

Kenneth J. Hopkins  
Mayor

Jason M. Pezzullo, AICP  
Committee Chairman  
Director of Planning



Jim Woyciechowski  
Fire Department

Stanley Pikul  
Building Official

Justin Mateus, P.E.  
Engineering Division

Stephen Mulcahy  
Traffic Safety Division

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Cranston City Hall  
869 Park Avenue, Cranston, Rhode Island 02910

### DRAFT MEETING MINUTES 9:00 AM, WEDNESDAY, December 21, 2022 CRANSTON CITY HALL – 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR COUNCIL CHAMBER

#### 1. Call to Order

Chairman Jason Pezzullo called the Development Plan Review Committee meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. in the City Council chamber.

The following members were in attendance for the meeting: Justin Mateus, Steve Mulcahy, Jason Pezzullo, and Stanley Pikul.

The following Planning Department staff members were in attendance: Doug McLean, Principal Planner; Gregory Guertin, Senior Planner; and Alex Berardo, Planning Technician.

#### 2. Approval of Minutes

- 11/16/22 Meeting

(vote taken)

Upon motion made by Mr. Mulcahy and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the Development Plan Review Committee unanimously voted (4-0) to approve the minutes of the 11/16/22 meeting.

#### 3. “Seasons Corner Market” Preliminary Plan Application

(vote taken)

Location	2050 Plainfield Pike, AP 36, Lots 116 and 117
Zoning District	C-5 (Heavy Business, Industry)
Owner/App	Colbea Enterprises, LLC
Proposal	Applicant seeks to construct a new gas station with a 5,000 SF convenience store inclusive of a coffee shop/cafe with drive-through operation, ten (10) new gasoline fueling pumps, one (1) new high-speed diesel fueling pump, two (2) new electric vehicle charging stations, as well as associated parking and landscaping improvements.

Chairman Pezzullo, introducing the application, reminded the other Committee members that they had previously reviewed this proposal in February, but Planning staff had a conference call with the applicants recently in preparation for this meeting. He then turned the discussion over to the applicant team, led by Atty. Danielle Dufault of Adler Pollock & Sheehan PC, and including Cheryl Guglielmo of DiPrete Engineering and Michael Gazdacko of Colbea Enterprises, LLC.

Atty. Dufault began by confirming that the Public Works Committee and the City Council had both given their approval during their most recent meetings (Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> and Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>, respectively) for construction in the vicinity of a historic cemetery. She then asked Ms. Guglielmo to give a brief project overview with specific attention to recent changes.

Ms. Guglielmo reviewed several aspects of the plan which had been modified following DPRC feedback received at the pre-application review. The conflict between the vehicle queue lane and the truck lane was resolved by shifting the building as far to the right as possible and moving the drive-thru window to the right side of the building, which created space to insert two separate lanes and to ensure compliance with City

and RIDOT queuing standards. For the small side lot, they reduced the impervious area, reduced the curb cut to 24 feet in width, provided seven parking spaces total (two of which will be “Shell Recharge” EV charging stations), and connected the parking area to the main portion of the site with a crosswalk.

Regarding the timeline, Ms. Guglielmo said the applicant submitted its wetlands paperwork to RIDEM on June 29<sup>th</sup> and only heard back in November; she said RIDEM offered no comments that would imply major changes to the plans as they currently stand. The applicant team is also seeking a response from RIDOT on its Physical Alteration Permit application, but the 45-day response period is still ongoing.

As for alterations to the median in Plainfield Pike, Ms. Guglielmo showed the currently proposed change which would facilitate left-turn access into the site. She and Mr. Gazdacko clarified that RIDOT has not given final approval to that configuration, but did review it and gave feedback, which was incorporated into the PAP application. The applicant team then welcome the Committee’s feedback.

Chairman Pezzullo asked if the DPR application could proceed independently of RIDOT’s approval of the median change; Ms. Guglielmo said it could and that the median issue is a related “wish list” item they wanted to mention to keep the City apprised. Mr. Pikul asked if the median modification would alter circulation patterns to the point it could warrant a return trip before the DPRC, but Mr. McLean said it would be a minor change that could be handled administratively. Mr. Pikul asked that a note to that effect be included on the site plan.

Similarly, Chairman Pezzullo then asked if the Final Plan could not be recorded until RIDEM provided its feedback. Mr. McLean confirmed that all state permits would be conditioned to Final Plan. Atty. Dufault reiterated RIDEM feedback would only result in minor tweaks at this point, but affirmed the applicant team has no issue with conditioning approvals to Final Plan. Chairman Pezzullo asked how much work could be conducted on-site in the meantime; Mr. Gazdacko said the owner intended to allow the existing mechanic shop on-site to continue operating into Spring 2023, so no work would begin now even if the permits were in place.

Finally, Chairman Pezzullo asked for an update on the applicant’s thinking regarding a freestanding sign that would be locate on land the applicant had not yet purchased, but Mr. McLean said the applicant informed him prior to the meeting that they’d dropped this idea in favor of locating a sign on-site.

Mr. McLean said the City did not distinguish EV parking spots as distinct from normal parking spaces, so they should count toward the overall parking numbers. He then asked if the EV stations would have an LED sign component, but Mr. Gazdacko said there would only be minor directional/pedestal signs as currently shown in the signage plan.

Mr. Mulcahy said he had no concerns but would be interested to see RIDOT’s decision on the proposed median alteration.

Mr. Mateus said he will not have any concerns as long as the applicant secures approval from both RIDOT and RIDEM.

Mr. Pikul asked if the high-speed diesel fueling canopy will accommodate one-way traffic, which Ms. Guglielmo affirmed. She said signage and striping could be added if the City requests it.

Mr. Pikul then asked for a summary of the applicant’s variance requests associated with the proposal, which were as follows:

- Exceeding the maximum building height (will be 36 feet if cupola is determined to count toward total height)
- Falling short of the minimum drive-thru length of 20 feet (driveway into site off Plainfield Pike)
- Exceeding the maximum curb cut width for trucking driveway on Sailor Way (30 feet to properly accommodate truck turning movements)

Upon motion made by Mr. Pikul, and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the Development Plan Review Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the Preliminary Plan application subject to the following conditions:

- The applicant would receive approval for all variance requests from the Zoning Board of Review
- The applicant would receive state permits from RIDEM and RIDOT prior to Final Plan recording
- The applicant would be granted the requested waivers for landscaping requirements as documented on the site plan
- Minor site changes to accommodate RIDOT outcomes regarding the proposed median alteration will be handled administratively

**4. “Plainfield Pike CAT Facility” Pre-Application (no vote taken)**

Location	2110 Plainfield Pike, AP 35, Lot 9
Zoning District	A-80 (Single-family dwellings on 80,000 SF)
Owner	WILLIAM A SIMAS SHEILA M SIMAS TRUSTEES
Applicant	Milton CAT
Proposal	Applicant seeks to construct a new 49,650 SF facility to serve as a showroom, service center, and storage warehouse for large construction equipment.

Josh Rosen (VHB), Ethan Flinkstrom, and Kevin Uniacke presented the pre-application concept on behalf of the applicant, Milton CAT.

Mr. Rosen introduced the project as a proposal to construct a CAT equipment dealership on an 11-acre parcel on the south side of Plainfield Pike, west of I-295. Mr. Rosen said Milton CAT has 13 stores in New England and New York, and 18 months ago, the owners came up with a master plan for expansion, which included construction of a new store in the vicinity of the existing parts store (which will be absorbed into the new facility).

Mr. Rosen said the applicant team has conducted a full existing conditions survey, an environment study, a soil analysis, and a traffic analysis. He added that the proposal will require a zone change from A-80 to M-2 without conditions, which is explicitly called for in the Comp Plan. The owner is happy with the floor plans as currently designed – the facility will accommodate service bays, workshops, a showroom, etc – but did not want to design the site much further before securing a zone change.

Chairman Pezzullo asked if the applicant intended to store outdoor equipment throughout the upland portions of the site. Mr. Flinkstrom confirmed CAT’s intent is to maximize impervious surface area for equipment storage and display.

Mr. McLean said once the zone change is secured, the applicant would need to work with RIDEM on a stormwater runoff design. Mr. Rosen said they are beginning to work with RIDEM but expect to have a buffer of 20-25 feet and should not need variances. He also stated there are no intermittent streams on the site.

Chairman Pezzullo and Mr. McLean suggested the project renderings either show a site filled with CAT vehicles or a site entirely devoid of them (showing only the building) to avoid unintentionally misleading abutters with an image that might suggest only a few vehicles will be stored on-site. Mr. McLean also said the applicants should be prepared to address the distance and amount of buffer between the subject site and the Alpine Estates neighborhood to the south. Mr. Uniacke said the structure would be set back from Plainfield Pike, slightly below grade as the site is today, and with some landscaping to further soften its visual impact from the road.

Chairman Pezzullo invited the other Committee members to comment.

Mr. Mateus cautioned the applicants to work closely with RIDEM to find appropriate stormwater solutions for the site, as the water table tends to be high in Western Cranston.

Mr. Pikul asked if offices would be located on-site, but Mr. Flinkstrom said no, although around 35 employees would work on-site. Mr. Pikul advised the applicant team to double-check all performance standards for parking, signage, etc, to ensure conditions wouldn’t be needed with the zone change request. Chairman

Pezzullo said that situation would effectively be a “contract zone” and encouraged the applicants to prioritize conformity to the standards.

Mr. Rosen took a moment to review the logic behind the current parking calculation (service, warehousing, and office/customer service components of the project; they are providing 1 space per employee and 1 space per 200 ft<sup>2</sup> of building area). Mr. Rosen asked if that calculation was reasonable, as they'd like to avoid asking for a variance on parking; Mr. McLean said he felt it was.

Chairman Pezzullo said the next time we see the applicants will be at the Preliminary Plan application phase. He noted that the project will only go through DPR, as the area is just under the Major Land Development threshold, so it will not go through the Plan Commission.

**5. Adjournment** *(next meeting date TBD)*

**(vote taken)**

Upon motion made by Mr. Pikul, and seconded by Mr. Mulcahy, the Development Plan Review Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn the meeting at 10:52 a.m.