VALERE
ARCHITECTS, INC.

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102 Elm Street, Suite #9
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February 9, 2022

Mr. Michael Leary
City of North Adams
Planning Board
10 Main Street
North Adams, MA 01247

Re: Special Permit Application Narrative and Documentation
537 Ashland St., North Adams, MA

Mr. Leary,

1. Introduction

On behalf of Rustin Kluge of Ruby Farms, LLC, Valere Architects, Inc. respectfully submits this narrative for the proposed change of use and improvements to the (2) buildings at 537 Ashland St. and use of the existing outdoor site to perform cannabis cultivation. Additionally, the Site Plan Approval Checklist has been provided at the end of this narrative with responses and/or reference to additionally submitted materials to fulfill the City of North Adams' Planning Board requirements. The applicant intends to grow outdoors in lieu of indoor to pursue sustainable cannabis cultivation utilizing natural sunlight instead of high-energy-demand lights & HVAC systems. A similarly sized indoor cultivation facility would use approximately 2400 AMPs of electrical service compared to the +/- 40 AMPs required to service the irrigation system for an outdoor cultivation facility.

2. Project Information

Ruby Farms proposes to use lots 245-0-3A, 245-0-4, and 245-0-3 at 537 Ashland St., North Adams, MA totaling approximately 1.204 acres as a Cannabis Cultivation & Manufacturing facility. The (2) existing buildings on the site, building #1 of approximately 1,815 GSF, and building #2 of approximately 2,160 GSF are currently utilized as automotive repair garages. These buildings will undergo minimal exterior modifications consisting of door security upgrades, and exterior lighting upgrades as reflected in the architectural drawings submitted with this narrative.

3. Building Improvements

Minimal work shall be performed to the exterior of the existing buildings. Existing windows shall receive translucent film to reduce visibility within the space. An existing exterior exhaust system shall be removed as depicted in the attached stamped documentation.

Interior improvements shall be provided as depicted in the attached stamped documentation including reconfiguration of existing interior spaces to provide sufficient divided spaces to support the proposed cannabis facility. Both existing buildings shall receive (2) new toilets to provide sufficient toilets for both indoor and outdoor employees.

Building #1 is an existing automotive repair garage shall be modified to provide an Entry/Receiving room that is securely separated from the remainder of the interior. This room will provide an area for the facility to allow visitors to enter to be ID-verified prior to being able to see or interact with any operations of the facility. Additionally, a new office, closet, secure storage room, packaging, trim/ cure room, dry room, toilet rooms, and work areas are provided. The proposed plan is subject to change based upon review and approval by the CCC and further investigation of existing building systems.

Building #2 shall receive fewer modifications. It is contained entirely within the secure fenced area of the lot and shall receive (2) new toilet rooms, a dry room, an open trim/cure/packaging area, and a prefabricated, pre-engineered C1D1 extraction booth. The proposed extraction booth will be pre-rated by registered engineers as explosion-resistant with explosion-resistant equipment included.

4. Site Improvements

The existing site will be fenced with an 8′ – 0″ privacy fence under separate permit by the Applicant to ensure visibility of plants is eliminated from all reasonable vantage points. The fencing will run the entire perimeter of the site with an area near the existing curb-cut being installed within the site to provide the necessary secured parking and delivery/receiving circulation. This information is further depicted in the site plans submitted with this narrative. No work shall be performed that alters existing utilities, grading, runoff, or disturbance of existing paving.

5. Parking

Ruby Farms intends to employ at peak 20 employees at the site. These employees will park in the parking area depicted on the accompanying site plan. Employees will be encouraged to carpool to the site to reduce parking demands. Per Appendix Chapter Z, Section 6.4 of the City of North Adams the required amount of parking is 1 space per 500 square feet of gross floor area or 1 ½ spaces for each employee on the maximum work shift, whichever is less. The GSF of both buildings is 3,975 GSF or 8 Parking spaces compared to 30 spaces for 1 ½ space for each employee on a maximum shift of 20. The applicant intends to encourage off-site parking and employee carpooling to mitigate parking requirements and intends to provide the code-required 8 parking spaces as depicted on the accompanying site plan.

6. Traffic & Operations

Ruby Farms intends to operate between the hours of 8 AM to 5 PM Monday through Sunday. Delivery and receiving activities will be limited to business hours Monday through Friday. Product shipping from the site requires randomization and coordination between the delivery company and Ruby Farms

per the Cannabis Control Commission. Deliveries to and from the site for non-cannabis product will be limited to 20' box trucks that will park in the area indicated on the accompanying site plans and hand-trucked to the receiving door as noted on the proposed building floor plans. Due to the nature of the facility as cultivation and manufacturing it is likely that overall traffic in and out of the site will be reduced from its current capacity and will have little to no effect on Ashland St.

Cannabis waste will be chipped, bagged, and removed from the site in accordance with CCC regulations are irregular intervals during normal operations. Cannabis waste will be limited disposal dependent on the current grow cycle and will not be produced daily.

Regular trash & debris removal will be provided by a trash service utilizing the dumpster as shown in the attached stamped documentation package. This dumpster is not visible from the street or public way due to the proposed perimeter fencing.

7. Odor Mitigation

The Applicant at 537 Ashland Street will be changing the use of the lot from parking to a cannabis grow facility and the existing buildings from Automotive Repair Garages to F-1 cannabis cultivation facility support buildings.

A self-contained, modular, sealed extraction booth shall be provided within one existing building as depicted in the attached stamped documentation package. The extraction building will utilize a packaged mini-split system with no direct air exchange for heating & cooling. Fresh air shall be provided by an HRV/ERV system with exhaust fans having activated charcoal/carbon filtration systems within the airstream to remove odor from the air. The extraction booth & associated equipment will be run during normal business hours and will not be operated during the evening or nighttime to aid in reducing potential odor concerns. The other support building will utilize similar HVAC systems but will not contain an odor source similar to the extraction booth.

The site will contain exterior growing plants that are open to the air, and sun. The Applicant intends to provide approximately 15% of the lot coverage with Marigolds and Lavender plants to aid in both pest management and odor mitigation. Lavender plants shall be arranged nearest to the proposed fence line to provide maximum odor mitigation. Due to the size of the facility, and the less noxious odor from flowering plants as opposed to extraction gasses, odor concerns are minimal.

8. Runoff & Fertilizer

All fertilizer to be used on site shall be certified organic and Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) certified. All plants shall be grown in 50-gallon pots located on the existing concrete and/or ground surfaces. Watering shall be provided by an automated above-ground PVC irrigation system. Landscaping fabric will be placed over all areas where cannabis plant pots are located to ensure no plant matter is left to enter the local ecosystem via runoff or otherwise. All pots and ground cover cloth will be stored within the buildings during winter months when plants are not being grown.

SITE PLAN APPROVAL CHECKLIST

1. Provide application filing fee of $125.00 CHECK ONLY - payable to the "City of North Adams". (This covers the legal notice and mailing of legal notice and decision notice to the abutters).
    a. Provided by others

2. Provide three (3) copies of the application, which must include the "correct'' book and page number, copy of the deed, title/ownership and copy of the assessor' s map.
    a. Provided

3. Provide a detailed site plan with exact measurements of property lines, with north point indicated with scale shown. Provide exact measurements and location of all buildings, sheds, pools, etc., on property and adjacent streets.
    a. Provided, see attached stamped documentation package.

4. Provide narrative for proposed use and improvements to the building.
    a. Provided, see above.

5. Provide interior site plan, exact measurement of space to be used, bathroom location and exits.
    a. Provided, see attached stamped documentation package.

6. Provide signage details - sign measurements with colors and materials to be used, site location and lighting if needed. Provide a colored rendering of all proposed signage.
    a. No signage is proposed.

7. Provide exterior façade work details along with sample materials to be used along with a color sample. Provide colored rendering of the completed project.
    a. No exterior façade improvements or changes of color are proposed. Existing building photos have been provided.

8. Provide exterior painting details and submit paint sample/chip of color. If building is in a historical district, provide approval from the Historical Commission.
    a. No exterior façade painting is proposed. Existing building photos have been provided.

9. Provide landscaping details on location of trees, shrubs, flowers. What type and size?
    a. No new landscaping is proposed. Proposed cannabis grow area is outlined in attached stamped documentation package.

10. Provide detailed site plan for parking, the number of spaces, along with designated handicap parking and employee parking.
    a. See attached stamped documentation package.

11. Provide rubbish removal details, location of dumpster, type of enclosure and security as needed contractor pick up, how often?
    a. See above & attached stamped documentation package

12. Provide hours and days of operation.
    a. See above

13. Provide Conservation Commission decision if applicable.
    a. N/A

14. Provide Traffic Commission review/decision as needed for traffic safety.
    a. N/A

15. Provide documentation from Historical Commission if applicable.
    a. N/A

16. Provide documentation from Board of Health if applicable.
    a. N/A

17. Provide documentation from Licensing Board if applicable.
    a. N/A

18. Provide exact square footage of interior space to be used for the change of use and explain in detail the "change of use."
    a. See attached stamped documentation package.

19. Provide details on exterior lighting, the type, location on building or parking area and hours to be used.
    a. See above & attached stamped documentation package.

20. Provide information on deliveries, how much, when, and where if applicable.
    a. See above & attached stamped documentation package.

21. Provide letter/certificate or "proof'' for the removal any underground oil/gas tanks and testing of soil for contamination.
    a. N/A, no underground oil/gas tanks are present, have been removed, or will be removed from the property.

Sincerely,

Matthew C. O'Boyle, RA, AIA
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ATTACHMENTS

1. **STAMPED DOCUMENTATION PACKAGE DATED 2/9/22**