

Planning Division
15151 E. Alameda Parkway, Ste. 2300
Aurora, Colorado 80012
303.739.7250



See Redline comments from the applicant, Ms. Gebremariam. Received by City of Aurora Staff 4/11/2018.

March 9, 2018

Hanna Gebremariam
Dream Hookah
350 N. Havana Street
Aurora, CO 80010

Re: Initial Submission Review – Dream Hookah – Conditional Uses
Application Number: **DA-2119-00**
Case Number: **2018-6005-00; 2018-6005-01**

Dear Ms. Gebremariam:

Thank you for your initial submission, which we started to process on February 15, 2018. We reviewed it and attached our comments along with this cover letter.

A conditional use application is reviewed based on criteria that assesses the proposed use and how it fits with the surrounding uses. Conditions may be attached to an approval of the request or to improve the site. Since several important issues still remain, you will need to make another submission. Please revise your previous work and send us a new submission on or before March 16, 2018.

When you resubmit, include a cover letter specifically responding to each item. The Planning Department reserves the right to reject any resubmissions that fail to address these items. If you have made any other changes to your documents other than those requested, be sure to also specifically list them in your letter.

Your estimated Planning Commission hearing date is still set for March 28, 2018. Please remember that all abutter notices for public hearings must be sent and the site notices must be posted at least 10 days prior to the hearing date. These notifications are your responsibility and the lack of proper notification will cause the public hearing date to be postponed. It is important that you obtain an updated list of adjacent property owners from the county before the notices are sent out. Take all necessary steps to ensure an accurate list is obtained.

If you have any comments or concerns, please give me a call. I may be reached at 303-739-7220.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Woodward, Planner II
City of Aurora Planning Department

cc: Haileyesus Zeryihun
Susan Barkman, Neighborhood Liaison
Gary Sandel, ODA
Filed: K:\\$DA\2119-00rev1.rtf



Initial Submission Review

SUMMARY OF KEY COMMENTS FROM ALL DEPARTMENTS

- Request does not meet criteria of Conditional Use (Planning)
- Window signs exceed 50% of window coverage (Planning)
- Replace missing landscaping (see Item 3)

PLANNING DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

1. Community Questions, Comments and Concerns

1A. Staff has not received comments from adjacent neighbors.

2. Zoning and Land Use Comments

2A. The applicant is requesting two conditional uses for two after-hours establishments to be opened past 12AM. The property is located at 350 Havana Street in the B-1 retail business district. Restaurants, retail or service must close by 12AM per [City Code Section 146-601](#), otherwise, a conditional use must be requested. Here are the following requests:

1) Dream Hookah proposed hours of operation:

Monday – Wednesday 1:00pm – 2:00am

Thursday – Sunday 1:00pm – 4:00am

2) Cozy Café proposed hours of operation:

Monday - Sunday 1:00pm – 2:00am

After reviewing the Conditional Use Criteria ([Code Section 146-402](#)), staff is unsupportive of the request for Dream Hookah to remain open until 4AM. Instead a closing time of 2AM two nights per week for Dream Hookah and Cozy Café is recommended. Staff finds that a 4AM close time is not compatible with the existing uses on abutting properties, and the request may change the character of the neighborhood. None of the surrounding businesses are opened past midnight.

Dream Hookah and Cozy Café are located in a commercial center which also contains a meat market, a small office, and a dry cleaner. The property is adjacent to a residential neighborhood to the north and Fan Fare, a residential and mixed use Urban Renewal Area to the west. Staff finds the request is not in keeping with the residential nature of the area.

A primary reason by the applicant for the requested 4AM closing time was to maintain the same closing time as Meskerem Restaurant and Hookah, a competitor at 1121 S Peoria Street. Meskerem has experienced a series of code violations and now closes at 2AM. Please note: in the City Code update these uses are being further examined.

The recommendation of staff will be the following hours and days of operation:

1) Dream Hookah:

Monday – Thursday 1:00pm – 12:00am

Friday – Sunday 1:00pm – 2:00am

2) Cozy Café

Monday – Thursday 1:00pm – 12:00am

Friday - Sunday 1:00pm – 2:00am

**Applicant Response:**

Most of our customers happen to be the minority who work so hard in serving the general community tireless day and night. Most of them work in the transportation business line thus work so late until 12am or even latter, at which time we generally close our business.

Currently dream hookah has been opened for the last three months now. Since it has opened its doors to the public we have experienced nothing but a peaceful business model. Occasionally we have asked the city for a conditional use permit where we were granted till 4am. During those times, there were police officers that have come and visited the area but found no issues. Unlike Meskerem hookah lounges we don't have D.J. or any type of loud music that attract young crowds which are said to be the problem starters. Meskerem hookah extends invitation to celebrities from outside the states in order to attract customers, however we have no plan or intention to do so. We have never done so.

We have gone door to door inviting the neighbors on our opening date with neighborhood special where we introduced a vegetarian Saturday buffets. We believe everything we do will always include our neighborhoods.

Therefore, we would like to modify our request with the following closing times:

- 1) Dream Hookah proposed hours of operation:
Monday – Wednesday normal operation (closing at midnight)
Thursday – Sunday 1:00pm – 4:00am*
- 2) Cozy Café proposed hours of operation:
Monday – Wednesday normal operation (closing at midnight)
Thursday - Sunday 1:00pm – 2:00am*

3. Design Issues**3A. Window Signs**

The storefront window signs cover 100% of the windows at Dream Hookah and Cozy Café and exceeds what is permitted by City Code Section 146-1610. The window signs may not exceed 50% of the window pane, and total window signage may not exceed 200 square feet. Please reduce the area of the window signs to meet the city's sign code.

Furthermore, 100% window coverage raises security concerns as well as a lack of transparency for a retail establishment. Retail best practices suggest maintaining an open elevation to attract more customers and provide a welcoming atmosphere.

Applicant Response:

Based on the comments presented to us by the planning commission, and discussing with Jonathan Woodward, we have understood the design issues and are willing to modified the signs accordingly.



3B. Landscape

The Havana Shoppette identified a small landscape area in front of the Hookah Lounge and Cozy Café which has since been removed. Please include a proposal that replaces this with suitable landscaping. A time frame for installation of the landscaping can be established with staff.

Applicant Response:

We have agreed to create a living plants in the small landscape in front of the hookah Lounge and cozy café accordingly.

REFERRAL COMMENTS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

4. Fire / Life Safety (John Van Essen / 303-739-7489 / JVanesse@auroragov.org)

No comments.

5. Tri-County Health Department (Sheila Lynch / 303-220-9200)

No comments.