

Update from Kate

Medical Cannabis Application Process is Just Beginning; No Decisions Made About Licensing or Locations

I understand that there's been community concern about the prospect of a medical marijuana dispensary coming to Tam Valley where the Dipsea Café restaurant currently operates and at other locations in Southern Marin.

In December of 2015, the County of Marin passed an ordinance permitting the licensing of up to 4 medical cannabis dispensaries in unincorporated Marin (no more than two in the highly populated eastern Marin and no more than two in the more rural central and western parts of the county) at properties currently zoned to permit a commercial use. No matter what you are hearing, please understand that no decision has been made approving any medical marijuana dispensary at any location in Southern Marin or anywhere else in unincorporated Marin. There is a rigorous process ahead and opportunity for public comment along the way.

Please remember that just because a property owner/lessee has a property/lease in an area zoned to permit this use doesn't mean that they will, in fact, obtain one of the 4 possible licenses to operate an approved medical cannabis dispensary.

We are at the beginning of this licensing process; in fact, applications may be submitted until August 31. There's an exhaustive list of criteria and a very competitive process for an operator seeking a license. Applicants will be asked to provide details of their operations; have sound business, security, and operations plans; and describe how the plan addresses issues of traffic, crime, litter, and other factors associated with the proposed site of the dispensary. In addition to meeting qualifications, an operator must propose a specific location with underlying zoning that would permit this use.

A medical cannabis advisory committee will review applications in November, conduct public meetings to hear from residents, and then present recommendations to County Administrator Matthew Hymel in December or early 2017 for his consideration. All applications will be reviewed against a rigorous set of criteria for operations, facility management, quality control and appropriateness of location.

The Medical Cannabis application [webpage](#) includes a set of [Frequently Asked Questions](#) outlining a process that is thorough, rigorous and exacting. Please [subscribe](#) to the medical cannabis webpage to stay informed as this process proceeds. At this point, nothing has been decided about who may receive a license to operate or at what location. We're monitoring this process as it unfolds and encourage you to do so with us.

If you have specific questions about the ordinance and application process that is currently underway, please contact the program planner, Inge Lundegaard at ilundegaard@marincounty.org. Feel welcome to copy me at ksears@marincounty.org and my Aide, Maureen Parton, at mparton@marincounty.org – we appreciate your thoughts and input.