



# TOWN OF BEL AIR MARYLAND

39 N. Hickory Avenue · Bel Air, MD 21014

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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*TOWN ADMINISTRATOR*  
*Edward Hopkins*

To the Bel Air community:

Recently, there has been discussion of Ordinance 851-25 on social media. We are providing the following information to clarify the purpose of the ordinance.

All proposed amendments to the Town Code are in response to the changes made by the Maryland General Assembly related to cannabis regulation.

State law requires cannabis dispensaries to be at least 500 feet from specific public places such as, schools, childcare centers, libraries, and public parks. By comparison, the Town currently does not permit taverns (alcohol retailers) within 300 feet of a school.

In addition, the Town code currently restricts a cannabis business from being located 500 feet from residential uses, while recently updated State law reduces that distance to 100 feet.

Importantly, Maryland law does not allow the Town to impose zoning requirements on cannabis dispensaries that are “more restrictive than zoning requirements for a retail dealer” of alcoholic beverages. Ordinance 851-25 is intended to align the Town Code with controlling Maryland law while continuing to protect children, public spaces, and neighborhoods.

The ordinance is not directed at alcohol retailers. The Town supports its restaurant community, both existing and planned, and is working with the appropriate agencies to meet the State mandates without impacting existing establishments where alcohol is sold or unduly burdening new ones.

The Town will continue working on this ordinance and welcomes community input, either by sending an email to the Commissioners at [commissioners@belairmd.org](mailto:commissioners@belairmd.org) or at the public hearing scheduled for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, January 20 at Town Hall.

Sincerely,

Paula S. Etting

Steven T. Chizmar

Kristien S. Foss

Gavin O. Hanley

Jakob D. Taylor