

From: [Carey McDonald](#)
To: [Amanda Linehan](#); [Stephen Winslow](#); [Carol Ann Desiderio](#)
Subject: 2022 Cannabis amendments recap
Date: Friday, March 6, 2026 9:48:14 AM

Hi all,

I went back and figured out how the zoning amendments for marijuana businesses were addressed back in 2022. Took a little archeology but I've pieced it back together.

Six different amendments were ultimately considered, coming out of discussions from Councillor Linehan's original paper [211-22](#). That original paper which was just the order for discussion, is where some additional info and analysis from city staff is attached. Here's what happened to each amendment:

1. Allowed City Council to grant relief from buffer zones for existing buildings, and clarified ZBA role to grant variances for new buildings; over the process, had also considered allowing the PB to do this (similar to #6, tabled as [315-22](#))
2. Removed the principal use requirement (placed on file as [316-22](#)); note PB report listed recommended types of uses that cannabis businesses could not be co-located with)
3. Cleaned up language on approving security plan (passed as [317-22](#))
4. Cleaned up sequence of license approvals (passed as [318-22](#))
5. Establishes ZBA vs PB role for granting variances/relief to new vs existing buildings, respectively; not cannabis related (passed as [319-22](#))
6. Allowed City Council to grant relief from buffer zones for existing buildings; over the process (failed as [320-22](#))

I think #2 is definitely worth revisiting, addressing the principal use restriction will be key and was one of the biggest restrictors in how many parcels could be eligible. #1/#6 is useful to consider, but may not go far enough given the court ruling, so I think we will need to have a robust conversation in committee about whether or to what degree we have buffer zones. Note we did not discuss the impenetrable barrier back in 2022.

Finally, I'll note that while we did not discuss parking requirements, these were a major barrier for the second special permit we awarded.

Warmly,

-Carey

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Carey McDonald :: (they/them)

City Councillor At Large

781.870.7665 cell

City of Malden

215 Pleasant Street, Room 430, Malden, MA 02148

cityofmalden.org

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