

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 9:30 AM, WEDNESDAY, April 19th, 2023 CRANSTON CITY HALL – 3RD FLOOR COUNCIL CHAMBER

1. Call to Order

Chairman Jason Pezzullo called the Development Plan Review Committee meeting to order at 9:38 a.m. in the City Council chamber.

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

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

2. Approval of Minutes

- 4/5/23 Meeting

(vote taken)

Upon motion made by Mr. Mateus and seconded by Mr. Mulcahy, the Development Plan Review Committee unanimously voted (4-0) to approve the minutes of the 4/5/23 meeting.

3. "747 Pontiac Ave. – Residential Apartment Conversion" Preliminary Plan (vote taken)

Location	747 Pontiac Avenue, AP 9, Lot 146
Zoning District	C-2 with conditions
Owner/App	Omni 747P LLC, P.O. Box 856, East Greenwich, RI 02818
Proposal	Convert an office building into 18 apartments

Chairman Pezzullo recalled that the Committee heard the pre-application discussion for this project in Fall 2022. He said that, in the time since, the project had received zone change approval from the City Council, and it was set to be heard again at the May meeting of the City Plan Commission. He then invited Mick Hogan, representing the applicant, to speak to the revisions that had been made to the plan since the previous discussion took place.

Mr. Hogan said Omni had been working diligently over the last few months to address the DPRC's comments, with the lighting, landscaping, and site plans having been updated accordingly. Mr. McLean added that the broad concept of the project remains unchanged, and on those elements that the DPRC did request changes, Staff believes the applicant now meets the required performance standards (with the exception of certain landscaping requirements, for which the applicant requested waivers based on existing conditions).

Chairman Pezzullo then asked for comments.

Mr. Pikul and Mr. Mulcahy both observed the plan showed only one handicapped parking space, but two would be required. The group agreed there would be no dimensional issue to adding the second handicapped space, as an adjacent (proposed) space could be dedicated for that purpose. Mr. Pikul further asked how the applicant intended to screen the dumpster and whether the proposed ramp would be ADA-

compliant, as neither detail was explicitly shown on the site plan. Mr. Hogan said dumpster screening would be achieved through a mix of arbor vitae trees and ornamental/stockade fencing, and he would verify regarding the ramp's dimensions.

Mr. Mateus said the applicant received a letter from the City Engineer's office confirming the project will generate no net runoff, so he has no remaining concerns to address.

Mr. Paulino welcomed the applicants to the City and wished them well.

Chairman Pezzullo then invited public comment.

- David Wilbur, 14 Norman Ave, asked how the applicant would be able to accommodate the handicapped ramp and spaces while keeping the Norman Avenue curb cut open. The Committee invited him to review the printed copy of the site plan and indicated the ramp would be downward sloping.

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

- a. The applicant will provide an additional handicapped-accessible parking space
- b. The DPRC will accept landscaping waivers as proposed

4. "Champlin Hills" Preliminary Plan (vote taken)

Location	320 Scituate Ave, AP ss, Lots 108 and 119
Zoning District	B-2 - Multifamily
Owner / App	Carpionato Properties, Inc.; West Bay LLC; and Alfred Carpionato Estate
Proposal	90 units of multi-family residential, three buildings with accessory clubhouse

Chairman Pezzullo gave the Committee a description of the project's history and the nature of the proposed modifications constituting a Major Amendment to a recorded Final Plan. He then welcomed the applicant team, consisting of Atty. Tenessa Azar, David Taglianetti, Sam Hemenway, and Steve Garofalo, to speak to the proposed changes.

Atty. Azar summarized the changes as 1) moving a proposed Clubhouse to an accessory lot and 2) locating a three-story, 18-unit apartment building in place of the Clubhouse's originally intended site. She also noted that the Clubhouse originally would have included a commercial component, but the applicant has since moved away from that concept, and the future Clubhouse will no longer have a commercial use.

Mr. Taglianetti said the applicant completed about \$1 million worth of site preparation in 2017 but stopped when construction bids came in much higher than expected. The project was further delayed by the death of Mr. Carpionato, the COVID-19 Pandemic, and a value-engineering process which resulted in reusing an existing house for the Clubhouse and reducing the number of retaining walls.

Chairman Pezzullo asked what the height of the three-story building would be. Mr. Taglianetti said it would be 53 feet tall; Chairman Pezzullo then said it would require a variance for height.

Chairman Pezzullo said Mr. Woyciechowski couldn't attend the meeting, but the Fire Department expressed a concern about whether there would be sufficient turnaround space for fire trucks without a cul-de-sac. Mr. McLean added that Fire specifically asked for a truck turning plan and a Condition of Approval directing the applicant to explore potential turnaround solutions. Mr. Taglianetti said that would be fine.

Chairman Pezzullo noted that wetlands on site constrain opportunities for a cul-de-sac to be built. Mr. Pikul asked whether the wetland buffers would need to be reviewed in this process, but Mr. Taglianetti said the applicant is vested under the original buffer. Mr. Taglianetti suggested a hammerhead-style turnaround and/or the use of grass pavers might be workable for this site. Mr. Mulcahy said some solution will need to be found (and noted that this was the only matter he had planned to raise as well). Chairman Pezzullo asked

if the applicant felt confident that the applicant could propose a solution before the May meeting of the City Plan Commission, which he did.

Mr. Pikul noted that the Clubhouse would require a use variance and the three-story building would need a height variance. Since the project's associated variance applications are set to go before the Zoning Board for its May meeting, Mr. Pikul further asked the applicant team to review the City's signage standards with enough time to know whether it will need any other variances.

Mr. Mateus said his largest concern would be how the applicant proposed to handle stormwater runoff, but if RIDEM has issued a permit, that would satisfy his concerns. He reminded the applicant team that their proposed runoff detention systems will require annual maintenance.

Chairman Pezzullo then opened the matter to public comment.

- Donna Andrews, of Scituate Ave, expressed concerns about the levels of traffic the project could generate.
- Ellen Andersen, of 315 Scituate Ave, also voiced concerns over traffic difficulties on Scituate and asked to see the site plan more closely.
- Gennaro Catalano, of 266 Scituate Ave, asked whether the changes to the proposed retaining walls would impact the buffer area for abutters and expressed some concerns about whether water quality would be impacted and the architectural character of the proposed buildings might suffer after the value-engineering process is complete.

Chairman Pezzullo said the proposal (including both phases of construction) was fully-vetted in 2016 and observed that the DPRC is only considering a specific amendment which will most likely result in a net reduction in traffic, as it replaces a commercial use with a residential use.

Mr. Taglianetti said there would be no net runoff as a result of the project and offered to submit architectural designs to the City for their May appearances before the Plan Commission and the Zoning Board. Chairman Pezzullo reminded those in attendance that the City does not review proposals against any particular architectural standards, and as such, those designs should be considered informational.

Upon motion by Mr. Pikul, and seconded by Mr. Mulcahy, the Development Plan Review Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to close the public comment period.

Finally, 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 will submit a truck turning plan to the Fire Department's satisfaction
- Approval will be conditioned upon granting of relief by the Zoning Board of Review for all associated variance applications

5. *Adjournment* (next meeting date TBD)

(vote taken)

Upon motion made by Mr. Pikul, and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the Development Plan Review Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn the meeting at 10:23 a.m.