

City Planning Department



Memo

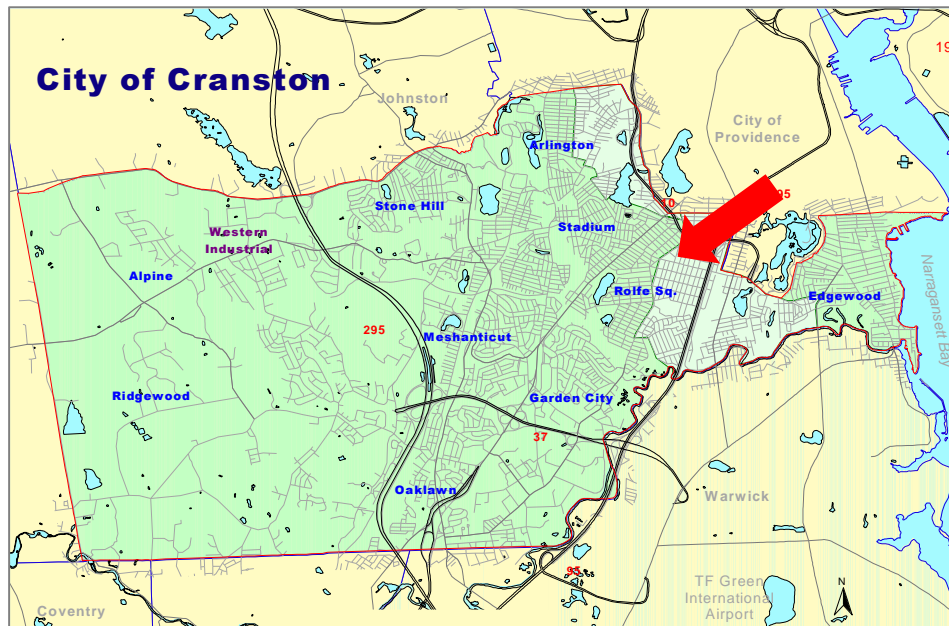
To: Cranston City Plan Commission
From: Doug McLean, AICP, Principal Planner
Date: April 1, 2021
Re: Dimensional Variance Application for 74 Rolfe Sq. – Sign Area

Owner: Force Realty, LLC
Applicant: Alani's Bistro, Inc.
Location: 74 Rolfe Sq (AP 5, Lot 1835)
Zone: C-3 (Neighborhood business)
FLU: Neighborhood Commercial/Services

DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE REQUEST:

1. To allow two (2) wall signs that are larger than the maximum wall sign allowed in a C-3 zone [17.72 – Signs]

LOCATION MAP



NEIGHBORHOOD AERIAL
(subject parcel marked in orange, 400 foot radius marked in black)



AERIAL CLOSE UP



STREET VIEW (from Rolfe Sq.)



STREET VIEW (from Clarence Street)



ZONING MAP



PROPOSED SIGN
(front of building facing Rolfe Sq)

total sq ft 35



30"

front

PROPOSED SIGN
(side of building facing Clarence Street)

total sq ft 48



36"

30"x30"

side

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. The applicant proposes to add two (2) new wall signs that are 35 sqft. and 48 sqft respectively. The maximum allowed area for a wall sign in the C-3 zone is 30 sqft so both signs require relief.
2. The signs only require relief for areas, and are compliant with regard to sign height as well as the total sign allowance on the property inclusive of all other signs.
3. This variance proposal is for the Alani's portion of the building only. Because this portion of the building is on its own lot, the other portions of the building (previous laboratory center) are NOT subject to City review as part of the immediate variance application.
4. The proposed signs are being requested in conjunction with a change of operation at this property. The new business is a restaurant and the signage is being proposed to allow customers to identify the new restaurant.
5. The applicant has stated that they believe the signs are an important component of their business plan to ensure the signs are visible to pedestrians and drivers.
6. The applicant has stated they worked with a sign design company to ensure the signs are well-designed and will enhance the aesthetic of the building.
7. The applicant has provided photos of signs from nearby businesses as evidence that there are several over-sized signs in close proximity to their business. The applicant has stated they believe that the sign will fit with the character of surrounding properties.
8. Staff has reviewed the proposal, including the submitted pictures of signs from nearby businesses, and agrees that the proposed signs are not out of character with the surrounding neighborhood. Staff views the proposed signs to be appropriate.
9. Staff has reviewed this application in relation to the Comprehensive Plan and finds no significant inconsistencies. The Comprehensive Plan calls for guidelines for signage and streetscape improvements, but does not provide detail or clear direction on what the guidelines would regulate or prohibit. Staff could not find any language within the Cranston Comprehensive Plan that provides for reason to oppose the application. Therefore, this application is believed to be generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

Due to the finding that the application is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and due to the finding that the application will not have a negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood, staff recommends the Plan Commission forward a **positive recommendation** to the Zoning Board of Review.