



CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
ZONING HEARING EXAMINER
NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

Central Market LTD (Agent, Compass Realty) request a conditional use to allow cannabis retail within 600 feet of another cannabis retail for Lot 14, Block 10, Original Townsite of ABQ, located at 301 Central Avenue NW, zoned MX-FB-UD [Section 14-16-4-3(D)(35)(c)]

Special Exception No: **VA-2024-00023**
Project No: **PR-2024-009921**
Hearing Date: 4-16-24
Closing of Public Record: 4-16-24
Date of Decision: 5-01-24

On the 16th day of April, 2024, Compass Realty, agent for applicant, Central Market LTD (“Applicant”) appeared before the Zoning Hearing Examiner (“ZHE”) requesting a conditional use to allow cannabis retail within 600 feet of another cannabis retail (“Application”) upon the real property located at 301 Central Avenue NW (“Subject Property”). Below are the ZHE’s finding of fact and decision:

FINDINGS:

1. Applicant is requesting a conditional use to allow cannabis retail within 600 feet of another cannabis retail.
2. The ZHE finds that the Applicant has authority to pursue this Application.
3. Applicant has duly authorized Agent to act on Applicant’s behalf regarding the Application.
4. All property owners within 100 feet and affected neighborhood association(s) were notified.
5. The ZHE finds that the proper “Notice of Hearing” signage was posted for the required time period as required by Section 14-16-6-4(K)(3).
6. The Subject Property is zoned MX-FB-UC and another cannabis retail establishment exists within 600 feet of the Subject Property. Therefore, having cannabis retail on Subject Property would require a Conditional Use Approval pursuant to IDO Subsection 14-16-6-6(A).
7. The City of Albuquerque Code of Ordinances Integrated Development Ordinance (“IDO”) Section 14-16-6-6(A)(3) (Review and Decision Criteria– Conditional Use) reads: “*An application for a Conditional Use Approval shall be approved if it meets all of the following criteria:*
 - (a) *It is consistent with the ABC Comp. Plan, as amended;*
 - (b) *It complies with all applicable provisions of this IDO, including, but not limited to any Use-specific Standards applicable to the use in Section 14-16-4-3; the DPM; other adopted City regulations; and any conditions specifically applied to development of the property in any prior permit or approval affecting the property, or there is a condition of approval that any Variances or Waivers needed to comply with*

- any of these provisions must be approved or the Conditional Use Approval will be invalidated pursuant to Subsection (2)(c)2 above.*
- (c) It will not create significant adverse impacts on adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the larger community;*
 - (d) It will not create material adverse impacts on other land in the surrounding area, through increases in traffic congestion, parking congestion, noise, or vibration without sufficient mitigation or civic or environmental benefits that outweigh the expected impacts;*
 - (e) On a project site with existing uses, it will not increase non-residential activity within 300 feet of a lot in any Residential zone district between the hours of 10:00 pm and 6:00 am;*
 - (f) It will not negatively impact pedestrian or transit connectivity without appropriate mitigation.”*
8. Applicant bears the burden of providing a sound justification for the requested decision, based on substantial evidence, pursuant to IDO Section 14-16-6-4(E)(3).
 9. Applicant bears the burden of showing compliance with required standards through analysis, illustrations, or other exhibits as necessary, pursuant to IDO Section 14-16-6-4(E)(4).
 10. Agent appeared and gave evidence in support of the Application.
 11. Applicant has met the burden of providing evidence that established that the requested Conditional Use Approval is consistent with the ABC Comp. Plan, as amended. Applicant submitted evidence supporting that the requested Conditional Use approval furthers the goals and policies of the ABC Comp. Plan by helping to ensure appropriate scale and location of development and character of design, placing new development along corridors, and providing employment and services for the area.
 12. Applicant has met the burden of providing evidence that establishes that the requested Conditional Use approval complies with all applicable provisions of the IDO, including, but not limited to any Use-specific Standards applicable to the use in Section 14-16-4-3; the DPM; other adopted City regulations; and any conditions specifically applied to development of the property in any prior permit or approval affecting the property. Applicant submitted evidence that, if granted this approval, development and operation of the Subject Property would take place in accordance with IDO requirements. It appears that no prior approvals would affect the Application.
 - a. A community association representative submitted testimony that the City Council is considering amending the IDO in a manner that would require denial of the Application by eliminating the potential of a conditional use approval for cannabis retail within 600 feet of a preexisting cannabis retail establishment. However, as of the date of the Application was accepted as complete by the City Planning Department, the City Council had not taken such legislative action or imposed any moratorium on applications for the conditional use Applicant seeks. The ZHE is required to apply the IDO and other City requirements in place as of the date as of the date the Application was accepted as complete by the City Planning Department. See IDO Section 14-16-1-7(c) (“Applications shall be reviewed and decided based on conditions that exist and requirements in effect when the application was accepted as complete by the City Planning Department”).

13. Applicant has met the burden of providing evidence that establishes that the requested Conditional Use approval will not create significant adverse impacts on adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the larger community. Agent testified that the building had been out of use and would like to open up a new and vibrant “lifestyle” business that would provide unique amenities to the neighborhood and City at large. Applicant submitted evidence that the dispensary will follow standard best practices and would also like to maintain open communication with surrounding neighbors and neighborhood.
14. Applicant has met the burden of providing evidence that establishes that the requested Conditional Use approval will not create material adverse impacts on other land in the surrounding area, through increases in traffic congestion, parking congestion noise, or vibration without sufficient mitigation or civic or environmental benefits that outweigh the expected impacts. Applicant provided evidence that the Subject Property is in the most densely populated center of Albuquerque, which has significant transit infrastructure, as well as street parking and several nearby parking garages, easily serving the relatively short-term visits by customers. No noise or vibration would result.
15. Applicant has met the burden of providing evidence that establishes that the requested Conditional Use approval will not increase non-residential activity within 300 feet in any direction of a lot in any Residential zone district between the hours of 10:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M. Applicant confirmed in written submittals that non-residential activity would not increase in any prohibited manner.
16. Applicant has met their burden of providing evidence that establishes that the requested Conditional Use approval will not negatively impact pedestrian or transit connectivity without appropriate mitigation. Applicant submitted evidence that there will be no modification to the lot, sidewalks, traffic access, roadways, or any other areas that would negatively impact pedestrian or traffic connectivity.
17. The City Traffic Engineer submitted a report stating no objection to the Application.

DECISION:

APPROVAL of a conditional use to allow cannabis retail within 600 feet of another cannabis retail.

APPEAL:

If you wish to appeal this decision, you must do so by May 16, 2024 pursuant to Section 14-16-6-4(V), of the Integrated Development Ordinance, you must demonstrate that you have legal standing to file an appeal as defined.

Successful applicants are reminded that other regulations of the City must be complied with, even after approval of a special exception is secured. This decision does not constitute approval of plans for a building permit. If your application is approved, bring this decision with you when you apply for any related building permit or occupation tax number. Approval of a conditional use or a variance application is void after one year from date of approval if the rights and privileges are granted, thereby have not been executed, or utilized.



Robert Lucero, Esq.
Zoning Hearing Examiner

cc:

ZHE File

Zoning Enforcement

David Blanc, 600 Central SE, Suite M, 87102, dblanc@comcast.net

Jake Ralphs, PO BOX 1674, 87102