

Dear Planning Commission,

RE: discussion Item 3

I am opposed to any cannabis lounges or dispensaries on Ojai Ave, or any further cannabis business in Ojai for that matter.

When the cannabis stores opened in 2015-16 (approximately), we all saw an increase in traffic from Ventura County residents driving through our town all the way to Bryant Street to buy weed, gummies and cannabis products. Ojai and Port Hueneme were the only locations in the county available to buy cannabis and many people made it a day trip: come to Ojai, buy weed and gummies, grab a brew at the brewery and head back out of the valley. These people were not shopping here and not supporting local business other than cannabis and alcohol. That's still true today. Ask any arcade shop owner.

Since 2014, Ojai has seen an explosion of locations to buy alcohol in town. Between the library and Bryant Street there are 20 locations to get a drink. 4 blocks. 20 places to drink. What other town has 20 similar businesses in a 4 block span? Where would you see 20 shoe repair shops, 20 dry cleaners, 20 pet stores or 20 hardware stores within 4 blocks? Ojai is heading out of balance as a community. Adding cannabis lounges and dispensaries would push Ojai over the edge, and is exactly what this town does not need.

Ojai needs to find a better balance as a community rather than the weekend party town that it has become.

The discussion item states that 'schools, child care and youth centers' are not included in the 600ft buffer zone. So what? That's being presented as a good thing? How hard is it to walk 600 ft to the weed store or the hookah lounge? That might possibly be the most absurd reasoning in the discussion. And how many more patrol cars will we need to monitor the DUI's?

Those in support of cannabis lounges in Ojai are either looking solely to make money (I'm guessing they will expand their current businesses from Bryant St., right?), and/or they do not have the town's future in mind.

If cannabis lounges, hookah parlors and weed stores are allowed to proliferate like the bars have done, then we'll have to change our town's name from OJAI to O-HIGH.

This is a BAD DECISION for Ojai. Ojai is not a down-in-the dumps town on the verge of collapse that's looking for a way to survive. Ojai is, and has always been, a vibrant family community with excellent education, art, culture and natural beauty to attract quality visitors. Let's keep heading in that direction and strive for balance.

Yours truly,
Cindy Convery