



City of Somerville

# PLANNING BOARD

City Hall 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

**TO:** Planning Board  
**FROM:** Planning, Preservation & Zoning (PPZ) Staff  
**SUBJECT:** 690-694 Broadway, P&Z 21-050  
**POSTED:** January 13, 2022

**RECOMMENDATION:** No change

This memo is supplemental to the PPZ Staff Memos dated November 10, 2021, and December 9, 2021.

## ANALYSIS

On December 9, 2021, the Applicant submitted an updated Transportation Access Plan (TAP). The primary difference between the original TAP ("August TAP") and the updated TAP ("December TAP") is that the August TAP shows a 19-foot delivery vehicle being used in the loading space on Josephine Ave, while the December TAP shows a 15.5-foot delivery vehicle. The TAP provides no explanation for this change.

In response to questions from Staff about why the TAP had changed, the Applicant provided a brief explanation in memo on January 3, 2022 (attached at the end of this memo). The January 3<sup>rd</sup> memo states that "[t]he extensive experience of the Advesa team have allowed them to properly size an urban compact van for incoming deliveries from suppliers."

The Mobility Division's requirements for TAPs state that "[t]he largest vehicle that will access each dock must be shown entering and exiting the loading area or dock."<sup>1</sup> The TAPs submitted as part of applications for other Cannabis Retail Sales proposals have typically shown a 19' vehicle.

The Board may wish to ask the Applicant additional clarifying questions about the TAP at the next public hearing. Possible questions to ask for clarification regarding include:

- Does Advesa have control over what vehicles are used during delivery? Is it possible to guarantee that no vehicle longer than 15.5' will be used?
- What sized vehicles are used to serve other cannabis retail stores in similar urban locations or at Advesa's other locations within the greater Boston area?

Even assuming that the largest vehicle used for delivery is 15.5' long, Staff are not confident that the on-site loading area is sufficient. The December TAP provides the dimensions of the loading area as being 18' by 13.5' which, if a 15.5' vehicle was used, would provide 2.5' of space in which to load and unload the vehicle without impeding the sidewalk. As the sidewalk in this area is fairly narrow, it is likely that loading

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<sup>1</sup> See the guidelines posted at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/office-strategic-planning-and-community-development-ospcd/ospcd-mobility-division> for the full list of requirements.

activities in this location will obstruct the sidewalk, even if the vehicle itself is fully within the designated loading area. As mentioned in the November 10 memo, the Zoning Ordinance prohibits loading activities from “encroach[ing] on or interfer[ing] with the use of sidewalks.”

For these reasons, Staff do not have any changes to the recommended conditions found in the November 10 and December 9 memos. Staff continues to believe that an on-street loading zone in close proximity to the site will best balance the loading needs of this Applicant with the right of the public to unimpeded sidewalks and that the Applicant should work with Mobility Staff to identify an existing, or create a new, on-street loading zone that can serve this use.



MEMORANDUM

To: Somerville Planning Board  
From: Jessica Pelletier, Advesa MA, Inc D/B/A Blue River Terps  
CC: Planning, Presentation and Zoning Staff  
Date: January 3, 2022  
Subject: 690-694 Broadway, P&Z 21-050

Advesa MA, Inc. ("Advesa") reviewed the comments relative to Advesa's Special Permit application to operate a cannabis retail store at 690-694 Broadway, Somerville, MA.

After reviewing the comments, Advesa makes the following response:

I. All deliveries to the site will be via an existing curbcut on Josephine Avenue. The vehicles used for deliveries will be the compact Nissan NV200 with a overall length of 15.5 feet allowing loading operations fully onsite without blocking the sidewalk. The extensive experience of the Advesa team have allowed them to properly size an urban compact van for incoming deliveries from suppliers.[Jessica confirm-they want to make sure we can control what suppliers/vendors use] This smaller vehicle addressed mobility and staff concern for sidewalk overhang.

II. On December 9th, the HSH team replaced figure A.6 (Appendix F - Vehicle Movement Plan) to reflect staff concern on loading movements. Additional updates include December header date; added sentence in Project Summary on Page 1 to reference the update to the August 21, 2021 issued TAP.