



June 1, 2020

City of Guelph Committee of Adjustment
Council Chambers, Guelph City Hall
1 Carden St.
Guelph, ON N1H 3A1

Dear Sir/Madam,

We would like to express our opposition to the proposed permit for the retail sale of cannabis and related supplies on the property at 739 Woolwich Street, Guelph, ON. We ask that you not permit relief from the By-law requirements and allow for the retail sale of cannabis in close proximity to the proposed Canadian Mental Health Association of Waterloo Wellington (CMHA WW) Children's Services and Youth Hub building.

As family members walking the path along side our children with mental health and addictions challenges, we are familiar with the number of barriers that exist between our children and getting the services they need. In the words of one of our children, age 16, "If a weed shop is next to a Youth Hub I guarantee that kids will want to try and influence their friends to try it. Even if they are under age there is always a way to get others to buy it for you or get fake ID".

The use of marijuana by teens has been shown to be detrimental to their developing brains. Research out of McGill (2019) found that children under the age of 18 who used marijuana in their teens were more likely as young adults to have incidences of depression, suicidal ideation and suicide attempts compared to those who didn't use cannabis in their teens.

For a child struggling with addiction and psychosis, dealing with the constant need to quiet their anxiety, having access to cannabis as a coping mechanism can be just too tempting. Locating a cannabis store next door to a mental health and addictions centre feels like it diminishes the importance of the research that states the negative effects of cannabis on the undeveloped teenage brain. By allowing those two buildings to be located next door to one another presents the appearance that it is okay to use marijuana. As a parent I wouldn't want to encourage my child to go to a Youth Hub located next door to a cannabis store.

The building of the Youth Hub for our community should take priority over the retail sale of cannabis in Guelph. We urge you to take the opinions of the CMHA Family Council into account when making your decision.

Sincerely,

CMHA Waterloo Wellington Family Council Members