

September 5, 2006

**Board of Appeals**

1550 Mission Street, Room 3036  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Re: Case # 06-145

To Whom This May Concern:

This a personal appeal, also in behalf of many others, in regards to the Planning Department's denial of application for the Green Cross to operate a medical cannabis dispensary at 2701 Leavenworth Street. I feel it was an unjust decision on the part of the Planning Department. The case was the last heard of the day, the neighborhood opposition was given the time to voice their opinions first, but Green Cross supporters were not given any time to voice their opinions. A similar feeling to the recount that got away back in 2000. Or the way it's done in Orange County. It just irks me how the neighborhood coalition groups continue to oppose the opening of a medical cannabis dispensary, such as The Green Cross. Especially, here, in San Francisco.

My personal feeling is that we really need to change people's perceptions of cannabis. And that should start right now, right here in San Francisco, a City supposedly always ahead of the rest of our country in our beliefs. Instead of fueling the negativity of cannabis being viewed as an illegal recreational substance, we need to realize the medicinal physical benefits to suffering patients. Cannabis has been used for centuries by societies far ahead of our own in some ways.

Cannabis really needs to be seen for its' attributes; for the positive. The benefits it medically provides to patients suffering from conditions due to severe or terminal illnesses. It alleviates pain, stimulates appetite, addresses Glaucoma, more. If someone were dying, in pain and using cannabis for relief would you arrest them? Would you deny their requests and pleas and let them suffer?

Finally, our Western society is beginning to accept the ancient Asian medicinal uses of herbs and roots that's been around for a couple or few thousand years. Refer to the recent article published in the June 27, 2006 San Francisco Chronicle:

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2006/06/27/MNGPHJKU131.DTL&hw=medicinal+roots+herbs&sn=001&sc=1000>

Cannabis has been used by various ancient cultures, even by the early native Americans. Yes, the real Americans. Not the real illegal immigrants who are trying to set the rules and dictate who cannot use or provide medicinal cannabis. Here, our Western culture has doubted ancient Asian medicine and condemned cannabis; all natural remedies, not man-made, processed chemical drugs in factories by profit-making pharmaceutical companies.

We need to stop viewing cannabis in a negative way as an illegal substance. The one commonly used and real harmful substance, but is legal in our society, is alcohol. Harmful to one's own health; and can harmfully affect those around them. Yet something condoned and used in our culture by parents, teachers, leaders, even members of neighborhood coalition groups, etc. The following article provided information and statistics related to alcohol and incidents and does some comparisons to cannabis:

<http://www.drugwarfacts.org/alcohol.htm>

(RELIABLE SOURCE: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, US Department of Health and Human Services, National Household Survey on Drug Abuse: Population Estimates 1998 (Washington DC: US Department of Health and Human Services, 1999), pp. 19, 25, 31, 37, 85, 91, 105).

As the article mentions, someone drunk on alcohol does not realize the extent of their intoxication. And, if combined with alcohol, the use of cannabis was found to be dangerous. So can some prescribed medications and over-the-counter purchases when mixed with alcohol. As mentioned, it appears that cannabis actually intensifies awareness.

The neighborhood groups in the Marina-North Beach areas welcome and participate in the patronizing of the bars of their neighborhoods. They thrive on the tourism brought to their areas, contributed a great deal by the businesses of the bars and restaurants serving alcohol. Look at the statistics from the link above. How ironic that society condemns medicinal cannabis compared to the condoned consumption of alcohol. How hypocritical are those neighborhood groups who oppose the opening of one medical cannabis dispensary. Did they form this coalition in a BYOB social gathering, or hosted by a ring leader providing alcohol or at a gathering at a neighborhood pub on a few rounds of drinks for everyone? Were the designated drivers getting their rounds too? Did they serve fajitas, forcefully taken from innocent folks by drunken SFPD's finest?

The reality is that, for a progressive City as we think our San Francisco is, there are so many hypocrites who are the ones who are hurting the real innocent: the patients who require the availability of medicinal cannabis. And The Green Cross medical cannabis dispensary can provide for such needs for patients. The City government has established regulations, The Green Cross has followed all guidelines imposed, they are the first medical cannabis dispensary to follow the newly-adopted City regulations set for such patient services, they have the experience in professionally providing such services, their owner and staff are sympathetic to patients needs. How can the City find out how a first legitimate and official San Francisco medical cannabis dispensary be operated unless there's a first one in existence? The Green Cross should be given that chance to help prove how it's done right, starting in San Francisco.

Their professional presence in such prominent San Francisco neighborhoods should be closely examined for its operations in a positive way. And can be the role model for other future medical cannabis dispensaries in San Francisco, possibly setting the tone and ground for the rest of the our country, once again. But this starts by changing people's negative perceptions of cannabis. This can start "only in San Francisco."

Sincerely,

Roger Solomon

cc:

Kevin D. Reed, The Green Cross, MCD