

## City Planning Department



## Memo

To: Cranston City Plan Commission  
From: Doug McLean, AICP - Principal Planner / Administrative Officer  
Date: August 28, 2020  
Re: **Sintra Seven, LLC; Two (2) Variance Applications Requiring Plan Commission Recommendations**

---

**Owner/**

**Applicant:** Sintra Seven, LLC

**Location:** Intersection of Magnolia Street and Clarence Street, AP 5, Lot 99

**Zone:** B-1 (Single-family and two-family dwellings)

**FLU:** Single/Two Family Residential Less Than 10.89 units per acre

### **DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE REQUESTS:**

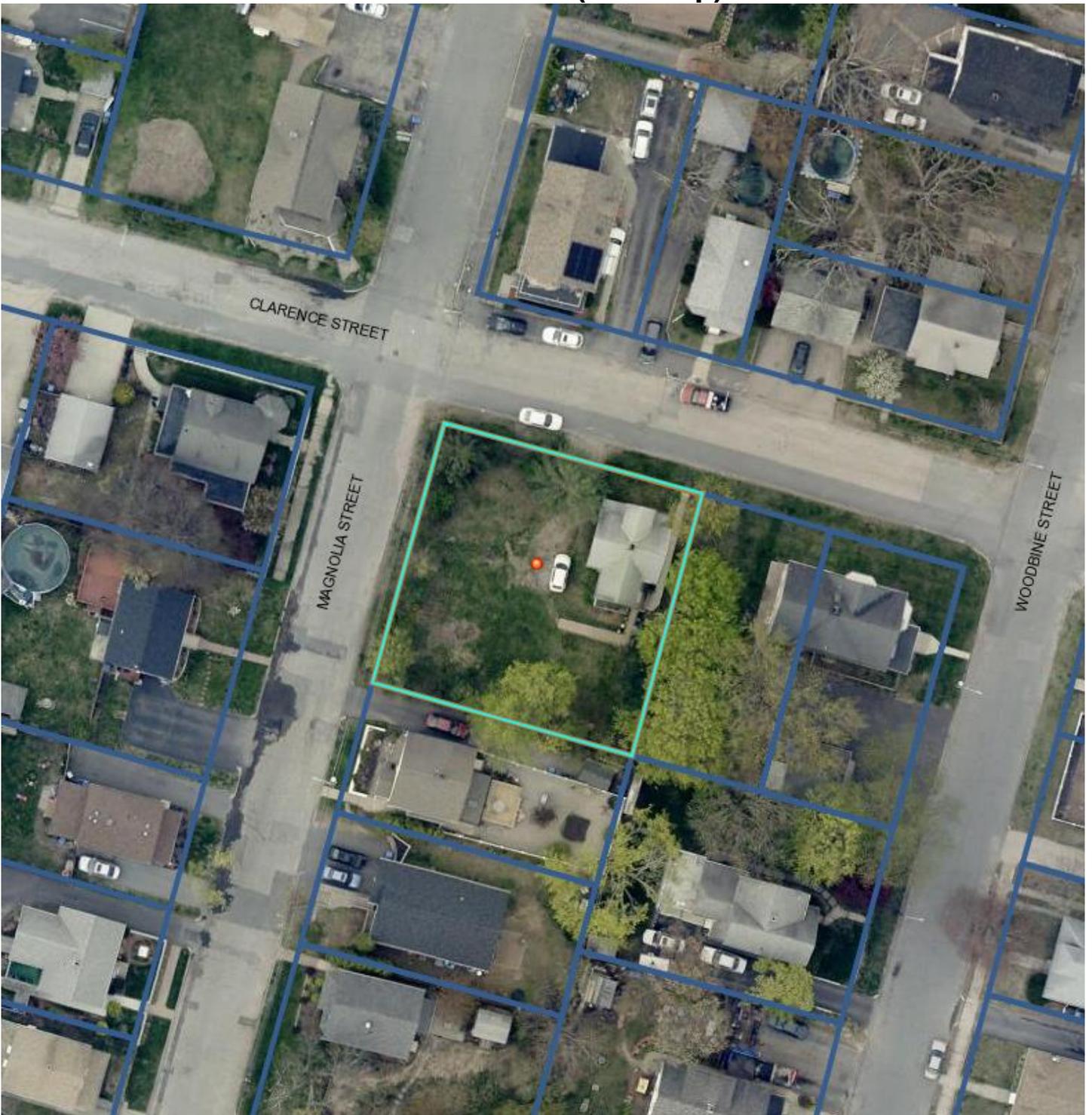
- 1. To allow a subdivision that will create two (2) lots that are substandard in size, whereas they each lot will contain 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup> while 6,000 ft<sup>2</sup> is required. [Section 17.20.120 – Schedule of Intensity]**
- 2. To allow a subdivision that will create one (1) lot with substandard frontage, whereas the lot will have 50' of frontage while 60' is required. [Section 17.20.120 – Schedule of Intensity]**

NOTE: this matter has been broken into 2 separate applications to be heard by the Zoning Board of Review, 1 for each of the 2 proposed substandard lots. The staff analysis and recommendation herein is being presented in combined fashion and should be considered equally applicable to the 2 separate ZBR applications.

**AERIAL VIEW**



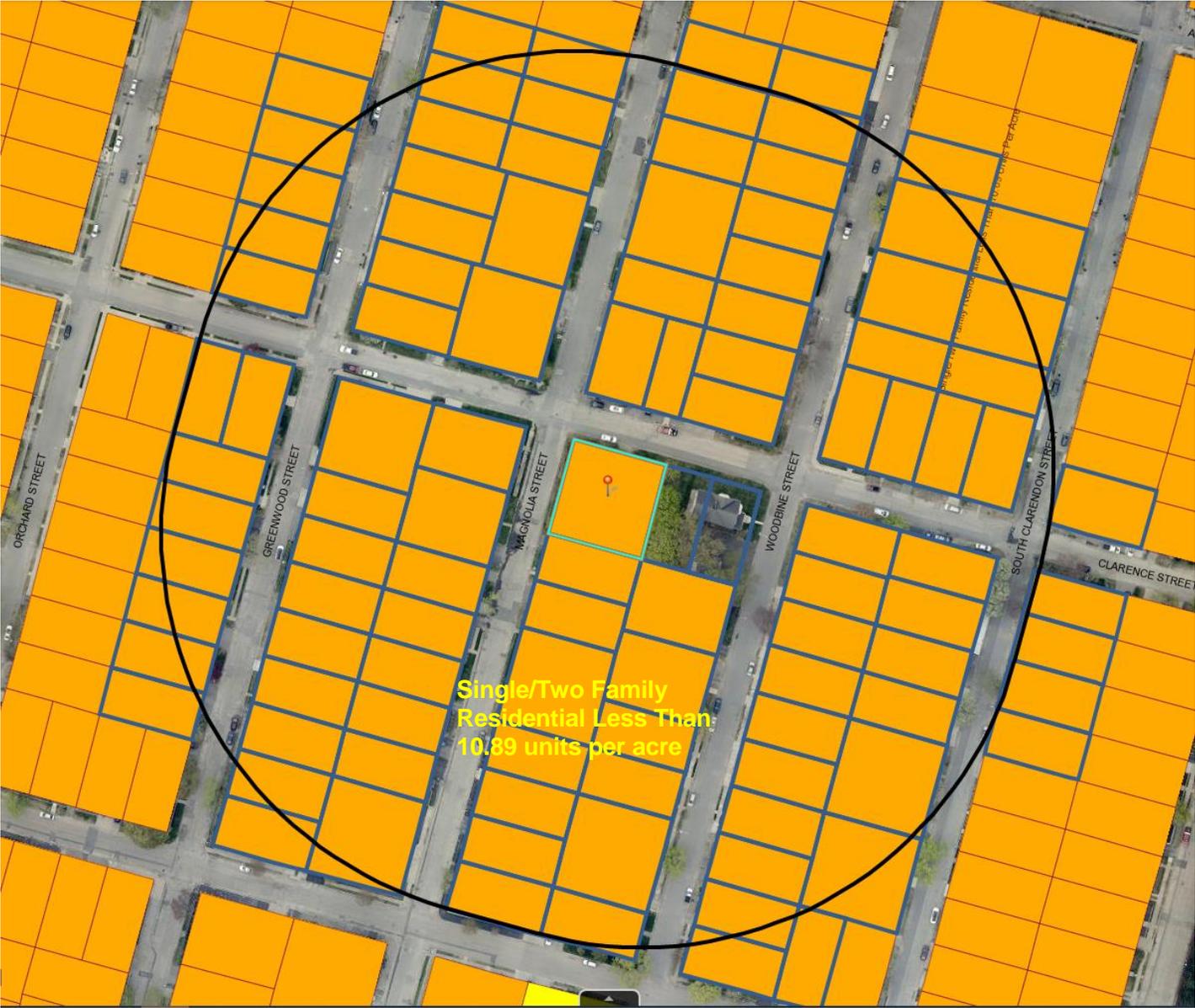
**AERIAL VIEW (close up)**



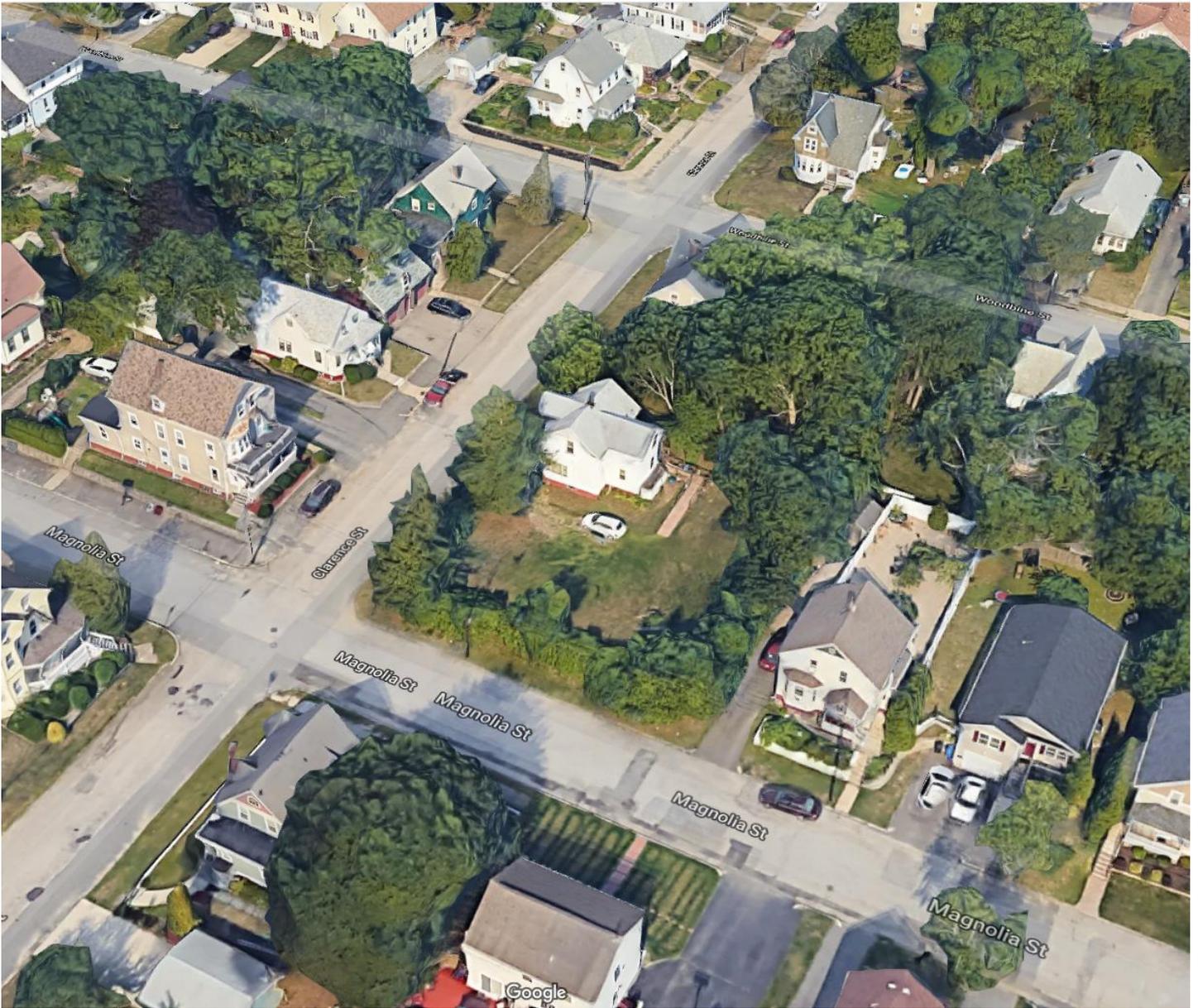
# ZONING MAP



# FUTURE LAND USE MAP



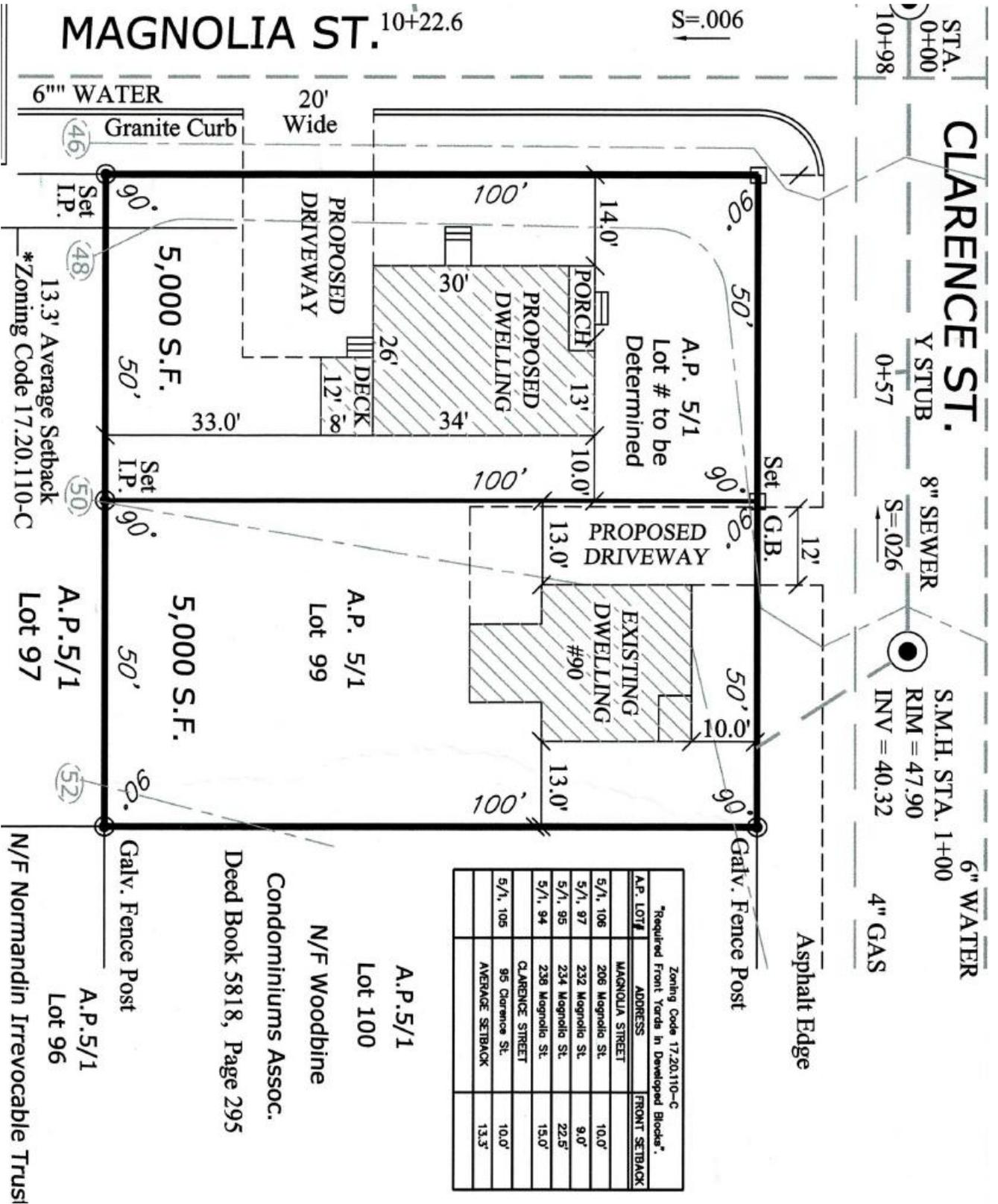
### 3-D AERIAL VIEW



## STREET VIEW (from Crescent Avenue)



# SITE PLAN



## FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. The overall project proposal is to subdivide a single 10,000 ft<sup>2</sup> lot with an existing single-family house into 2 new lots. If approved, the applicant intends to keep the existing single-family dwelling on 1 of the lots, and on the other lot the applicant intends to build a new single-family dwelling.
2. The lot with the remaining house (Parcel 2) will be substandard in frontage in which 50' is provided where 60' is required.
3. The lot with the remaining house (Parcel 2) does NOT require any building setback variances despite the creation of a new side lot line.
4. The proposed new buildable lot (Parcel 1) does not require any building setback variances. It should be noted this lot is a corner lot and subject to 2 front yard setback on each of abutting public rights-of-way. The proposed new dwelling is located 14' from the Magnolia Street right-of-way which is closer than the standard front setback for this zone of 25 feet, However, City zoning code section 17.20.110(C) provides regulatory relief from the standard front setback as follows:

*“Required Front Yards in Developed Blocks. In a block in which twenty-five (25) percent or more of the frontage within two hundred (200) feet of the lot and on the same side of the street is developed with structures, the required front yard for a structure hereafter erected on that lot shall extend to the average alignment of such existing structures instead of as provided in the succeeding sections of this chapter, except that no residence shall have a front yard depth of less than five feet in depth or need have a front yard of greater depth than forty (40) feet in an A-80 district, thirty (30) feet in an A-20 district or twenty-five (25) feet in any other residential district.”*

The applicant has met all of the requirements for a reduced front setback as provided in the City zoning code cited above. The applicant was able to determine the average alignment of applicable structures on Magnolia based on “real time measurements in the field with a Topcon GTS series Electronic Distance Measurer (EDM) with reflectorless technology.”
5. The surrounding neighborhood (400 foot radius) is comprised of B-1 zoned parcels, containing mostly single-family residential lots, with a number of higher density residential uses (2-family, 3-family, etc).
6. The applicant provided a neighborhood assessment that provided the following facts:
  - a. Total number of lots within a 400 ft radius: 101
  - b. Lots less than 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup>: 1
  - c. Lots equal to 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup>: 79
  - d. Lots greater than 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup>: 21
  - e. Lots with equal to 50' frontage: 79
  - f. Average size of all lots: 5,594 ft<sup>2</sup>
7. The surrounding neighborhood contains mostly single-family residential lots, but also has a number of multi-family dwellings which typically occur on the larger lots in the area. This brings the average lot size up above 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup> due to the multi-family dwellings, however

staff finds that the proposed lots size of 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup> for the proposed project is still in keeping with the character of the neighborhood.

8. The Cranston Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map designates the subject parcels as "Single/Two Family Residential Less Than 10.89 units per acre". The proposed density of the project is 8.71 units/per acres (including the pre-existing single-family dwelling) so the project is in conformance with the Future Land Use Map despite the need for a lot size variance.
9. The Land Use Plan Element recognizes that many existing lots in the eastern portion of the city are undersized, and the Comprehensive Plan supports the development of these lots, stating: "...the City grants variances routinely when properties are 5,000 square feet limiting the purpose and effectiveness of the existing minimum size requirements. The City needs to address this issue and consider changing regulations to reflect the higher density in these areas, which are essentially built out and have an older housing stock." The Comprehensive Plan supports the development of undersized lots and provides clear policy direction relevant to this proposal.
10. The proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Housing Element in that development of infill lots is encouraged in Eastern Cranston.

#### **PLANNING ANALYSIS:**

Staff has no concerns with the application and the resulting density on the site. This application provides an opportunity for infill development in Eastern Cranston in a manner that fits with the surrounding neighborhood.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

*NOTE: The overall application to the Zoning Board of Review has been broken into 2 separate applications, representing 1 application for each of the proposed 2 substandard lots. As such, this recommendation is intended to be replicated for each of the 2 separate applications.*

Due to the fact that the application is consistent with the Cranston Comprehensive Plan, and due to the fact that the proposed lot size and frontage is consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhood, staff recommends the Plan Commission forward a **positive recommendation** on this application to the Zoning Board of Review.