

# Galloway Township Planning Board tells Township Council to allow cannabis making

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GALLOWAY TOWNSHIP — The nine Planning Board members, attending Thursday's regular meeting, spent part of their night focusing on cannabis.

The Planning Board voted unanimously on two different redevelopment plans, both having to do with cannabis.

One of the redevelopment plans had to do with the entirety of the township.

The Planning Board recommended to the Township Council that any company wanting to cultivate, manufacture, wholesale, distribute or deliver cannabis would need to enter into a redevelopment agreement with the Township Council, so that the governing body would have more of a say on guidelines that needed to be met before the business was approved.

The Planning Board also said that a cannabis cultivation and manufacturing facility proposed for Pomona Road did adhere to the township's master plan.

When it came to the redevelopment plan that could impact all of the township's light industrial or highway commercial zones in the municipality, the Planning Board and the Township Council agree that there will be no cannabis retailers allowed within its borders.

Any company that wanted to be involved in some other aspect of the cannabis business would have to agree to certain rules and regulations including: being at least 1,000 feet away from vocational, elementary or secondary schools; operating security cameras; providing access to township police to security footage; and installing an alarm system.

Christopher Dochney, a project planner at CME Associates of Camden working on behalf of the township, said whatever the municipality allows as far as types of cannabis businesses as of Aug. 21, the state says it would have to continue to allow for the next five years.

For any type of cannabis business that the township decided to prohibit as of Aug. 21, the state says the municipality could change its mind and allow that type of business to operate at any time, Dochney said.

"We can't prohibit delivery," Planning Board and Township Council member Anthony Coppola said.

If the Township Council adopts the Planning Board's recommendation when it comes to the municipal-wide redevelopment plan for cannabis businesses, no company would be allowed to come into the township and set up a cannabis business by right even in a light industrial or a highway commercial zone.

"We are waiting to see the (state) regulations," said attorney M. James Maley Jr., who appeared in front of the Planning Board on behalf of the township.

The state's Cannabis Regulatory Commission has not met yet, and it is the middle of July, Maley said.

Even though the Planning Board was recommended to the Township Council to allow for cannabis cultivation, manufacturer, wholesaling, distribution and delivery, the establishment of any of these businesses in the township is years away, Maley said in his opinion.

The Planning Board also recommended adoption of a proposed redevelopment plan for a 40,000-square-foot building that would be a cannabis cultivation and manufacturing facility on Pomona Road.

Pineland regulations only allow for a 16,000-square-foot footprint based on the property the landowner controls surrounding the facility, Dochney said.

"The building may be multiple stories," Dochney said. "The zoning permits quite a range of uses... This is not inconsistent."

The proposed building would be like any light industrial facility, Dochney said.

Coppola said he believes the proposed building fits the master plan, but he thinks it is an undersized site for what they want to do.

The business would have to obtain its cannabis cultivation and manufacturing licenses from the state and then would need to seek approval from the Pinelands Commission, Maley said.