



MEMORANDUM

CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

245 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM 305, WATERTOWN, NY 13601

PHONE: 315-785-7741 – FAX: 315-782-9014

TO: Planning Commission Members

FROM: Michael A. Lumbis, Planning and Community Development Director

PRIMARY REVIEWER: Joseph Albinus, Planner

SUBJECT: Special Use Permit – 952 Arsenal Street, Basement Unit of
Tax Parcel Number 8-05-105.100

DATE: August 6, 2026

Request: Special Use Permit to allow a Retail Marijuana Dispensary in a
Commercial District

Applicant: Bud Bound Ventures LLC

Proposed Use: Marijuana Dispensary, Retail

Property Owner: OKS Realty LLC

Submitted:

Application Form: Yes

8 ½" x 11" Copy of Tax Map: Yes

Cover Letter: Yes

County Planning Board Review Required: Yes

A Sketch of the Site to Scale: No

SEQRA: Unlisted Action

Overview: The applicant proposes to open a Retail Marijuana Dispensary in the smaller storefront (basement suite) in the existing multi-occupant retail building on the subject parcel. The proposed storefront is the former Bottle Caps retail store. Interior renovations will be needed to comply with New York State regulations enforced by the NYS Office of Cannabis Management. The Zoning Ordinance defines a Marijuana Dispensary, Retail use as follows:

“A business that is registered to operate in the State of New York that engages in the Retail Sale of Cannabis Products.”

Section 310-18 of the Zoning Ordinance, which contains the use table for all districts, requires a Special Use Permit for a Retail Marijuana Dispensary in a Commercial District.

Site Plan Approval: This proposal will not require Site Plan Approval. Section 310-104 of the Zoning Ordinance identifies the following as exempt from Site Plan Review:

- “A. Where the space proposed for occupancy is within an existing building or structure that will not undergo exterior alterations unless the new use is going to require additional parking.”*

The proposed renovations to the structure meet the criteria for the exemption listed above.

Special Use Permit Standards: Article XI of the Zoning Ordinance empowers the Planning Commission to issue Special Use Permits after holding a Public Hearing and reviewing the application against the Special Use Permit Review Criteria.

Section 310-116 of the Zoning Ordinance contains the Special Use Permit Review Criteria that the Planning Commission is tasked with considering. Below is a list of all nine criteria and Staff’s conclusions for each criterion. The following represent Staff’s professional comments only and do not necessarily represent the final position of the Planning Commission, which must reach its own determinations. The applicant also addresses the Special Use Permit Criteria in his cover letter.

- A. The proposed use will be consistent with the purposes of this Chapter and the requirements of the zoning district in which it is located.***

The stated purpose of the Commercial District, per the Zoning Ordinance is as follows:

“This district facilitates the highest intensity of commercial uses that serve the entire region beyond adjacent neighborhoods. Development character typically is larger lots with franchise architecture, on-site parking and signage. While the desire is to maintain this land use, a higher standard of design to create a uniform/uncluttered look is desired. While the Commercial Corridor is by nature auto-oriented, design standards should still integrate sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit stops into the streetscape.”

The proposed use is consistent with this purpose, as the existing property is an active retail use. The proposed business would occupy an existing storefront within the primary building. The built environment would remain unchanged.

- B. The proposed use’s compatibility and consistency with the goals and recommendations of the City of Watertown Comprehensive Plan, Complete Streets Ordinance and other approved City plans and programs.***

The subject property is in the Commercial Corridor future land use character area. The City's adopted Comprehensive Plan defines this future land use character area as follows:

"As opposed to Coffeen, Washington and State Streets, Arsenal Street from the western edge of downtown west toward Interstate 81 is primarily commercial and serves a much broader regional population. Arsenal Street is also a high volume arterial road, carrying 30,000 vehicles per day into the City from Interstate 81. As the regional retail center for the North Country, Arsenal Street provides a land area capable of higher density commercial and retail uses including modestly sized franchise companies. Parking is generally in front of these buildings and signage is prominent. While the desire is to maintain this land use, a higher standard of design to create a uniform/uncluttered look is anticipated. This can be accomplished with good site design and sign standards. Sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit stops should also be integrated in the design."

The proposed use is compatible with other commercial uses and will not create a nuisance to the adjacent businesses or affect the properties surrounding it. The exterior architecture and built environment will not change. This proposal is in harmony with the Comprehensive Plan.

C. The impact on the nature and character of the surrounding neighborhood, natural environment, historic district, or corridor in which it is located.

The proposed use will have a minimal impact on the surrounding corridor. There are numerous nearby retail stores and one other commercial business within the existing parcel. The existing parcel is not in a historic district.

D. The overall impact on the site and its surroundings, considering environmental, social, and economic impacts of traffic, noise, dust, odors, release of harmful substances, solid waste disposal, glare, or any other nuisances.

The proposed use would have minimal impact on the surrounding environment and will not create any negative impacts per the items listed above.

E. Restrictions and/or conditions on design of structures or operation of the use (including hours of operation) necessary either to ensure compatibility with the surrounding uses or to protect the natural resources of the City.

A Retail Marijuana Dispensary can be open in the City of Watertown from 8:00 am to 9:00 pm. The applicant has proposed hours of operation from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. which is in compliance with the hours of operation listed in 310-75. In addition, the hours are similar to the business hours of other nearby commercial uses, such as the following examples:

1. McDonald's: 24 Hours a day, every day.

2. KFC: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. Weeknights.
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m. Friday, Saturday
3. Valvoline Instant Oil Change 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Weekdays
7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Saturday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Sunday
4. The Mustard Seed 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Weekdays, Saturday
9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Sunday
5. Arby's 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. All days.

Adjacent uses on the surrounding parcels consist of single family residential uses to the north, and other commercial uses to the east, south and west.

To the east, the subject parcel abuts the McDonalds restaurant.. To the west, across Palmer Street, is a Kentucky Fried Chicken. To the southwest, across Arsenal Street, is a Valvoline Instant Oil Change. To the south, across Arsenal Street, is The Mustard Seed Natural Market and Café. To the southeast, across Arsenal Street, is an Arby's. All of the preceding are on Commercially zoned parcels.

This review did not identify any significant detrimental effects to any of the surrounding properties.

F. The adequacy and accessibility of essential public facilities and services, such as streets, parking spaces, police and fire protection, drainage structures, refuse disposal, water and sewer, and schools.

There are approximately 42 existing parking spaces on site, which is under the maximum of 50 spaces allowed in the Commercial District. Staff concurs with the applicant's determination that the existing number of parking spaces is adequate to accommodate the customer and employee parking demand. As the primary building on the parcel is considered a Retail, General and Service, there will be a number of parking spaces shared by the existing and proposed business on the parcel. A sidewalk leads to the parcel along Arsenal Street and while part of a sidewalk exists along the Palmer Street section, it ends before the parcel does spanning approximately half of the parcel's Palmer Street adjacent side.

G. The proposed use's impact on traffic congestion, impairment of pedestrian safety, or capacity challenges to Level of Service on existing streets, considering their current width, surfacing, and condition, and any improvements proposed to be made to them by the applicant.

The proposed dispensary will likely have similar trip generation to the Bottle Caps craft beer store, the previous occupant of the basement suite. However, it is

exceedingly unlikely to have an adverse effect on the vehicular Level of Service on Arsenal Street or Palmer Street.

H. The impact on adjacent historic resources as formally recognized by the New York State and Federal Registers of Historic Places.

The subject property is not adjacent to any formally recognized historic resources. The nearest historic resource is Taylor Flats, which is over 4,000 feet away at 550 Coffeen Street.

I. In reviewing the adequacy of the Supplemental or General Regulations as they may relate, the Planning Commission may impose more restrictive conditions.

This standard allows the Planning Commission to impose more restrictive conditions after review of this application. Any comments or additional conditions should be stated at the Planning Commission meeting.

Parking and Vehicular Circulation: The applicant is not proposing any additional parking or change to vehicle circulation. All customers and employees will access the site using the existing curb cuts on Arsenal Street and Palmer Street.

Landscaping and Buffers: Since the proposal does not require Site Plan Approval, it would be impractical to require the applicant to bring the site into full compliance with landscaping and buffer requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. The only proposed exterior renovation on the building is adding a new sign.

The site currently contains a 5' +/- wide buffer zone along the east and south property line with it expanding to 15' +/- in some places, a 5' +/- buffer zone across part of the western property line and a large greenspace area to the north of the proposed storefront.

SEQRA: The project is considered an Unlisted Action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The applicant has completed Part 1 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form. The Planning Commission will be required to complete Part 2 prior to making a decision on the requested Special Use Permit.

Other: If the Special Use Permit is granted by the Planning Commission, the applicant must obtain the following permits, at a minimum, from the Bureau of Code Enforcement: a Building Permit for any interior renovations or alterations and a Sign Permit to replace the existing sign.

The applicant must also obtain a license from the Office of Cannabis Management in order to operate the marijuana dispensary.

Summary: The following should be discussed by the Planning Commission and included as a contingency in the motion for approval of the Special Use Permit:

1. The applicant shall obtain a Building Permit and Sign Permit from the Bureau of Code Enforcement prior to any internal alterations.

Public Hearing: As noted above, the Planning Commission is required to hold a public hearing on the Special Use Permit application within 62 days of Planning Staff deeming it complete. Planning Staff has deemed the application complete and has scheduled a public hearing for Tuesday, August 11, 2026, at 5:20 p.m. during the Planning Commission meeting to hear public comments on the proposed Special Use Permit.

Planning Commission Action: Prior to voting on the request, the Planning Commission is responsible for reviewing each of the Special Use Permit criteria found in Section 310-116 of the Zoning Ordinance and highlighted in bold text above. After reviewing the criteria, holding the public hearing and completing the SEQRA review, the Planning Commission will be free to make a decision on the request. The Planning Commission shall not issue a Special Use Permit unless it finds that the proposed use will satisfy the criteria listed above.

cc: Planning Commission Members
Dana Aikins, Code Enforcement Supervisor
Bud Bound Ventures LLC, [REDACTED]



Above: A satellite view of the subject parcels highlighted in blue and their surroundings.

Site Photos:



Above: Picture of the proposed store front from the front, from the southwest looking northeast.



Above: Picture of the proposed storefront from the side, from the south looking north.



Above: Picture of Arsenal Wine & Liquor, from the southeast looking northwest.

July 14, 2026

Michael Lumbis
Planning and Community Development Director
City of Watertown
245 Washington Street, Room 305
Watertown, NY 13601

Re: Special Use Permit Application – Bud Bound Ventures, LLC (designee Legal Cannabis LLC) – 952 Arsenal Street

Dear Mr. Lumbis,

On behalf of Bud Bound Ventures, LLC, I am pleased to submit this Special Use Permit application to the Planning Commission for consideration to establish a licensed adult-use cannabis dispensary at 952 Arsenal Street, Watertown, NY, located on Tax Parcel 8-05-105.100. This letter describes the proposed use and addresses the review criteria set forth in Section 310-116 of the City of Watertown Zoning Ordinance.

Project Overview

Bud Bound Ventures, LLC is proposing to establish a responsible, compliant, and professionally operated retail cannabis dispensary within the City of Watertown. The proposed use is located within the Commercial (C) zoning district, where retail cannabis dispensaries are permitted upon issuance of a Special Use Permit. The proposed location will operate as a secure, safe, and accessible retail destination for residents of Watertown and the surrounding communities.

Proposed Location and Site Description

The proposed site consists of an existing 2,200 +/- square foot commercial tenant space within the building located at 952 Arsenal Street. The space does not require any additional build-out beyond standard interior tenant fit-out, and no new construction is proposed. Because the project involves no new construction or land development activity, site plan approval under Section 310-116(A) is not separately triggered by this application.

- Exterior Renovations: There will be no exterior renovations to the building or site.
- Interior Renovations: Any interior improvements will be limited to standard tenant fit-out and will comply with all applicable building codes and permitting requirements.
- Signage: Updated signage will comply with local zoning requirements and New York State Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) Packaging, Labeling, Marketing and Advertising Regulations.

Hours of Operation

Proposed operating hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Sunday through Saturday, consistent with the City of Watertown's current ordinance governing dispensary hours of operation.

Compliance with § 310-75 (Marijuana Dispensary, Retail)

The proposed use has been evaluated against the specific standards for retail marijuana dispensaries set forth in § 310-75 of the Zoning Ordinance, as follows:

- On-Site Consumption: No on-site consumption of cannabis products will be permitted at the proposed dispensary, and no cannabis consumption lounge is proposed, in accordance with § 310-75(A).
- Hours of Operation: The proposed hours of 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. comply with § 310-75(B), which prohibits operation between 9:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.
- Proximity to Schools: The applicant has confirmed that the proposed location is not within 500 feet, measured along the same road, of any building or grounds occupied exclusively as school grounds as defined in § 409(2) of the New York State Education Law, and the proposed use therefore complies with § 310-75(C)(1).
- Proximity to Houses of Worship: The applicant has confirmed that the proposed location is not within 200 feet, measured along the same road, of any building or grounds occupied exclusively as a house of worship, and the proposed use therefore complies with § 310-75(C)(2).

Security Plan

Security is a foundational element of this proposal, and the applicant is committed to a comprehensive security program that meets or exceeds New York State OCM licensing requirements as well as City expectations for this use. The security plan includes the following components:

- Video Surveillance: The building has existing camera infrastructure, which will be supplemented with additional interior and exterior cameras [REDACTED] in compliance with OCM regulations. Footage will be retained for the period required by OCM.
- Intrusion Alarm System: A monitored alarm system will be installed [REDACTED]
- Secure Product Storage: [REDACTED]
- Access Control: [REDACTED]
- Point-of-Sale and Identification Verification: All transactions will require valid government-issued identification and will be processed through a compliant point-of-sale and inventory tracking system (seed-to-sale) as required by OCM.
- Staff Training: All employees will complete mandatory training on security protocols, identification verification, conflict de-escalation, and emergency procedures prior to beginning work.

- **Cash Handling Procedures:** The business will follow strict cash-handling and end-of-day deposit procedures to minimize on-site cash accumulation and reduce risks.
- **Coordination with Local Law Enforcement:** The applicant will coordinate with the Watertown Police Department to establish a direct point of contact prior to opening.

These measures are designed to protect employees, customers, and the surrounding neighborhood, and to ensure the facility operates safely and in full compliance with state and local requirements.

Consistency with Zoning District and City Plans

The proposed use is consistent with the purposes of the Commercial (C) zoning district, which is intended to accommodate a range of retail and service uses serving City residents and the broader region. The Commercial district in this area already contains a variety of established retail and service businesses, and the proposed dispensary is compatible with this existing commercial character.

The proposal is also consistent with the goals of the City of Watertown Comprehensive Plan, which supports the reuse and continued economic vitality of existing commercial corridors and buildings. Because the project involves adaptive reuse of an existing tenant space with no exterior alteration, it will not affect pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure contemplated under the City's Complete Streets Ordinance, and no changes to existing sidewalks, crosswalks, or bicycle facilities are proposed.

Neighborhood Compatibility and Impact

The proposed dispensary is compatible with the retail and service character of the surrounding commercial corridor. The applicant does not anticipate any adverse impacts related to noise, dust, glare, or release of harmful substances associated with this retail use.

Odor Control: The applicant recognizes that odor control may be a common consideration for cannabis cultivation and processing uses. This is not such a business. It is solely a dispensary and all product is required to be securely packaged. Nevertheless, the premises will be equipped with a dedicated HVAC system consistent with OCM requirements, to ensure no discernible odor is detectable outside the premises.

Waste Disposal: Solid waste and any cannabis waste will be handled and disposed of in accordance with OCM regulations and standard commercial refuse collection practices already serving the building.

Traffic, Parking, and Public Facilities

As a retail reuse of an existing 2,200 +/- square foot commercial space, the proposed dispensary is not expected to generate traffic materially different from other retail or service uses permitted in the Commercial district, and no substantial increase in traffic congestion is anticipated. Existing parking serving the building is adequate to accommodate the customer and employee parking demand associated with this use, and no changes to existing pedestrian access, sidewalks, or street infrastructure are proposed.

The site is served by existing public water, sewer, and refuse collection infrastructure, and the proposed use will not place any unusual demand on police, fire, or other essential public services beyond that of a typical retail tenant.

Historic Resources

The applicant is not aware of any properties adjacent to or in the vicinity of 952 Arsenal Street that are listed on, or eligible for, the National or State Register of Historic Places. The proposed use, which involves no exterior alteration to the building, will have no impact on any adjacent historic resources.

Community and Safety Commitment

Bud Bound Ventures, LLC intends to partner with local non-profit and charitable organizations that improve the Watertown community and its residents. As a business committed to responsible operation, we will promote education and the responsible use of cannabis products through community outreach and cooperation with State and County organizations, and will continue to work closely with the Watertown Police Department and Planning staff to ensure the facility remains a safe and positive addition to the neighborhood.

Conclusion

Bud Bound Ventures, LLC respectfully requests that the Planning Commission review this application and recommend approval of the requested Special Use Permit. We believe the proposed use satisfies the review criteria set forth in Section 310-116 of the Zoning Ordinance, and we look forward to working with the City of Watertown throughout this process. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any additional questions.

Signature

Michael Sboro

Owner

Bud Bound Ventures, LLC



Parcel: 8-05-105.100

Parcel Size: 1.17 Acres (+/- 50,965 sq ft)

952 Arsenal Street

Watertown, NY

Palmer St

132

130

924 R

30'

132'x47' Building

37'

92'

40'

924

VL-6

Arsenal St

Dorsey St

Parcel: 8-05-105.100
Parcel Size: 1.17 Acres (+/- 50,965 sq ft)
952 Arsenal Street
Watertown, NY

1005

969

957



Prepared by
City of Watertown GIS
For
City of Watertown
Assessment Department

For Tax Purposes Only
Not to be Used for Conveyance

Parcel	Date
8-05-121.000	01/25/2017
8-05-110.001	06/01/1999
8-05-120.000	01/25/2017

Property Line

Historic Property Line

Building Outline

Railroad

City Boundary

School District Boundary

Coordinate Grid

Parcel ID

Assessment ID

Indicates

Informally

combined parcels)

1 inch = 50 feet*

0

50

100

200

Feet

Tax Map

City Of Watertown

Jefferson County, NY

Section 08 Block 05

Printed Date: 6/3/2024

Short Environmental Assessment Form

Part 1 - Project Information

Instructions for Completing

Part 1 – Project Information. The applicant or project sponsor is responsible for the completion of Part 1. Responses become part of the application for approval or funding, are subject to public review, and may be subject to further verification. Complete Part 1 based on information currently available. If additional research or investigation would be needed to fully respond to any item, please answer as thoroughly as possible based on current information.

Complete all items in Part 1. You may also provide any additional information which you believe will be needed by or useful to the lead agency; attach additional pages as necessary to supplement any item.

Part 1 – Project and Sponsor Information			
BUD BOUND VENTURES, LLC			
Name of Action or Project: ADULT USE CANNABIS DISPENSARY			
Project Location (describe, and attach a location map): 952 ARSENAL STREET, WATERTOWN, NY 13601			
Brief Description of Proposed Action:			
Name of Applicant or Sponsor: BUD BOUND VENTURES, LLC		Telephone: [REDACTED] E-Mail: [REDACTED]	
Address: [REDACTED]			
City/PO:		State:	Zip Code:
1. Does the proposed action only involve the legislative adoption of a plan, local law, ordinance, administrative rule, or regulation? If Yes, attach a narrative description of the intent of the proposed action and the environmental resources that may be affected in the municipality and proceed to Part 2. If no, continue to question 2.		NO ☒	YES ☐
2. Does the proposed action require a permit, approval or funding from any other government Agency? If Yes, list agency(s) name and permit or approval:		NO ☐	YES ☒
3. a. Total acreage of the site of the proposed action?		1.17 acres	
b. Total acreage to be physically disturbed?		0 acres	
c. Total acreage (project site and any contiguous properties) owned or controlled by the applicant or project sponsor?		0.06 acres	
4. Check all land uses that occur on, are adjoining or near the proposed action:			
5. ☐ Urban ☐ Rural (non-agriculture) ☐ Industrial ☒ Commercial ☒ Residential (suburban) ☐ Forest ☐ Agriculture ☐ Aquatic ☐ Other(Specify): ☐ Parkland			

5. Is the proposed action,	NO	YES	N/A
a. A permitted use under the zoning regulations?	☐	☒	☐
b. Consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan?	☐	☒	☐
6. Is the proposed action consistent with the predominant character of the existing built or natural landscape?	NO	YES	
	☐	☒	
7. Is the site of the proposed action located in, or does it adjoin, a state listed Critical Environmental Area?	NO	YES	
If Yes, identify: _____	☒	☐	
8. a. Will the proposed action result in a substantial increase in traffic above present levels?	NO	YES	
	☒	☐	
b. Are public transportation services available at or near the site of the proposed action?	☐	☒	
c. Are any pedestrian accommodations or bicycle routes available on or near the site of the proposed action?	☐	☒	
9. Does the proposed action meet or exceed the state energy code requirements?	NO	YES	
If the proposed action will exceed requirements, describe design features and technologies: _____ _____	☐	☒	
10. Will the proposed action connect to an existing public/private water supply?	NO	YES	
If No, describe method for providing potable water: _____ _____	☐	☒	
11. Will the proposed action connect to existing wastewater utilities?	NO	YES	
If No, describe method for providing wastewater treatment: _____ _____	☐	☒	
12. a. Does the project site contain, or is it substantially contiguous to, a building, archaeological site, or district which is listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places, or that has been determined by the Commissioner of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to be eligible for listing on the State Register of Historic Places?	NO	YES	
	☒	☐	
b. Is the project site, or any portion of it, located in or adjacent to an area designated as sensitive for archaeological sites on the NY State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) archaeological site inventory?	☐	☒	
13. a. Does any portion of the site of the proposed action, or lands adjoining the proposed action, contain wetlands or other waterbodies regulated by a federal, state or local agency?	NO	YES	
	☒	☐	
b. Would the proposed action physically alter, or encroach into, any existing wetland or waterbody?	☒	☐	
If Yes, identify the wetland or waterbody and extent of alterations in square feet or acres: _____ _____ _____			



Disclaimer: The EAF Mapper is a screening tool intended to assist project sponsors and reviewing agencies in preparing an environmental assessment form (EAF). Not all questions asked in the EAF are answered by the EAF Mapper. Additional information on any EAF question can be obtained by consulting the EAF Workbooks. Although the EAF Mapper provides the most up-to-date digital data available to DEC, you may also need to contact local or other data sources to confirm data provided by the Mapper or to obtain data not provided by the Mapper.



Part 1 / Question 7 [Critical Environmental Area]	No
Part 1 / Question 12a [National or State Register of Historic Places or State Eligible Sites]	No
Part 1 / Question 12b [Archeological Sites]	Yes
Part 1 / Question 13a [Wetlands or Other Regulated Waterbodies]	Digital mapping data are not available or are incomplete. Refer to EAF Workbook.
Part 1 / Question 15 [Threatened or Endangered Animal]	Yes
Part 1 / Question 15 [Threatened or Endangered Animal - Name]	Indiana Bat, Northern Long-eared Bat
Part 1 / Question 16 [100 Year Flood Plain]	Digital mapping data are not available or are incomplete. Refer to EAF Workbook.
Part 1 / Question 20 [Remediation Site]	No