

City Planning Department



Memo

To: Cranston City Plan Commission
From: Alexander Berardo – Planning Technician
Date: July 29, 2022
Re: **Dimensional Variances @ 1627 Cranston Street & 0 Matthewson Street**

Owner/App: Anthony M. Caprio
Location: 1627 Cranston Street (AP 8, Lot 364) and 0 Matthewson Street (AP 8, Lots 362 and 363)
Zone: B-1 (Two-family dwellings on 8,000 ft² minimum lots)
FLU: Neighborhood Commercial Services (AP 8, Lot 364) and Single/Two Family Residential less than 10.89 units/acre (AP 8, Lots 362-363)

DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE REQUESTS:

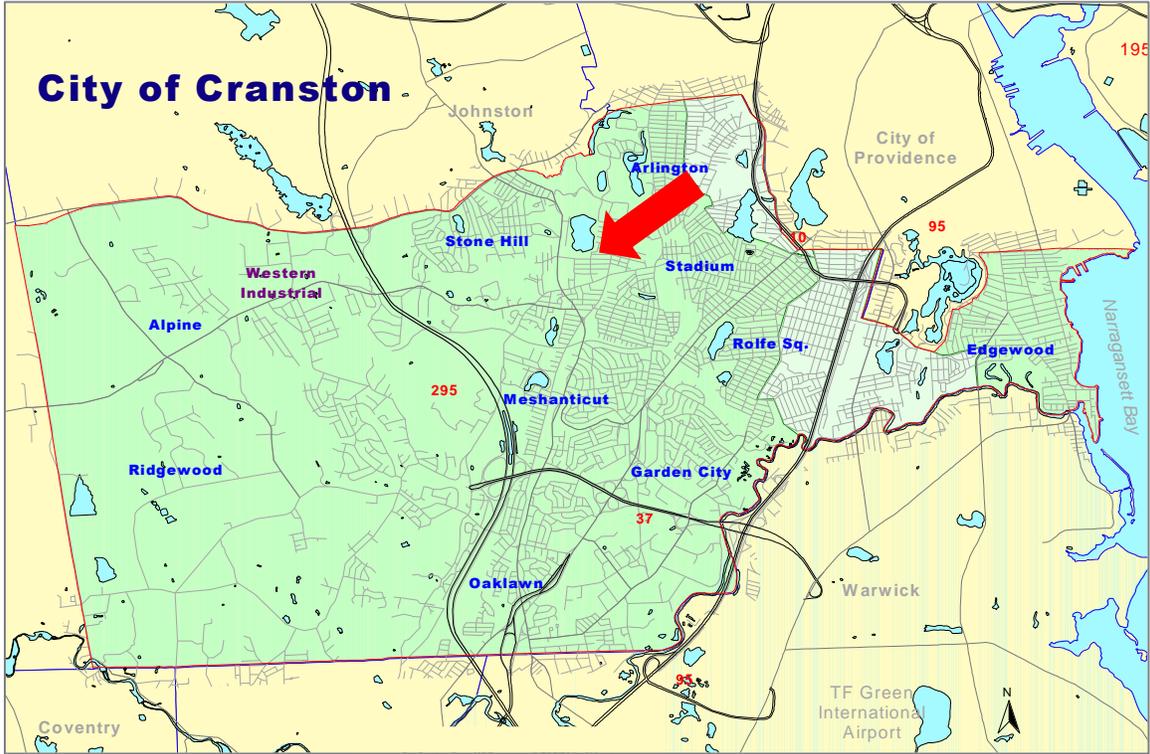
1627 Cranston Street (AP 8, Lot 364)

1. Relief from the merger clause to allow the 6,584 ft² nonconforming lot to be unmerged from the other two lots. [17.88.010 *Substandard Lots of Record and Lot Mergers*]
2. Relief for substandard lot area (AP 8, Lot 364 is 6,584 ft² where 18,000 ft² would be required in a B-2 zone, where multi-family buildings can be built by-right). [17.20.120 – *Schedule of Intensity*]
3. Relief for encroachment into the required 25' front setbacks (pre-existing non-conforming house is located on a corner lot and encroaches by 25' into the Matthewson St front setback and 22' into the Cranston St front setback, respectively). [17.20.120 – *Schedule of Intensity*]

0 Matthewson Street (AP 8, Lots 362-363)

1. Relief from the merger clause to allow the two nonconforming lots to be unmerged from AP 8, Lot 364 and merged into a new, 7,289 ft² nonconforming lot. [17.88.010 *Substandard Lots of Record and Lot Mergers*]
2. Relief to allow the construction of a two-family residence on a lot with substandard area (7,289 ft² where 8,000 ft² is required). [17.20.120 – *Schedule of Intensity*]
3. Relief for encroachment into the required 20' rear setback (the proposed house would encroach by 0.75' into the rear setback). [17.20.120 – *Schedule of Intensity*]

LOCATION MAP



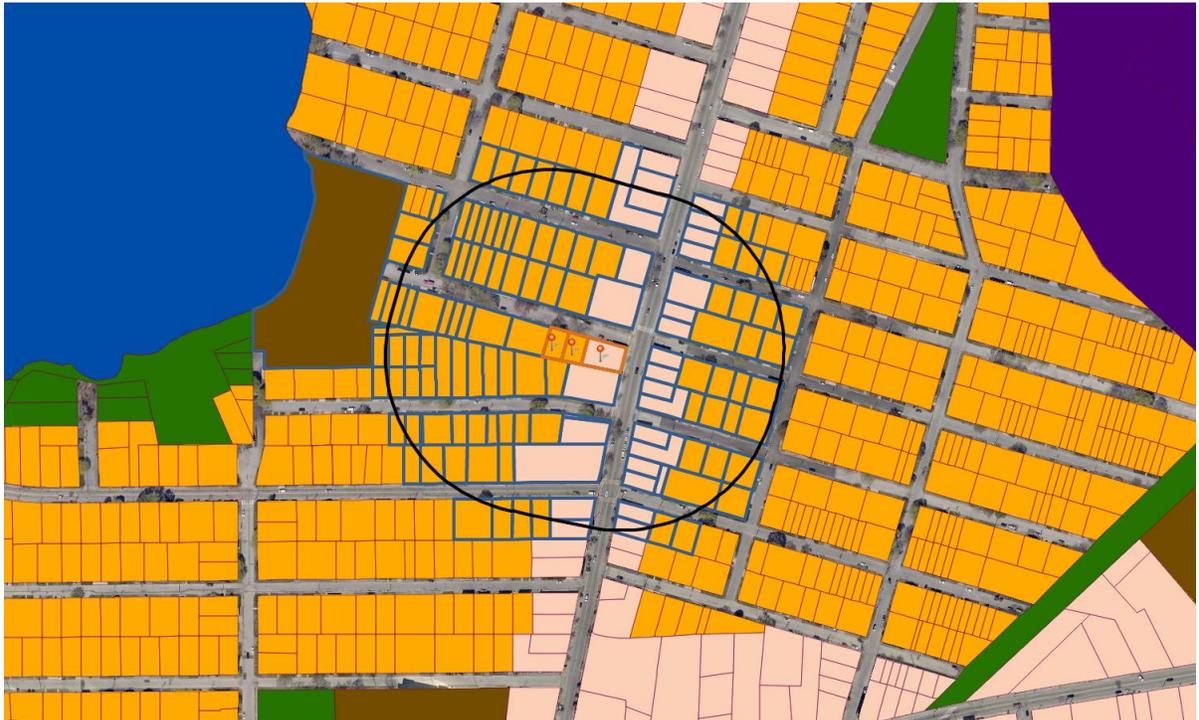
AERIAL VIEW



ZONING MAP



FUTURE LAND USE MAP



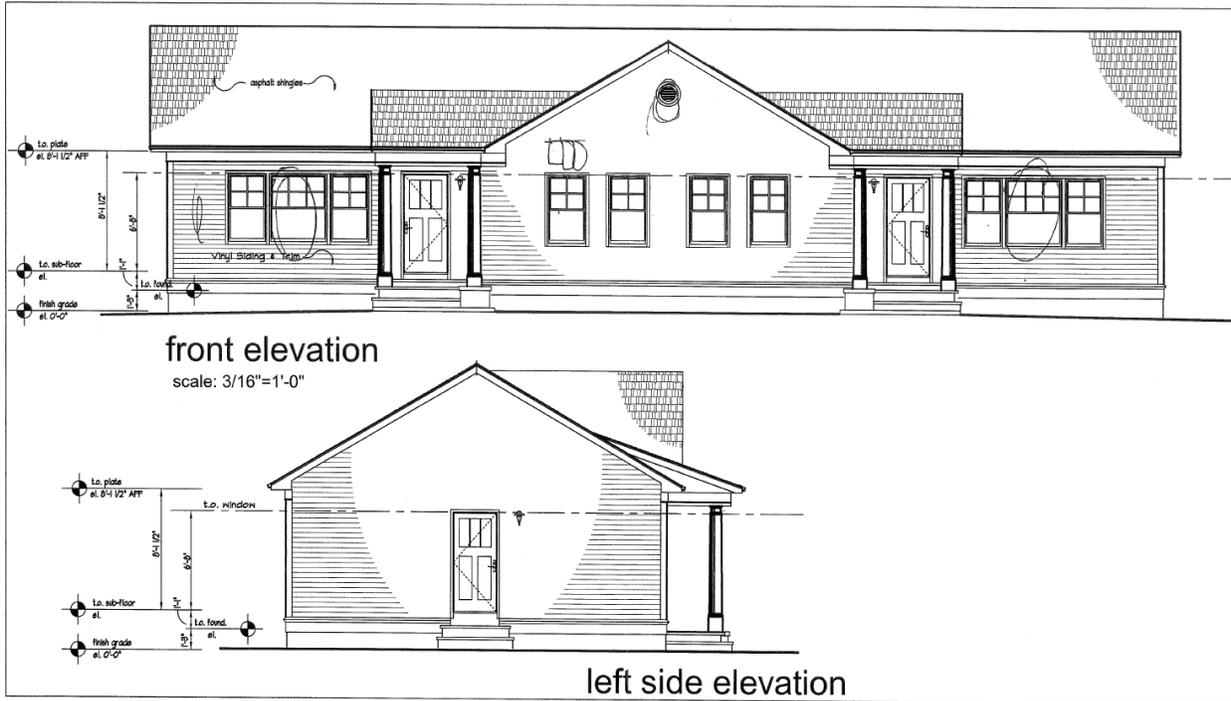
STREET VIEW
(1627 Cranston St, AP 8, Lot 364)



STREET VIEW
(0 Matthewson St, AP 8, Lots 362-363)



ELEVATIONS



RENDERING



PLANNING STAFF FINDINGS

1. The subject parcel (AP 8, Lots 362-364) is comprised of three adjacent, substandard lots which are merged to form one conforming lot of 13,873 ft² in a B-1 zone.
2. A neighborhood analysis submitted by the applicant notes that within a 400-foot radius of the subject parcels, there are no other lots hosting four or more units. The analysis also found there are 33 lots hosting two-family residential uses, with an average lot size of 5,188 ft². The applicant's proposed two-family house would be built on a lot of 7,289 ft².
3. An existing four-family house located on AP 8, Lot 364 stands at the corner of Cranston and Matthewson Streets. It encroaches into both front setbacks; it stands just over 3 feet from the Cranston Street lot line and stands flush with the Matthewson Street lot line. The house was built in 1904; it predates zoning and is a pre-existing non-conforming structure. (Multifamily houses are not a permitted use in a B-1 zone.)
4. The proposed two-family house to be built on AP 8, Lots 362-363 would be constructed in compliance with all contemporary setbacks for the B-1 zone except for an encroachment of 9 inches into the rear setback at its southeast corner.
5. The parking lot design as shown on the site plan for the four-family house on Lot 364, which would replace the existing three-car garage, may require additional relief for configuration and curb cut width. However, this judgment is beyond Planning Staff's purview and properly rests with the Zoning Board of Review.
6. The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates AP 8, Lot 364 as Neighborhood Commercial Services and AP 8, Lots 362 and 363 as Single-Family Residential less than 10.89 Units/Acre.
 - a. AP 8, Lot 364: Per the Comprehensive Plan, the Neighborhood Commercial Services designation encompasses the C-1, C-2, and C-3 zones. Because multifamily residential uses are permitted by-right in the C-1 and C-2 zones with no associated density standards, maintaining the current use of the lot is consistent with its Future Land Use designation.
 - b. AP 8, Lots 362-363: The proposed two-family house would represent a density of 11.95 Units/Acre for its portion of the parcel, slightly higher than the range prescribed by the FLUM.
7. Granting relief would be generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element Principle 4, which advises to "*Protect and stabilize existing residential neighborhoods by basing land use decisions on neighborhood needs and quality of life.*" (p. 34), and Housing Goal 4, to "*Promote housing opportunity for a wide range of household types and income levels.*"

PLANNING ANALYSIS

Staff finds that granting relief to allow the lots to become unmerged and to allow for the construction of a new two-family house to be built on the vacant lot would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, particularly through Housing Goal 4 and Land Use Principle 4. The proposal is consistent with the City's interest in supporting neighborhood housing needs and it would not alter the character of the neighborhood, as this is an opportunity to create infill housing

at a scale and intensity that is consistent with the existing neighborhood. Staff recognizes that the existing single-family house was built in 1904 and therefore is a pre-existing, non-conforming use. Staff also notes that a case can be made that this multifamily house, as a land use, is consistent with the Neighborhood Commercial Services FLUM designation of the parcel on which it stands. Furthermore, Staff would note that the proposed two-family house could be built in conformance with all required setbacks for a B-1 zone, save for a 9-inch encroachment into the rear setback, and that the resulting density for this portion of the parcel only slightly exceeds the range prescribed by the FLUM.

RECOMMENDATION (applies to both AP 8, Lot 364 and AP 8, Lots 362-63)

Due to the findings that the application is generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and that it 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.