC system that monitors indoor air quality. Programmable thermostats will be installed to achieve ambient temperatures throughout the day. In order to maximize efficiency and reduce energy usage during the evening and nighttime hours, the HVAC system will utilize pre-programmed settings.
- **Odor Control:** River Growers will take extraordinary precautions for the proper treatment of air that leaves the proposed facility. The primary method for mitigating odors associated with the proposed facility will be the use of plant-based odor removers manufactured and sold by Ecosorb which destroy cannabis smells with natural plant oils. These natural odor removers can be specifically designed to eliminate the odorous chemical compounds in cannabis including cannabinoids, terpenes and sesquiterpenes. The odor removers used in the proposed operation will not contain harsh chemicals or synthetic fragrances and are non-toxic, non-hazardous, biodegradable, non-flammable and contain no harmful volatile organic compounds.

Air filters that reduce odors associated with the cannabis operation will be used in the HVAC system. Air purifier systems will also be used within the facility. If necessary, odor removal distribution systems will be used outside of the facility to provide additional odor prevention mechanisms for the benefit of the community. If installed, outside odor removal distribution systems will be managed through a master, centralized system within the facility, operated on automated controls that regulate dispersion.

- **Water conservation:** Typical cultivator facilities are known to use excessive amounts of water. River Growers will utilize a reverse-osmosis system in conjunction with a tri-generation system, which can capture 95% to 97% of the water administered to the marijuana plant that goes unused. The collected water will be stored in 10,000-gallon storage tanks on site for reuse at the facility. These storage tanks will be located in a



1,000 square foot room within close proximity to the initial finished cultivation and manufacturing space.

- **Traffic:** The Site has three access driveways, one on Wawarme Avenue, one on Ledyard Street, and one on E. Elliot Street. The driveways from Wawarme Avenue and Ledyard Street are both gated with security access controls and provide access to the 121 Wawarme building and its existing surface parking lot. River Growers will continue to utilize this security access for these driveways. The Ledyard Street driveway will serve as the employee entrance. The Wawarme Avenue driveway will serve as the visitor and vendor entrance and will be managed by security during business hours. The access driveway from E. Elliot Street provides access to the loading area of the 121 Wawarme Avenue building and will serve as the shipping and receiving entrance, allowing for direct access to loading docks of the cannabis cultivator and product manufacturing facility.

The employee count on site will be 30-40 at any given time. Employee traffic will be directed to Ledyard Street in order to minimize impact on the main roadways (Wawarme Avenue and E. Elliot Street). It is anticipated that shipping and receiving serving the operation will utilize commercial trucks no larger than 26 feet in length with a height of approximately 8-10 feet, similar to a large U-Haul rental truck. Any vendor intending to deliver utilizing a vehicle larger than this will be required to notify River Growers in advance to ensure that proper steps are taken to minimize any traffic and/or community impacts. Truck deliveries to and from the facility will occur at random times daily with consideration to the peak hours of community traffic. Pick up of finished products from the Site is expected at least twice per week. Receipt of shipments to the facility, which are anticipated to be no more than 2 deliveries per day, will occur as the needs of the operation require during weekdays, also with consideration to the peak hours of community traffic. No incoming or outgoing shipments will occur on the weekends.

- **Fencing:** An existing six-foot-tall chain link fence encloses the majority of the Site. This fencing is a pre-existing legal nonconformity since it does not comply with Code Sections 6.13.2 (maximum height of four feet in the front yard) and 6.13.3 (prohibition on chain link fencing in the front yard). The Applicant intends to continue use of this fence as-is with no changes or additional fencing proposed at this time.

### **Special Permit Review Criteria**

The following is a discussion of the Application with regard to the Special Permit Review Criteria outlined in Code Section 1.3.4.D.

#### *Harmony with the Plan of Conservation and Development*

The Application is consistent with the goals and policies of the City's Plan of Conservation and Development (Hartford 2035) ("POCD"), specifically the following:

- **Clean up 100 acres of brownfield sites** (POCD page 29): The proposed cannabis cultivator and product manufacturing operation will reuse an existing building on a previously contaminated site. River Growers’ proposed use will provide a viable business on a site that may otherwise be restricted from many other uses or redevelopments without costly remediation.
- **Attract new business and create jobs** (POCD page 5): River Growers will be a new business in Hartford and anticipates creating 30-40 jobs at this facility initially and could expand to nearly 100 jobs depending on market dynamics. As explained, River Growers is committed to hiring local residents (upwards of 75%) as part of its operations. It will also hire local companies to complete necessary interior renovations.
- **Enforce public project workforce set-asides** (POCD page 29): Though this is not a public project, River Growers is dedicated to providing equal employment opportunities for all and will recruit and retain employees who qualify as residing within the local community. It is anticipated that 75% of employees will be local residents. River Growers also provides spousal and partner benefits for families that have been deeply affected by the challenges surrounding incarceration.

River Growers’ commitment to diversity and inclusion will extend to the hiring of staff members, including those who have been disproportionately impacted by past drug laws. River Growers will advance this important mission by i) hiring diverse local employees, contractors, and suppliers; ii) providing charitable contributions to non-profits focused on criminal justice reform; and iii) working with re-entry programs within the state of CT. In the process, these actions will build trust in the community where the company operates.

- **Support “return to work” programs and policies** (POCD page 33): As previously discussed, River Growers is focused on equal opportunity hiring practices, including providing jobs to those impacted by past drug laws. It will also partner with re-entry programs in the State to further support those affected by the challenges faced after incarceration.

*Compliance with Applicable Code Sections Pertaining to the CX-1 District*

The proposed cannabis cultivator and product manufacturing operations comply with all use-specific requirements applicable to cannabis uses outlined in Section 3.3.10 of the Code.

- **Comports with the Purposes of the CX-1 District:** The Commercial Industrial Mix districts are intended to “encourage the re-use of traditional warehouse and factory buildings.” This is exactly what River Growers seeks to do here. River Growers proposes the reuse of an existing warehouse building for its cannabis cultivator and product manufacturing facility. The proposed cannabis cultivator and product manufacturing facility is also consistent with the CX-1 District’s intent to allow for low



intensity industrial uses. Per the Code, the CX-1 district includes large-scale traditional warehouse and factory buildings such as the large warehouse building at 121 Wawarme.<sup>3</sup>

- **Will not be Detrimental to Existing Development in the CX-1 District Because of its Location, Bulk, Scale or Design:** The proposed cannabis cultivator and product manufacturing operations will be confined within an existing building that was previously used as a distribution facility for the Hartford Courant. No changes are proposed to the existing building or site. As previously discussed, River Growers will take great care to ensure that its proposed operation will be respectful of the surrounding land uses and community.
- **Does not Create Safety Hazards in the Proposed Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation Pattern:** No changes to the current vehicular and pedestrian access to and from the Site are proposed. The existing access driveways and pedestrian sidewalks will sufficiently and safely serve the proposed cannabis cultivator facility. The bulk of vehicle trips, which consist of employees to and from the Site, will be through the Ledyard Street entrance to minimize impact to traffic on Wawarme Avenue. Any impact will be *de minimis* and far less than that of the prior use conducted by the Hartford Courant.
- **Compatible with Adjacent Properties:** The proposed use is consistent with the mix of commercial, industrial and other uses in the surrounding area. This includes a building materials store, a steel supply facility, a plumbing supply store, a church, and a park. There are more commercial and industrial uses beyond the adjacent properties. The proposed cannabis cultivator and product manufacturing facility will be operated in a manner which minimizes any impacts on the surrounding uses.
- **Provides for Suitable Arrangement of Buildings, Open Space and Provision of Light and Air:** No changes to the existing building or Site are proposed. All provisions for light and air and open space currently existing at the Site will remain.
- **Properly Provides for Adequate Provision of Essential Services:** The proposed facility will utilize all existing utility connections, which are sufficient to support the operations.
- **Will not be Detrimental to the Control of Stormwater at its Source and the Minimization of Runoff:** No changes to the Site are proposed. Current stormwater management existing at the Site will remain in place for this proposed operation.
- **Does not Place Excessive Demands on City Services and Infrastructure:** As previously discussed, the proposed operation will utilize a reverse osmosis system to recapture unused water for reuse on site. This will conserve water and reduce the operation's impact on local water resources and infrastructure.

All waste containers will be stored within the facility in a locked enclosure to prevent

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<sup>3</sup> Code Figure 2.2-A (Table of Districts)

unauthorized access. If any waste for any reason is stored outside of the locked facility and on premises, waste containers will remain locked at all times and located on concrete pads.

All water used to treat plants, from irrigation, fertigation, discharge and runoff, will be collected and pooled together in a containment area within a designated area of the facility to treat according to all applicable regulations of the State of Connecticut (“State”) before it is discharged into the wastewater/sanitary sewer system.

- **Provides Landscaping that is Appropriate to the District Enhances the Public Realm:** As previously stated, no changes to the Site are proposed. All existing landscaping is to remain. No additional landscaping is proposed at this time.
- **Conforms Fully with the Code:** The proposed operation conforms with the applicable provisions of the Code, including the use-specific conditions for cannabis uses outlined in Section 3.3.10 of the Code. While the Site may contain some pre-existing nonconformities, no changes to the Site are proposed that would trigger the requirement to bring such nonconformities into compliance with the current Code.

The Code states that compliance with parking requirements must be attained for the development of new parking facilities, improvements to existing parking facilities, and changes in use requiring a change in the amount of parking.<sup>4</sup> No changes are proposed to the Site’s existing parking facilities. Further, the maximum parking requirement is the same for industrial and warehouse uses and cannabis cultivator uses (maximum one space per employee).<sup>5</sup> Therefore, a change in use from distribution to a cannabis cultivator or manufacturer would not trigger the requirements of § 7.2 of the Code as it does not require a change in the amount of parking. The Site contains approximately 200 parking spaces on the portion to be used in this operation, which is more than adequate to serve the proposed use. The loading area to the south of the Wawarme Avenue building will be used for transportation purposes.

### **Conclusion**

River Growers’ proposed cannabis cultivation and product manufacturing facility presents a viable reuse of the existing building that would provide jobs and increase the tax base of the City of Hartford. The low-intensity use is consistent with the mix of commercial, industrial, and other uses in the area. Approval of the Application will benefit the City of Hartford by attracting a new business, creating new jobs for residents (up to 75% of employees to be residents), and generating additional tax revenue (real and personal property). The proposed use is consistent with all provisions of the Code and furthers several goals and policies of the POCD. River Growers respectfully requests that its Application be approved.

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<sup>4</sup> Code Section 7.1.2.A.

<sup>5</sup> Code Figure 7.2-A (Required Off-Street Automobile Parking)

## Attachment 2 – Compiled Comments

**From:** Hyacinth Yennie <hyennie3@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 21, 2022 2:10 PM  
**To:** Paul Ashworth  
**Subject:** 121 Wawarme Ave

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Please contact the helpdesk at 860-757-9411 if you have any questions.

Dear Paul , I am writing on behalf of MARG board, we met on 8/31/22 to discussed many concern we had with the applicant at the above address, we were able to come to agreement on many things , and of the most important thing was the support to have 75% of the workers would come from Hartford , at living wage and they agreed to do so, we at MARG will support this endeavor as long they fallow the City of Hartford Planning & Zoinning guideline , please feel free to contact me with any question you may have. Hyacinth Yennie chair of MARG. Maple Ave . NRZ Group 830 Maple Ave. Hartford , Ct. 06114 860-8830383.  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** chair person <chair@fhnrz.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 13, 2022 5:23 PM  
**To:** Seeman, Evan J. <ESeeman@rc.com>  
**Subject:** Re: 121 Wawarme Avenue - Special Permit Application Referral

Evan,

I just spoke with some of the other members and we don't think this needs to come before the Frog Hollow NRZ at this time.

Thanks, again, for reaching out.

Carey

# Court of Common Council

CITY OF HARTFORD  
550 MAIN STREET  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06103



Maly D. Rosado, Council President  
Thomas J. Clarke II, Majority Leader  
Marilyn E. Rossetti, Assistant Majority Leader  
John Q. Gale, Councilman

Tiana Hercules, Councilwoman  
Nick Lebron, Councilman  
Joshua Michtom, Councilman  
James Sánchez, Councilman  
Shirley Surgeon, Councilwoman

Noel F. McGregor, Jr, Town and City Clerk

Dear Hartford Planning and Zoning Commissioners,

I write this letter to express my support of River Growers CT LLC, a cannabis cultivation company with a Section 149 license to grow and process cannabis at 121 Wawarme Avenue in Hartford, Connecticut. River Growers has shown their commitment and expertise in growing and processing quality cannabis. They have secured compliant real estate in accordance with state and local laws related to the adult-use of cannabis.

We strongly support the location and mission of River Growers' venture and request that they be granted the necessary permits for operation. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Email: [TJ.Clarke@hartford.gov](mailto:TJ.Clarke@hartford.gov) Phone: (860) 757-9571

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T.J. Clarke II".

Councilman T.J. Clarke II, MBA  
Majority Leader  
Hartford City Council



**State of Connecticut**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

**REPRESENTATIVE EDWIN VARGAS**  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING

CAPITOL: (860) 240-8585  
TOLL FREE: (800) 842-8267  
FAX: (860) 240-0206  
E-MAIL: Edwin.Vargas@cga.ct.gov

**DEPUTY SPEAKER**

**MEMBER**  
EXECUTIVE & LEGISLATIVE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE  
LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE  
AGING COMMITTEE

September 8, 2022

Hartford Planning and Zoning Commission  
Hartford City Hall  
550 Main Street  
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear Hartford Planning and Zoning Commission,

I write this letter to express my support of River Growers CT LLC, a cannabis cultivation company with a Section 149 license to grow and process cannabis at 121 Wawarme Avenue in Hartford, Connecticut. River Growers has shown their commitment and expertise in growing and processing quality cannabis. They have secured compliant real estate in accordance with state and local laws related to the adult-use of cannabis.

I strongly support the location and mission of River Growers' venture and request that they be granted the necessary permits for operation. They would be a welcome addition to the State's cannabis market, and I have had the pleasure to meet and discuss the plan with the leadership team. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions at 860-240-8585.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Edwin Vargas".

Edwin Vargas  
State Representative

SERVING HARTFORD



**From:** Reynolds, Michael <REYNM002@hartford.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 15, 2022 6:55 PM  
**To:** Schaut, Christopher <CSchaut@rc.com>; Laureano, Gabriel <laurg001@hartford.gov>  
**Cc:** Seeman, Evan J. <ESeeman@rc.com>; Mauro, Joseph <MAURJ001@hartford.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: 121 Wawarme Avenue - Special Permit Application Referral

Hi Christopher,

I did thank you. I just wanted a chance to read it before responding.

Your security plan seems thorough and well thought out.

It was addressed in the report, but I would seriously consider upgrading the perimeter fencing at some point in the future.

Other than that, the security plan answered a lot of questions.

Just monitor and adjust as you see fit. Security is a constant process.

If you have any issues, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks,

Mike Reynolds



**Lieutenant Michael Reynolds**  
**Southeast District Commander**  
**Hartford Police Department**  
**253 High Street Hartford CT 06103**  
**(860) 757-4214**