

MINUTES

April 3, 2012

Chairman Rossi called the Planning Commission Meeting to order in the Cranston High School East Auditorium at 7 p.m. The following Commission members were in attendance:

Charles Rossi, Chairman
Michael Smith
Mark Motte
Robert Strom
Gene Nadeau
James Moran

Also present were:

Peter Lapolla, Planning Director
Stephen Marsella, Esq., Assistant City Solicitor
Lynn Furney, Senior Planner
Jason Pezzullo, Principal Planner
J. Resnick, Clerk

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion made by Mr. Motte and seconded by Mr. Moran, the Planning Commission unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the March 6, 2012, Planning Commission Meeting.

ZONING BOARD OF REVIEW ITEMS

RAMON AND GILDA ALMONTE 10-12 PAINE AVENUE CRANSTON RI 02910 (OWN/APP) have filed an application for permission to build a basement egress for a recreation room on an existing two-family home with restricted side yard setback at **10-12 Paine Avenue**. AP 6/1, Lot 2343, area 8755 SF, zoned B-1. Applicant seeks relief from Sections; 17.92.010 Variance, 17.20.120 Schedule of Intensity.

This application was reviewed for conformance with criteria (3) of R.I.G.L. 45-24-41 (c) "*Standards for Variance*" which reads as follows: "*That the granting of the requested variance will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the zoning ordinance or the comprehensive plan upon which the ordinance is based.*"

Findings of Fact:

1. The existing residential use of the property is consistent with the 2010 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map that designates this area as Single/Two Family Residential, less than 10.89 units per acre.
2. The proposed basement egress will be located on the left side of the house, 3-1/2 inches off of the side lot line.
3. The existing left yard setback is 5.5', where 8 feet is required by per the Zoning code.
4. The right side yard setback is 17', and includes a 10' wide driveway.
5. The rear yard setback is 108 feet.

6. The floor plan submitted shows the basement entertainment room joins a common area with stair access at the rear of the house.
7. The City's GIS shows that none of the 50 houses within the 400' radius in Cranston have side yard setbacks of less than 3 feet. The radius includes 34 houses that are located in Providence.
8. Photos taken by the Planning Department show that excavation for the stairs and foundation removal for the door has already been done.
9. Photos also show that there is a door on the same side of the house that does not show on the floor plan submitted.

Recommendation: The Plan Commission recognizes that the residential use of the property is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map, however, based on the findings of fact, upon motion made by Mr. Motte and seconded by Mr. Smith, the Commission unanimously voted to forward a *negative* recommendation on this application to the Zoning Board as the proposed residential addition that decreases the side yard setback to 3-1/2 inches will alter the general character of the surrounding area and hinder the intent and purpose of the Zoning Code and the Comprehensive Plan upon which the Code is based. There are no dwellings within the 400' radius in Cranston have side yard setbacks that are less than 3 feet.

Ayes: Chairman Rossi, Mr. Motte, Mr. Smith, Mr. Strom, Mr. Nadeau and Mr. Moran.

Nay: none

LICHT INDUSTRIAL REALTY CO 765 WESTMINSTER STREET PROVIDENCE RI 02903 (OWN) AND BC AUTO SALES 1473 ELMWOOD AVENUE CRANSTON RI 02910 (APP) have filed an application for permission to operate a used auto sales business from a portion of a building at **1473 Elmwood Avenue**. AP 4, lot 2645, area 111,061 SF, zoned M-2. Applicant seeks relief from Sections; 17.92.010 Variance, 17.20.120 Schedule of Intensity, 17.71.010 Signs, 17.20.030 Schedule of Uses.

This application was reviewed for conformance with criteria (3) of R.I.G.L. 45-24-41 (c) "*Standards for Variance*" which reads as follows: "*That the granting of the requested variance will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the zoning ordinance or the comprehensive plan upon which the ordinance is based.*"

Findings of Fact:

1. The 2010 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map designates the Elmwood Avenue Corridor as an area for a Future Village Center. The Comp Plan text notes that until the area is rezoned, the current underlying Zoning controls. Therefore, the proposed used auto sales (commercial use) is not consistent with the current Industrial Zone, or the Comprehensive Plan.
2. The lot contains large connected buildings (51,865 sq. ft.) that currently contain three separate businesses – Bichon Automotive, Bichon Truck Parts, and JCD Design and Display.
3. The proposed used auto sales business will convert 2,800 sq.ft. of the building into 6 sales offices, conference room, and 2 storage areas. Approximately 8,300 sq. ft of the existing parking lot will be dedicated to the display of 26 cars for sale.
4. The site plan states 4 additional customer parking spaces and 2 handicap spaces will be utilized for the auto sales dealership, leaving 27 spaces for the remaining businesses.
5. The change of use of 11,100 sq. ft. of the property will require site plan review submittal and preliminary approval prior to any Zoning Board decision.

Recommendation: Upon motion made by Mr. Strom and seconded by Mr. Nadeau, the Plan Commission unanimously voted to *continue* the application until the applicant has received Preliminary Site Plan Review approval.

Ayes: Chairman Rossi, Mr. Motte, Mr. Smith, Mr. Strom, Mr. Nadeau and Mr. Moran.

Nay: none

DAVID M AND ELAYN BOUCHER 179 JULIA STREET CRANSTON RI 02910 (OWN/APP) have filed an application for permission to build a 12' X 16' storage building with restricted front yard setback at **179 Julia Street**. AP 6/2, Lot 549, area 5381+/- SF, zoned B-1. Applicant seeks relief from Sections; 17.92.010 Variance, 17.20.120 Schedule of Intensity, 17.20.110 B Residential Yard Exceptions.

This application was reviewed for conformance with criteria (3) of R.I.G.L. 45-24-41 (c) "*Standards for Variance*" which reads as follows: "*That the granting of the requested variance will not alter the general*

character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the zoning ordinance or the comprehensive plan upon which the ordinance is based.”

Findings of Fact:

1. The existing residential density of 16 units per acre, for the existing 2-family dwelling is not consistent with the 2010 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map that designates this area as Single/Two Family Residential, less than 10.89 units per acre. However, the existing density is preexisting, and will not change.
2. The existing house has a 16.5' front yard setback from the Julia Street property line.
3. The proposed 12' x 16' by 14' high storage building will have a 1' setback from the front property line on Julia Street (a 25' street setback is required per Zoning Ordinance).
4. There is an existing smaller, 7 ft. high shed located within the Julia Street front yard setback area, where the proposed larger and higher storage building is to be located. (The existing shed is in violation of Sec. 17.20.110 B. of the Zoning Code which states “Extension into Front Yard. The space in a required front yard shall be open and unobstructed by structures other than signs except that an unenclosed porch may extend no more than ten(10) feet into the front yard.”)
5. The property received a zoning variance in May, 2002, for the operation of a mortgage broker business from the walk out basement of the building.
6. The existing shed abuts the 19' wide driveway. This is a current violation of Sec.17.20.100 B. of the Cranston Zoning Code which states: “In the areas within ten (10) feet from the sides of a driveway and from the street line to a line ten (10) feet from the sides of a driveway and from the street line to a line ten (10) feet back from the street line, between a height of three and one-half and ten (10) feet above the centerline grade of the driveway, nothing shall be erected, placed, planted or allowed to grow in such a manner so as to materially impede vision from the front ten (10) feet of the driveway to the sidewalk extending ten (10) feet on either side of the driveway. The proposed storage building will violate this section as well.
7. The proposed new storage building (and existing shed) causes a sight line hazard from the driveway, especially considering that vehicles and bus traffic for the high school use this street.
8. The 37' x 35' landscaped rear yard area could accommodate a 12 x 16' storage building without a variance.
9. No other residential properties within the 400' radius has an accessory structure located within the front yard setback area.

Recommendation: The Plan Commission recognizes that the residential use of the property is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map; however, based on the findings of fact, upon motion made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Motte, the Commission unanimously voted to forward a *negative* recommendation to the Zoning Board on this application, as a structure of this size, height and location, will alter the general character of the surrounding neighborhood, and hinder the intent and purpose of the Zoning Code and the Comprehensive Plan, upon which the Code is based.. The Commission notes that the applicant is creating his own hardship, as without a variance, the area of the rear yard could easily accommodate a building of this size that would be in harmony with the locations of all of the other accessory buildings located on lots within the surrounding neighborhood.

Ayes: Chairman Rossi, Mr. Motte, Mr. Smith, Mr. Strom, Mr. Nadeau and Mr. Moran.

Nay: none

DAVID C AND LIANNE DIMAIO 50 PRESTON DRIVE CRANSTON RI 02920 (OWN/APP) have filed an application for permission to build 15' X 34' garage addition with restricted corner side yard setback at **50 Preston Avenue**. AP 12/5, Lot 285, area 9000+/- SF, zoned A-6. Applicant seeks relief from Sections; 17.92.010 Variance, 17.20.120 Schedule of Intensity, 17.64.010 F, (3) Street Access curb openings.

This application was reviewed for conformance with criteria (3) of R.I.G.L. 45-24-41 (c) “*Standards for Variance*” which reads as follows: “*That the granting of the requested variance will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the zoning ordinance or the comprehensive plan upon which the ordinance is based.*”

Findings of Fact:

1. The existing residential use of the property is consistent with the 2010 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map that designates this area as Single Family Residential, 7.26 to 3.64 units per acre.
2. The proposed garage addition will have a restricted corner street yard setback, of 5'-6" from Elmhurst Avenue, (25' required per zoning code) which, easterly from its intersection with Preston Avenue, is a dead end, servicing 8 houses. The City's GIS shows that two of those 8 houses have restricted front yard setbacks of between 8 and 10 ft.
3. The proposed garage will have a 20' front yard setback from the Preston Avenue property line. The average street setback 200' north and south of the applicant's property on Preston Avenue is 14.60 ft. Therefore the proposed 20' setback is not out of character with the neighboring properties. (zoning code 17.20.110-C)
4. The location of the proposed driveway curb opening for the new garage on Preston Avenue is 6 ft. from the corner, where a minimum distance of 25 feet from the radius curb is required per the Zoning Ordinance. The City's GIS shows that of the 20 corner lots within the 400' radius, there are two lots that have driveway openings that are between 10' and 12' from the corner's radius curb. Those two lots are on the dead end corners of Grape Court. The proposed 6' driveway distance from the corner is therefore out of character with the surrounding area.
5. Fifteen feet of curbing on Preston Avenue will be removed to accommodate the proposed new garage's driveway.
6. The lot currently has a 40' driveway opening on Elmhurst Avenue, which exceeds the permitted maximum driveway opening of 20', permitted in the Zoning Code.

Recommendation: The Plan Commission recognizes that the residential use of the property is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map; however, based on the findings of fact,, upon motion made by Mr. Motte and seconded by Mr. Smith, the Commission unanimously voted to forward a *negative* recommendation to the Zoning Board on this application, as the proposed 6' driveway opening from the intersection of Preston and Elmhurst Avenues, and the 5-6" setback from Elmhurst Avenue is out of character with the setbacks in the surrounding area, and will impair the intent and purpose of the Zoning Code and the Comprehensive Plan upon which the Code is based.

Ayes: Chairman Rossi, Mr. Motte, Mr. Smith, Mr. Strom, Mr. Nadeau and Mr. Moran. Nay: none.

EXTENSION OF TIME

Atwood Village Condominiums
Extension of the Final Plan Decision

On 3/26/12 the Planning Department received correspondence from attorney John DiBona requesting an extension of the Final Plan Decision for the major land development entitled Atwood Village Condominiums.

The developer has been working on infrastructure related matters, legal challenges to the approval, as well as dealing with the slumping housing market and is not yet ready to record the Final Record Plans. In addition, Mr. Carlino, the developer, is also contemplating the potential phasing of the project and is working with the requisite approval agencies to work out the logistics of this proposal.

Attorney DiBona added that due to the economic down-turn the State has allowed the tolling of land use decisions/approvals.

In response to this request, and upon motion made by Mr. Moran and seconded by Mr. Smith, the Commission unanimously voted to *approve* the request and extend the recording of the Final Plan for this subdivision to June 16, 2013.

Ayes: Chairman Rossi, Mr. Moran, Mr. Nadeau, Mr. Strom, Mr. Smith and Mr. Motte. Nays: none

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

Roger Plat – Phase II
Major Subdivision – Preliminary Plan
Arthur Street
AP 5/1, Lot 1831

Mr. Pezzullo explained that Phase I of this project was a subdivision for the existing home. Lots 1 and 2 are the subject of Phase II. He mentioned that the Zoning Board of Review has approved the configuration of the proposed homes and has stipulated that the homes can be single family only.

Richard Bourbonnaise, Millstone Company, stated that the applicant has already installed new sidewalks along Hodsell and Arthur Streets as Part of Phase I.

Neighboring homeowner, Chris Heinz, 14 Hodsell Street, asked whether soil testing was done, as this was a condition of approval for Phase I. Mr. Bourbonnaise stated that three test holes in the garage indicated the presence of petroleum in the soil. He noted that the site was used for septic service and truck maintenance, however, the site has been cleaned.

Mr. Heinz also requested that some type of debris control be initiated at the time of the razing of the garage. Mr. Pezzullo stated that the Building Inspections Department would be able to address his concerns regarding that matter.

There being no further comment, the Planning Commission moved to a vote. Upon motion made by Mr. Moran and seconded by Mr. Strom, the Commission unanimously voted to adopt the Findings of Fact denoted below and *approve* this Preliminary Plan subject to the below conditions.

Findings of Fact

Staff has reviewed this Preliminary Plan application for conformance with the required standards set forth in RIGL Section 45-23-60, as well as the City of Cranston's Subdivision and Land Development Regulations and finds as follows:

1. An orderly, thorough and expeditious technical review of this Preliminary Plan – Phase II has been conducted. Property owners within a 100' radius have been notified via certified return receipt mailing on 3/21/12 and the meeting agenda has been properly posted. Advertisement for this major subdivision was published in the 3/22/12 edition of the Cranston Herald.
2. The proposed subdivision, and its resulting density of approximately 9.7 residential units per acre, is consistent with the City of Cranston Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map which designates the subject parcel as "Residential" allowing less than 10.89 residential units per acre".
3. The proposed subdivision is inconsistent with the Cranston Zoning Code for frontage and irregular common lot line configuration. However, the use of the property for two new structures in this modified configuration will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent and purpose of the Cranston Zoning Code. Applicant has also received zoning relief for the frontage on 3/11/09.
4. There will be no significant negative environmental impacts from the proposed subdivision as shown on the Preliminary Plan.
5. The proposed subdivision promotes high quality appropriate design and construction, will be well integrated with the surrounding neighborhoods and will reflect its existing characteristics.
6. The proposed subdivision will not result in the creation of individual lots with such physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable.
7. The property in question has adequate permanent physical access on Arthur Street and Hodsell Street, improved public roadways located within the City of Cranston.
8. The proposed subdivision provides for safe and adequate local circulation of pedestrian and vehicular through traffic and adequate surface water run-off.
9. Significant cultural, historic or natural features that contribute to the attractiveness of the community have not been identified on site.
10. The design and location of streets, building lots, utilities, drainage and other improvements conform to local regulations for mitigation of flooding and soil erosion.

Conditions of Approval

1. Provide a municipal lien certificate for AP 5-1, Lot 1831 at the time of Final Plan submission.

2. Provide final written approval from the PWSB for the proposed water service connections at the time of Final Plan submission.
3. Provide final written approval from Veolia Water for the proposed sewer service connection at the time of Final Plan submission.
4. Provide reciprocal access easement documentation for the shared driveway configuration at the time of Final Plan Submission.
5. Payment of Eastern Cranston Capital Facilities Impact Fees of \$1,186.92 (\$593.46 x 2) at the time of Final plat recording.
6. Final Record Plan submittal shall depict the existing garages "To be removed prior to residential development"

Ayes: Chairman Rossi, Mr. Moran, Mr. Nadeau, Mr. Strom, Mr. Smith and Mr. Motte. Nays: none

The Lodges at Phenix Glen

Mixed-Use Planned District / Major Land Development
 Preliminary Overall District Plan / Master Plan
 950 Phenix Avenue
 AP 19/1, Lot 3

Chairman Rossi began by informing the public of the procedure required for this project to attain approval. He stated that the applicant has had two Pre-Application meetings with the Planning Department. He reminded everyone that this is the first level of review, namely, the Public Informational Meeting.

Mr. Lapolla reiterated, stating that the Master Plan level of review is basically a concept plan review that deals with the projects consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The project will require a change of zone as an MPD is proposed. The applicant's traffic study submittal has been referred to Fuss & O'Neill by the City for an independent peer review. He further stated that the Planning Commission cannot deal with the economics of the project, the need for this type of housing as well as who may or may not live in this development. He also noted that the City's zoning regulations do not regulate design guidelines.

Attorney John DiBona announced that the proposal is for a Mixed Plan District (MPD), noting that other MPD developments in the City are Chapel View and The Brewery Parkade. He stated that the property is located next to two ice rinks, the City animal shelter, Public Works garage and Salt Barn and the PJ Keating property. He further stated that an upscale 192 unit apartment complex is proposed, along with a 7,200 square foot commercial/office/retail building.

Mr. DiBona stated that the project does not need a Comprehensive Plan Amendment as the 2010 Comprehensive Plan deemed this area as a "special development area". He further noted that in approving the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, the City Council has deemed that single family zoning is inappropriate for this property. He stated that a change of zone (an MPD) is required; informing the public that MPD zoning essentially becomes its own zone. No zoning variances are required. The project will also need approval from the Site Plan Review Committee. In closing, he submitted 61 letters of support for the project to be entered into the file.

Mr. Michael Voccola, Senior Vice President, The Proccacianti Group, stated that he has lived in Cranston his entire life. He stated that The Proccacianti Group has real estate holdings in various states and is headquartered on Reservoir Avenue in Cranston. He stated a top quality, upscale rental community is proposed. The Lodges will have a secured entrance, resort style swimming pool and club house; all top of the line amenities. He stressed that all public improvements associated with the project will be at the sole expense of The Proccacianti Group. He stated that the project will generate over \$500,000 in tax dollars. Mr. Voccola provided a brief power point presentation with photos of the apartment interiors as well as renderings of the proposed buildings. He stated that 407 parking spaces are proposed throughout the site.

Upon motion made by Mr. Motte and seconded by Mr. Smith, the Commission unanimously voted to accept the resume and expertise of the next speaker on behalf of the project, Mr. Joseph Lombardo, AICP. Mr. Lombardo referenced his Planning Study and Fiscal Impact Study as it related to the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, noting that the Future Land Use Map designated this as an area of special interest. He stated that the project is "a perfect transitional use to the single family development that exists", further stating that the project would provide a balance of housing choices.

Upon motion made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Nadeau, the Commission unanimously voted to accept the resume and expertise of the next speaker on behalf of the project, Mr. Duncan Pendleberry, AIA, NCARD, CCS of Solus IV LLC. Mr. Pendleberry stated that the clubhouse would be visible as one entered the property. The clubhouse design includes "lots of windows with a farmer's porch and dormered roof, pool in the rear and plenty of landscaping and stone walls". He noted The Proccacianti Group's reputation for providing abundant, appealing landscaping on all of their properties. He went on to state that the four story buildings, some of which would have garages where tenants would have direct access to their units, elevations have been broken up with "bays". The roof is "cut back to reduce the volume of the roof". The front of the project has low eave roof lines with dormers; setting the character of the residential use.

Upon motion made by Mr. Motte and seconded by Mr. Strom, the Commission unanimously voted to accept the resume and expertise of the next speaker on behalf of the project, Mr. David Taglianetti, P.E., Civil Engineer, VHB. Mr. Taglianetti stated that the project comprises 14.9 acres, of which six acres are wetlands with intermittent stream that discharges in to Furnace Brook and ultimately to the Pawtuxet River. He stated that the proposed primary access to the site is from the existing signalized intersection of Natick and Phenix Avenues. An emergency access is proposed to and from the adjacent City owned property. He stated that each of the utility companies (National Grid, etc.) have indicated sufficient capacity for such a development. He further stated that full engineering has not been fully set at this point as it is not required for a Master Plan level submittal.

Regarding stormwater management, Mr. Taglianetti stated that the project would have a zero net increase, and all stormwater will be treated prior to discharge into existing wetlands. Two permits have been obtained from RIDEM; wetlands and NPDES.

Upon motion made by Mr. Strom and seconded by Mr. Nadeau, the Commission unanimously voted to accept the resume and expertise of the next speaker on behalf of the project, Mr. Peter Alviti, P.E., Civil Engineer, Hudson Place Associates. Mr. Alviti stated that he did analysis to determine adequacy of the existing system. He stated that the site is separated from the nearest pumping station, the Sherman Avenue Pumping Station, by Route 295. He studied two scenarios for pumping influent to the Sherman Avenue pumping station: 1) a sewer force main from Natick Avenue to Wilbur Avenue to Wheelock Street to Turner Avenue to Cranston Street, and 2) the preferred route - pumping influent to the Sherman Avenue Pump Station across Route 295. Veolia Water/Stantec has determined that only 10% of the capacity available would be used via the preferred route. He further stated that "the City Wastewater Treatment Plant has determined that it has the capacity to handle 140 more developments of this type".

Mr. Alviti stated that option #1 would not require RIDOT approval, however, it would effect the existing Providence Water aquaduct. Providence Water had no objection with the option #1 proposal however. He stated that the options available were reviewed with the City's acting public works director, David Ventetuolo, who noted that the City sewer system has sufficient capacity. Mr. Alviti noted that the sewer lines would be constructed at the cost of the developer.

Upon motion made by Mr. Moran and seconded by Mr. Motte, the Commission unanimously voted to accept the resume and expertise of the next speaker on behalf of the project, Mr. Robert Clinton, P.E., VHB. Mr. Clinton was qualified as a transportation engineer. Attorney John DiBona asked that Mr. Clinton's Traffic Impact Study be made part of the record. The traffic improvement plan studies three areas, namely the Phenix/Natick Avenues intersection, the Wilbur Avenue intersection and the Route 37/Natick Avenue intersection and should be referenced for further detail. Mr. Clinton stated that the Phenix/Natick Avenues intersection southbound approach is presently one lane. The eastbound lane cuing is inadequate. The northbound lane is insufficient. He stated the proposal is to provide a right turn lane to Phenix Avenue by means of re-striping the roadway. The eastbound approach down the Phenix Avenue hill will be widened. He stated that the delays at the intersections will be less once the proposed improvements are complete. He noted that all improvements will be at the cost of the developer. He further noted that the City's independent peer review by Fuss & O'Neill concurred with the improvements proposed. He closed by stating that signal time will be optimized to minimize the delays even further once the development is complete.

Upon motion made by Mr. Motte and seconded by Mr. Strom, the Commission unanimously voted to accept the resume and expertise of the next speaker on behalf of the project, Mr. Derek Hugg, Traffic Engineer, Fuss & O'Neill. Mr. Hugg stated that he has reviewed the traffic study submitted by VHB as well as the site plan, including the drive-thru by pass lane, primary access, aisle width, parking at the eastern end, continuity

of pedestrian traffic, the circular center and emergency access route. He stated that, overall, he is in agreement with the improvements proposed by VHB.

Mr. David Izzi, 12 Midland Drive, spoke against the project. He expressed concern with The Proccacianti Groups target market, stating that he does not believe there will be enough people in the income bracket that can afford such housing.

Chairman Rossi responded, stating that the economics of the project do not come under the purview of the Planning Commission.

Mr. David Nadeau, corner of 100 Natick Avenue and Herod Street, spoke against the project, stating that "it is over development" and that "the developer is greedy and arrogant". He expressed concern with traffic congestion in the area and asked the Planning Commission to "pare down" the proposal.

Mr. Robert Pelletier, 120 Hope Road, spoke against the project, stating that he feels "the proposal grossly exceeds the village center", which is called for in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan. He expressed concern with the buildings height, lighting and parking. He asked that two-story buildings with perhaps 120 units be considered (Option #1) or two-story townhouses (Option #2) be considered. He asked that the Planning Commission "scale down" the project.

Mr. Aram Garabedian, 173 Belvedere Drive, spoke in favor of the project. He mentioned his own concern when the apartments along Meshanticut Valley Parkway and Hoffman Avenue were proposed, however, he stated that they have had no negative impact in the area. He suggested that "people opposed to the project back up their opposition with facts".

Mr. Matthew Copper, 11 Merit Drive, also spoke in favor of the project. He stated that he was "impressed with the presentation by The Proccacianti Group", mentioning their attention to landscaping of their headquarters on Reservoir Avenue and several other successful projects by The Proccacianti Group. He stated "there is nothing to dislike about the plan" and that "a lot of misguided conceptions are out of fear". He urged the Commission to make a positive recommendation on the application.

Ms. Katie King, 1389 Hope Road, asked that the proposal be tabled. She stated that "no natural buffer zone" is proposed and she expressed concern with the commercial buildings' location "on the street". She expressed concern with the flooding of Furnace Brook, as well as concern that the commercial building could possibly house a KFC (Kentucky Fried Chicken), McDonald's, etc.

Mr. Lapolla responded, stating that the Planning Commission can only "deal with the facts before us". An MPD is proposed, and the uses that are allowed will be crafted by the City Council.

Mr. Richard Tomlins, 400 Farmington Avenue, stated that "an objective view is needed by the residents of the city". He expressed concern with the negative comments made regarding the developer.

Mr. Vincent Cullen, Naomia Street, stated that he has been a "78 year resident of Cranston, 45 years on Naomia Street". He made innuendo that plans sometimes look better on paper than when actually executed. He expressed concern with traffic and asked the Planning Commission to request less density.

Mr. Craig Bilodeau, 3 Ridgevale Court, stated that the traffic engineers suggestions would not mitigate the existing traffic problems but would merely alleviate the traffic congestion.

Mr. Vincent Scalera, 106 Vincent Way, expressed concern with taxes and additional traffic. However, he noted that the apartments would be set back from Phenix Avenue and praised the esthetic value this project would add. He asked if the roads would be re-stripped or widened. The response to that can be found later in these minutes.

Mr. Nick Mattiello, District 15 State Representative, thanked the presenters, noting that the project "is not bad in concept". He stated that his constituents feel the project is "too big". He mentioned concern with quality of life, taking into consideration one of his constituents comments that she moved from Providence to get away from high-rises. He stated that the proposal is not a village center and feels that it does not comply with the 2010 Comprehensive Plan. He stated that the additional traffic and "high intensity" will impact the rural character of the area.

Ms. Karen Thompson, 93 Hope Hill Terrace, expressed concern with traffic, quality of life and the loss of the rural character of the area.

Mr. Steven Carrera, 5 Priscilla Drive, expressed concern that this is spot zoning, traffic and the project is out of character with the area. He noted that property values near other MPDs in the City are not as high as in the Phenix Avenue area, expressing concern that this project would result in reduced property values in the area. He expressed concern with the height and setback requirements on collector/arterial streets.

Mr. Douglas Doe expressed concern with compliance with the 2010 Comprehensive Plan as well as compliance with smart growth principles. He asked that a decision on this matter be continued to next months meeting.

Ms. Sherry Izzi, 12 Midland Drive, expressed concern with light pollution and that the area is not considered to be a rural area. She named several endangered bird species that she has observed on the property.

Ms. Drake Patten, 1097 Phenix Avenue, stated that the area is a Native American archeological site. She is against the 2010 Comprehensive Plan Village Plan. She expressed concern that with the presence of commercial development there would be cut through traffic through the existing neighborhoods. Regarding the "sewer study", she asked whether there is sufficient sewer capacity for the proposed clubhouse and pool. She expressed concern with the Hazard Mitigation Plan and flooding. She stated that the amount of rent proposed is "out of line with income". She asked that the site be considered for recreational use, walking trails, a farmer's market, etc.

Mr. Fred Joslyn, 23 Gaglione Court, noted Mr. Garabedian's opposition to the "Garden Hills proposal in 2008". He feels the project is inappropriate and expressed concern with traffic. He stated that an MPD "should be development consistent with the surrounding area". He noted the proposals proximity to two historic districts, namely, the Oaklawn Historic District and the Furnace Brooke Historic District. He objects to the developer's comments that the area is not considered rural. He expressed concern with additional students in the schools and possible strains on other City services. He submitted a Police Department report that included calls for response to the Jefferson at Independence Way apartment complex. He stated that after doing the math, there would be a net \$1.47 per city resident increase from the taxes the proposal would generate. He expressed concern that the plan did not provide for parking for guests of the residents of the apartment complex. He noted Mr. Voccola's statement that he has no experience with self-contained communities but rather has had a successful history with hotels. He noted that a 12.92 acre density is greater than the density proposed by the former Phenix Terrace proposal. He expressed concern that once the Natick Avenue bridge is open there would be traffic from West Warwick. He also mentioned that once the employment rebounds there would be increased traffic with more people heading to work at peak hours.

There being no more public comment offered, the Planning Commission moved forward in trying to address some of the questions raised. Commissioner Motte asked Mr. Taglianetti about proposed Building #2 located in a FEMA AE Flood Zone. Mr. Taglianetti stated that the AE Zone is the 100 year flood plain and cannot impact the floodplain volume.

Mr. Alviti addressed the concern about increased wastewater from the proposed clubhouse and pool. He stated that there would be no change.

In response to residents concern that only re-striping is proposed, Mr. Clinton addressed the concern with re-striping and roadway widening, stating that Phenix Avenue eastbound will be widened 2-3 feet at the bottom and 12 feet further up. He stated that no physical roadway widening is proposed on the north/south Phenix/Natick Avenues lanes. Mr. Clinton went on to explain various turning movements at peak hours to the dissatisfaction of the crowd. Many felt that simply re-striping the roadway is insufficient.

There being no further comment, upon motion made by Mr. Motte and seconded by Mr. Smith, the Planning Commission unanimously voted to close testimony, formulate findings of fact and render a decision on this matter at next month's meeting.

Ayes: Chairman Rossi, Mr. Motte, Mr. Nadeau, Mr. Moran, Mr. Smith and Mr. Strom. Nays: none.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion made by Mr. Strom and seconded by Mr. Nadeau the Commission unanimously voted to adjourn at 11:35 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

May 1, 2012

Respectfully submitted,

Jason M. Pezzullo, AICP
Principal Planner/Secretary