

City Planning Department



Memo

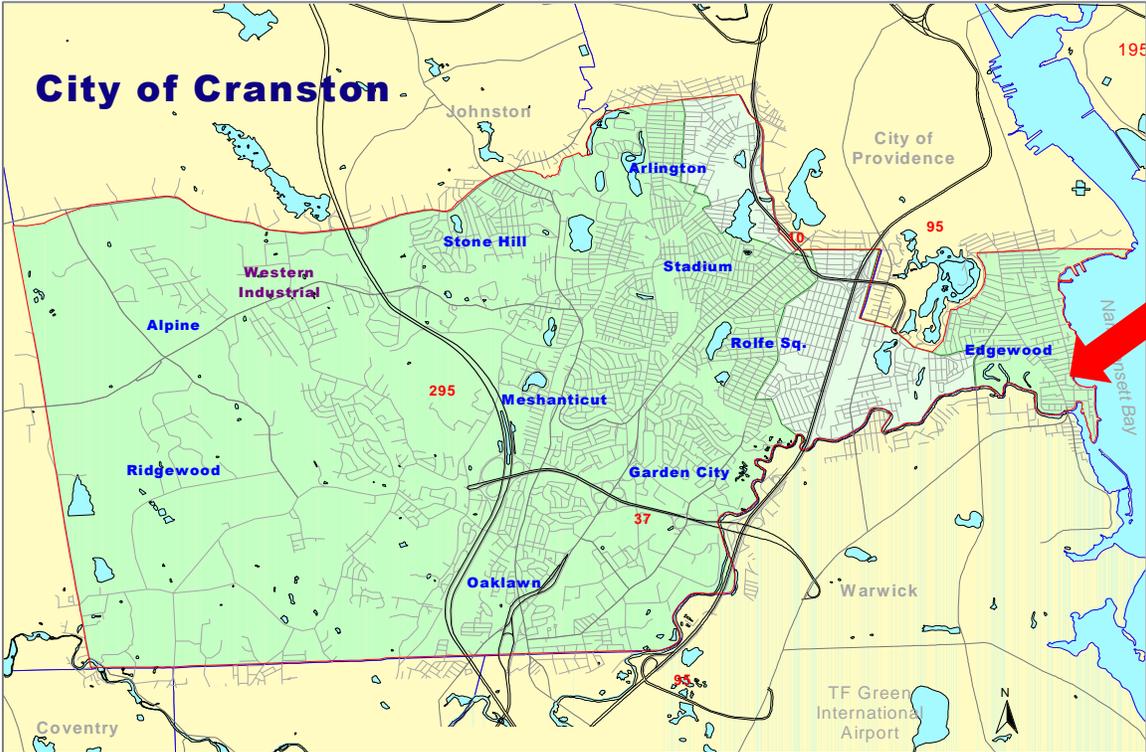
To: Cranston City Plan Commission
From: Alexander Berardo – Planning Technician
Date: September 1, 2022
Re: **Dimensional Variance @ 16 Windsor Avenue**

Owner/App: 16 Windsor Road, LLC
Location: 16 Windsor Road, AP 2, Lot 3434
Zone: B-1 (Single- and Two-family dwellings on 6,000 ft² minimum lots)
FLU: Single Family Residential less than 10.89 units/acre

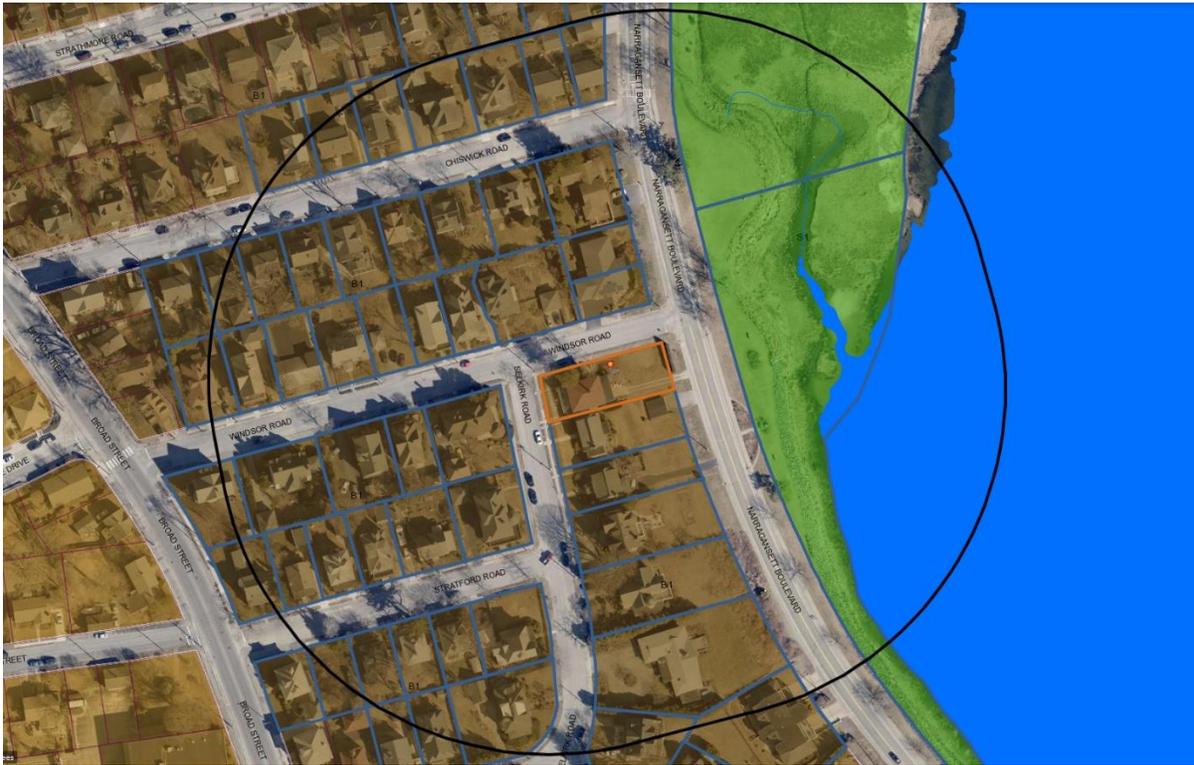
DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE REQUEST:

1. To allow the construction of a detached garage within the required front yard setbacks. [17.20.120 – Schedule of Intensity]

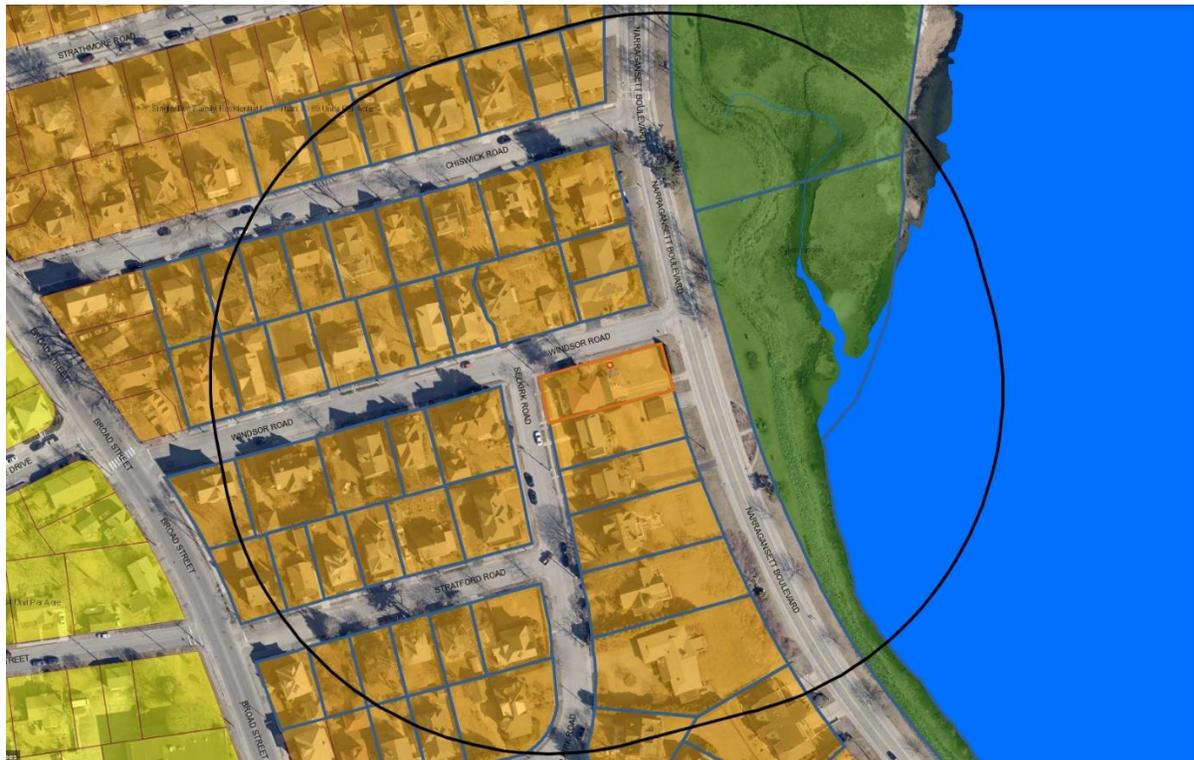
LOCATION MAP



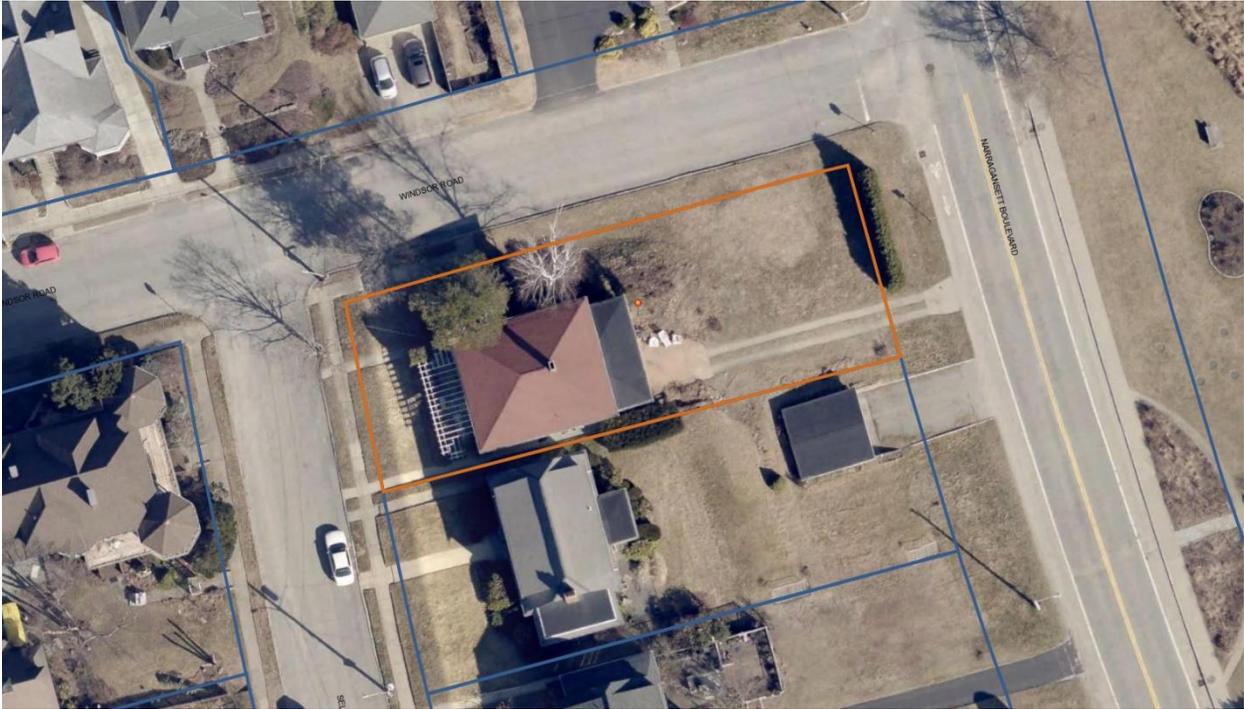
ZONING MAP



FUTURE LAND USE MAP



AERIAL VIEW



3-D AERIAL VIEW (facing west)



STREET VIEW (from Narragansett Blvd)



STREET VIEW (from Windsor Rd)



PLANNING STAFF FINDINGS

1. The subject parcel is a corner lot with frontage on three sides, so its buildable envelope is inherently constrained by three front setbacks. Dimensionally, it is a conforming lot of 9,117 ft² in a B-1 zone.
2. The proposed three-car garage would encroach roughly 5 feet into the 25-foot front setback along Narragansett Boulevard and roughly 12 feet into the 25-foot front setback along Windsor Road. It would also increase the lot coverage from 10% to 25%, which remains within the maximum allowable lot coverage (35%) in a B-1 zone.
3. The proposed garage would also encroach roughly 2 feet into the 8-foot side setback shared with the neighboring parcel (AP 2, Lot 3435). As the existing residence also encroaches roughly 2 feet into the side setback, the addition of the garage would not increase the degree of nonconformity along this side of the property.
4. Given the lot's dimensions, three frontages, and unique topographical conditions (land slopes downward toward Narragansett Blvd), the proposed three car garage's encroachment into the Windsor Road setback appears to be unavoidable.
5. Although it is not readily apparent why the garage cannot be located slightly further into the lot to comply with the Narragansett Blvd setback, Planning staff's purview does not extend to determinations of hardship, which are the domain of the Zoning Board of Review.
6. The proposed three-car garage would be set into the hillside, roughly in-line with the comparable two-car garage located on the neighboring parcel. However, the proposed garage would also include a green roof that mitigates its visual and environmental impacts.
7. The garage is a by-right accessory use and its addition would therefore be consistent with the parcel's Future Land Use Map designation of *Single Family Residential less than 10.89 units/acre*.
8. Relief would be consistent with Comprehensive Plan Land Use Principle 4, "*Protect and stabilize existing residential neighborhoods by basing land use decisions on neighborhood needs and quality of life...*" (p. 34).

STAFF ANALYSIS

The Comprehensive Plan does not directly address accessory structures or their encroachment into setbacks; however, Land Use Principle 4 advises to "*Protect and stabilize existing residential neighborhoods by basing land use decisions on neighborhood needs and quality of life...*" (p. 34). Staff finds that granting relief to allow the construction of the garage is consistent with promoting neighborhood needs and quality of life. It should be taken into consideration that the applicant's property is located on a corner lot which imposes two additional front setbacks, which renders it more constrained in terms of the buildable area.

Given the reduced buildable area and the existing topographical conditions on site, staff finds the relief requested to be reasonable. Furthermore, the visual/aesthetic impacts to the abutting neighbors will be mitigated and minimized by the green roof, and for these reasons **staff finds that relief would not negatively alter the character of the neighborhood and is generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.**

RECOMMENDATION

Due to the findings that the application is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and does not alter the character of the neighborhood, staff recommends the Plan Commission forward a **positive recommendation** on the application to the Zoning Board of Review.