

June 2, 2020

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

To: The Committee of Adjustment of the City of Guelph

I am writing on behalf of the *Integrated Youth Services Network* (IYSN) of Wellington County and Guelph. The IYSN is a grass roots initiative, led by the Rotary Club of Guelph, to realize at least seven (7) physical sites across the area where youth, between the ages of 12 and 26, can partake in a variety of programs and services in a “one stop shop” format. For example, youth may want to upgrade their education, learn how to create a resume, have a musical jam session, receive counselling for mental health and addictions, visit a nurse practitioner or simply do their homework in a quiet space.

For the past year, the IYSN has been working with CMHA Waterloo Wellington and the respective development team, architects, designers and youth in order to occupy up to 8,000 square feet of the first floor of the building at 735 Woolwich Street, Guelph, ON. Extensive thought, time and effort has been put into the space planning in order to ensure it is welcoming, safe and functional for the youth. We expect that some youth will be vulnerable and at risk and others may not be. The IYSN is all about health promotion, injury prevention, early identification and intervention.

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.

To this end, the IYSN would like to express its opposition to the proposed permit for the retail sale of cannabis and related supplies on the property at 739 Woolwich Street, Guelph, ON. The close proximity to the soon to be new site of child and youth programming for the Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington (CMHA WW), as well as the premier space for the north Guelph site of a Youth Hub for the IYSN is unacceptable.

Please consider these facts as you deliberate on the issue.

Sincerely,



Cyndy Moffat Forsyth
Chair, Partnership Table of the IYSN