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Thomas Zidelis

Draft Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 2nd, 2023 – 6:30 PM

3rd Floor - City Council Chamber, 869 Park Avenue, Cranston RI

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. in the Council Chamber, 869 Park Avenue.

The following Commissioners were in attendance for the meeting: Chairman Michael Smith, David Exter, Steven Frias, Kathleen Lanphear, Justin Mateus, Lisa Mancini, and Thomas Zidelis. Commissioners Thomas Barbieri and Robert Coupe were absent.

The following Planning Department members were in attendance: Jason M. Pezzullo, AICP, Planning Director; Douglas McLean, AICP, Principal Planner; Gregory Guertin, Senior Planner; Alexander Berardo, Planning Technician; Amelia Lavallee, Planning Department Intern; and Jacob Barnds, Planning Department Intern.

Also attending: Steve Marsella, Esq., Assistant City Solicitor.

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE - CITY PLAN COMMISSION MEMBER

(no vote taken)

- Richard Bernardo – 2022-2023

Chairman Smith acknowledged former Commissioner Richard Bernardo's year of service and welcomed his replacement, Justin Mateus, who is acting Director of Public Works and therefore holds one of the Commission's two ex officio seats.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(votes taken)

- 4/4/23 Regular City Plan Commission meeting
- 4/19/23 Special City Plan Commission meeting

Upon motion by Ms. Mancini, and seconded by Mr. Zidelis, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to **approve** the regular City Plan Commission meeting minutes of 4/4/23 as submitted.

Upon motion by Mr. Exter, and seconded by Mr. Zidelis, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to **approve** the special City Plan Commission meeting minutes of 4/19/23 as submitted.

ORDINANCES AND LAND DEVELOPMENTS

(votes taken for all items)

- **"Knights Corner Development Project"** Public Informational Meeting (vote taken)
MASTER PLAN – Major Land Development

Redevelopment of former church and construction of maximum of 160 multi-family apartments
 Current zone M-1 (C-2 with special condition is proposed (**Ord. 3-25-05**)).
 AP 8, Lots 203 and 2739
 1390 Cranston Street

ORDINANCE 3-23-05 – in amendment of Chapter 17 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled “Zoning” (Change of Zone – 1388 & 1390 Cranston St. – Knights Corner Development Project). **C-2 zone with conditions to allow 160 multi-family dwellings and the adaptive re-use of the church structure for commercial purposes.**

Principal Planner Doug McLean gave the Staff presentation. He said the proposal, which would redevelop the property at 13800-1390 Cranston Street for restaurant and multifamily uses, involved two separate applications: one for the Master Plan and another for the rezone.

Mr. McLean first reviewed the site layout and context through various graphics. An abandoned church building (which the applicant proposes to convert into a restaurant venue) is the only structure standing on the site, which is otherwise covered in asphalt and trees. Mr. McLean displayed renderings of what the restored church building and four new multifamily apartment buildings would look like. He also pointed out the inclusion of a central outdoor tennis/pickleball court for residents’ use and noted that the parcel can be accessed from both Cranston Street and Dyer Avenue.

In his Planning Analysis, Mr. McLean said the zone change would shift the property from its present M-1 zoning to “C-2 with Conditions.” The conditions would allow the applicant a degree of flexibility from complying with certain dimensional requirements of the C-2 zone, whose by-right uses constitutes the base of the rezone request. Specifically, it would allow a density bonus of up to 160 units (the applicant is currently proposing 156), a height bonus of up to 75 feet, and parking calculations based on 1.25 spaces per residential unit (although Mr. McLean noted the Master Plan has been revised since the Ordinance was drafted, and the applicant now appears to be requesting 1.5 spaces/unit). Mr. McLean added that some of the signage standards are similar to what the Cranston Print Works developers requested, and 15% of the units will be designated affordable.

As for the Findings, Mr. McLean said the area contains a mix of land uses and zones, and all immediate abutters are industrial, so Staff does not believe the zone change should conflict with the existing context. He said Staff also believes the proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, as the Future Land Use Map designates the parcel as a Special Redevelopment Area and numerous Goals support the sort of development the proposal would bring to the Knightsville area.

Staff made positive recommendations on both the Master Plan and Ordinance, subject to several conditions, among them that 1) final traffic reviews and the Fire Department’s comments will be addressed and 2) necessary state permits will be submitted before the Preliminary Plan application is heard.

Atty. Robert Murray then introduced the members of the applicant team: Jeremy Moses (333 Main St LLC), Dave Russo and Jenna Shea (DiPrete Engineering), Ron Stevenson (South County Architecture), Paul Bannon (BETA Group), and Joe Lombardo (JDL Enterprises).

Atty. Murray said the Master Plan has changed little since the concept was first shared during the February Site Walk meeting. He noted that the applicant has not yet closed on its purchase of the subject parcel, but the property’s present owner has also signed the Master Plan application. He then asked Ms. Shea, serving as Project Manager, to introduce the site context and to provide an overview of the proposal.

Ms. Shea first reviewed the topographic and hydrological situation of the parcel, observing an isolated wetland area stands in the southeast corner of Lot 203 (and reporting that the project’s Wetland Edge Verification is pending with RIDEM). She said that stormwater plans have not been designed yet but will be reviewed by RIDEM at the Preliminary Plan phase, and in the meantime, Ms. Shea was able to confirm that the proposal would not result in disturbances to any wetland areas.

On a related note, Ms. Shea reported that environmental testing has been done to ascertain to what extent the site may have been polluted during the years when it was associated with the Print Works complex across the street. She said ash had been buried on-site and confirmed that the applicant would fully remediate the site to all standards necessary to allow residential use. Ms. Lanphear asked if the RIDEM-approved remediation plan would be submitted prior to the Preliminary Plan phase, which Ms. Shea confirmed, albeit while acknowledging that a separate consultant would prepare that plan. Atty. Murray then added that Fuss & O'Neill conducted a preliminary site investigation and data-collection exercise on behalf of Cranston Print Works, so the applicant team already has some data at its disposal.

Next, Ms. Shea called attention to an existing, 8-foot-wide gas easement running along the eastern side of the site, as well as the two existing curb cuts on Cranston Street and one on Dyer Avenue that the applicant intended to retain for site ingress/egress. There will be 20-foot-wide drive aisles throughout the site; the applicant is coordinating with Fire to ensure sufficient access for emergency vehicles.

Finally, she offered an overview of the proposal before the Commission. The Knight's Corner development would create a mixed-use multifamily apartment complex consisting of four 5-story buildings. Three of the four buildings would feature ground-floor parking for vehicles as well as bicycles, while the fourth would host an indoor recreation area for residents on the ground level. There would be 156 residential units, comprised of a mix of studio, 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom units, with 15% of the units being designated affordable. The multifamily element of the redevelopment would provide 234 parking spaces, or 1.5 spaces per unit. At the same time, the project would also repurpose the historic church building into a restaurant with 32 associated parking spaces and a valet parking area. Ms. Shea said the site has access to public water and sewer, and the future multifamily buildings will comply with the setback requirements of the C-2 base zone.

Next Mr. Stevenson, the Project Architect, addressed the Commission. He said each building includes standardized dimensions (footprint of 140 feet by 70 feet) and standardized floorplans (Floors 2 through 5 feature the same mix of studio, 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom units). Horizontal and vertical design elements have not yet been finalized, but the applicant is interested in including white clapboard as a vertical element to recall the historic church on-site. The top floor of each building will be set back as mitigation for their massing. Finally, amidst the multifamily buildings, Mr. Stevenson said the applicant wants to create a park-like atmosphere, and to that end an outdoor kitchen, fire pits, a tennis/pickleball court, and covered seating areas will be provided.

Mr. Frias thanked the applicant team for raising the parking ratio to 1.5 spaces per unit and asked whether it would be feasible for them to increase the ratio to 1.57 (which would amount to 12 more on-site parking spaces). Mr. Frias explained that if he were to diverge from the City's own parking standards, he wanted to point to some sort of rational basis for doing so, and 1.57 would represent a compromise in which 1.25 spaces would be provided for studio and 1-bedroom apartments, while 2 spaces would be provided for 2- and 3-bedroom units. Mr. Stevenson said a determination of feasibility would have to be handled by DiPrete staff, but he personally would rather see more green space than parking. He also anecdotally shared that many towns are moving in the direction of 1.25 spaces/unit for multifamily projects. Mr. Frias also asked if a shared parking arrangement could be established between the multifamily buildings and the restaurant as a safeguard against on-street parking; Mr. Stevenson said he couldn't speak for the applicant or the restaurant's future operator, but felt it would be unlikely that people would park on-street, and the restaurant will only be open from Thursday to Sunday.

Ms. Lanphear asked for clarity on how and why the applicant's parking requests differ between the Master Plan and the Ordinance. She also asked whether the Ordinance's specifications would rule in the absence of a condition of approval that established another ratio. Atty. Murray then explained that the 1.25 ratio appears in the draft Ordinance because the applicant hadn't decided to move to a ratio of 1.5 by the deadline to submit notice to the City Clerk's office. Mr. Frias asked if the applicant would be open to the Commission applying a condition of approval that enshrines the 1.5 spaces/unit ratio into their recommendation to ensure agreement between Master Plan and Ordinance requests; Atty. Murray confirmed the applicant would be amenable to that course of action.

Atty. Murray then asked Mr. Bannon, serving as the applicant team's Traffic Consultant, to provide his testimony. Atty. Murray noted that Mr. Bannon's 180-page traffic study was peer-reviewed by Pare Corporation and a written response to their report has been sent. He added that data from the traffic

study for Print Works was incorporated into Mr. Bannon's traffic study; likewise, Knight's Corner was accounted for in Vanasse's traffic study for Print Works, for which Pare was also peer-reviewer. Ms. Lanphear asked whether the Commission should expect an additional response from Pare to Mr. Bannon prior to Preliminary Plan; Mr. McLean said he anticipated that Pare could submit a response within a week, probably before the Ordinance Committee of the City Council takes up the matter. He also said the Staff Memo includes a condition of approval to that effect.

Mr. Bannon said that his traffic study determined traffic volumes, obtained crash records, inventoried the physical characteristics of surrounding roadways, and estimated future traffic conditions using the ITE Trip Generation Manual for both restaurant and residential uses. He also worked with DiPrete Engineering to review how the proposed driveways into the site will be designed and interact with the existing roadway network.

Among his findings, Mr. Bannon reported that morning peak-hour traffic volumes at the Cranston/Dyer intersection stand at 975 vehicles per hour on Cranston Street and 875 on Dyer Avenue, while the afternoon peak-hour traffic counts stand at 935 for Cranston and 870 for Dyer. He said the intersection sees more angled collisions than usual because of its dimensions. Mr. Bannon said his study projected the Knights Corner development would add 71 trips in the morning peak hour and 113 in the afternoon peak hour under worst-case scenario projections. Finally, he made a few recommendations for improving the intersection's traffic situation, including to restripe the Cranston Street approaches of the intersection to have a dedicated left-turn lane; leaving a 5-foot-wide shoulder for safe bicycle passage; and potentially signal optimization down the line.

Mr. Frias posed several questions to understand the differences in findings between the Knights Corner and Print Works studies. In the course of discussion, Mr. Bannon stated that the Print Works traffic study analyzed the situation with maximum recall and made more negative findings due to the fact that the light on Cranston Street needs to be changed (it costs drivers time in its current condition, which is essentially a maintenance issue that the City should fix). Mr. Frias asked whether the anticipated D-rating of the intersection (post-construction) implies there will be long delays, but Mr. Bannon said that still falls under the acceptable range and corresponds to a roughly 35-second wait. He then confirmed that with maintenance on the traffic light and restriping the roads, the intersection could be improved to service level B. Currently (listed in the study as the No-Build Condition), the eastbound movement operates at Level E.

Mr. Mateus asked whether restriping would require signal upgrades. Mr. Bannon said it wouldn't be necessary right away, but in the long term, to reduce the crash rate, the City could also alter the signaling in other ways that he did not factor into his study.

Mr. Frias also asked whether part of the difference might also be because the two projects were analyzed under different ITE designations, with the Print Works complex being treated as a "mid-rise multifamily apartment" while Knights Corner is treated as a "low-rise multifamily apartment." Mr. Bannon said the categories refer mostly to building height; when Mr. Frias asked why Knights Corner should be expected to generate less traffic than Print Works even though its proposed buildings would be taller, Mr. Bannon said site-specific considerations also come into play and impact the traffic projections. Similarly, Mr. Frias asked whether the restaurant's designation made a difference: Mr. Bannon's study examined it as a "high-end" restaurant, while the Print Works study treated it as "high-turnover." Mr. Bannon said the high-turnover designation assumes the facility will be open seven days a week and handle a higher volume of customers than what the applicant currently envisions, so if anything, the Print Works study would overstate the restaurant's expected traffic generation.

Next, Mr. Lombardo came forward to summarize the findings of his Fiscal Impact Report, whose methodologies and numbers were comparable to those found in Frank Spinella's Fiscal Impact Report for the Cranston Print Works redevelopment. Speaking first to his methodologies, Mr. Lombardo said he drew upon data from multiple studies conducted in other parts of New England, the American Community Survey, and his own prior work to determine how many people would be expected to live at the property. He said the numbers largely depend on the unit type: 1.5 people/unit would be expected for studio and 1-bedroom units; 2.07 residents (2 representing adults, 0.07 representing children) would be expected for an average 2-bedroom unit; and 2.60 for a three-bedroom unit, which is in line with the average occupancy for a single-family house. He further noted that the amenity package the applicant intends to

create for the site would appeal more to adults than to children. In total, Mr. Lombardo projected around 14 school-aged children would reside at the fully built development.

On a purely fiscal basis, Mr. Lombardo said the project exceeds the break-even threshold from the City's perspective by only around \$20,000. Among the figures he cited based on his work with the Assessor's office, the project would probably generate just under \$500,000 in new tax revenue and the annual sewer charge would bring in an additional \$70,000. Mr. Lombardo qualified this discussion by observing the project would bring other important (but not necessarily fiscal) benefits to the City, particularly an increase in affordable housing production.

Ms. Mancini asked which school district the property would fall within; Atty. Murray said it would be Arlington Elementary School (which will be consolidated into Gladstone). He added that he'd spoken with the Superintendent of Schools and received confirmation that the School Department doesn't foresee any capacity issues as a result of this development.

Mr. Frias observed that if Mr. Lombardo's estimate is off by three children, the project would not break even for the City. He then shared that he had amassed his own data set concerning how many school-aged children reside in apartment complexes across the City and shared data for Riverbend and Pocasset Village to explain that he thought the actual number of children residing at Knight's Corner would be much higher, perhaps up to 60. He raised concerns about the schools having adequate capacity to handle an increase of that size, but Mr. Lombardo said Mr. Frias' sample size was smaller than the one his projections used, and in any case there would be no way for the City to prevent people with children from moving into that development or any other.

Atty. Murray observed that Riverbend may not be a good comparison given that it is subsidized housing and then stressed some of the non-fiscal benefits of the project. He said the project would contribute \$93,000 in impact fees to the City, revitalize a contaminated and vacant property in Knightsville, and generate new construction as well as permanent jobs. Finally, he reminded the Commission that school impacts are not among the state-required Findings of Fact they are required to make, and part of the reason is that it cannot be assumed that every school-aged child will attend public school.

After Mr. Lombardo's testimony had concluded, Atty. Murray offered a few closing remarks of his own. He discussed RI Historic Preservation & Heritage Commission's comments regarding the proposal and the historic value of the church building. Mr. Frias asked whether DiPrete staff intended to seek RIHPHC's opinion on how to properly reuse the building (i.e. preserving only the exterior, also interior elements, etc) and if the applicant intended to seek Historic Tax Credits. Atty. Murray said Mr. Stevenson would take the lead on coordination with RIHPHC, and at this time the applicant did not plan to seek tax credits. Lastly, Atty. Murray confirmed the applicant had no concerns with the proposed conditions of approval.

Chairman Smith invited the public to comment on the proposal, but none wished to do so. Upon motion made by Ms. Lanphear, and seconded by Mr. Exter, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to close the public comment period.

Chairman Smith then asked for a motion regarding the Ordinance application. Mr. Frias moved to amend the recommendation to raise the residential parking ratio to 1.5 spaces/unit, as had been previously discussed. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lanphear and passed unanimously (7-0).

Mr. Frias said he remained unconvinced that the project would break even for the City (as he suspected it would house more school-aged children than projected), but he nonetheless felt it was a good project overall for providing more housing, including affordable housing, and for preserving a historic structure.

Upon motion made by Mr. Frias, and seconded by Ms. Mancini, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to forward a **positive** recommendation on Ordinance #3-23-05 to the City Council as amended.

Chairman Smith then asked for a motion on the Master Plan application. Ms. Lanphear moved to add a condition of approval specifying that the applicant would provide 1.5 parking spaces per residential unit and 32 parking spaces total for the restaurant. The motion was seconded by Mr. Frias and passed unanimously.

Upon motion made by Ms. Lanphear, and seconded by Ms. Mancini, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the Master Plan – Major Land Development application as amended.

- **“Champlin Hills”** Public Hearing (votes taken)
 PRELIMINARY PLAN – Major Amendment to a recorded major land development
 Major Land Development w/o street extension
 Multi-family residential - 90 total units (18 new units) and associated amenity clubhouse
 Scituate Avenue (southerly side)
 AP 20/4, Lots 2112, 2116 and 2117

ZONING BOARD OF REVIEW – Recommendation

Carpionato Properties, Inc (OWN); Alfred Carpionato c/o Carol DeAngelis (OWN); and West Bay, LLC (OWN/APP) have filed an application to construct a multi-structure residential complex with 90 apartment units, a club house, and pool facility; allowing the club house and pool facility as accessory to the residential development and to allow the structures to exceed the allowable heights at 320 Scituate Ave. A.P. 20 Lots 2112, 2116; area 30,4747 sf zoned A20; 0 Scituate Ave. A.P.20 Lot 2117; area 345,430 sf, zoned B2. Applicant seeks relief per 17.92.010- Variances, sections 17.20.030- Schedule of Permitted Uses, 17.20.120- Schedule of Intensity Regulations.

Director Pezzullo gave the Staff presentation. He said the 72-unit project first began in 2014 and was recorded in 2017. The applicant has returned to the Commission seeking a major amendment that would add a new three-story, 18-unit multifamily building to the development, raising the total unit count to 90. The amendment would also relocate the proposed Club House to a location that had previously been intended for commercial use.

Atty. Tom Moses, representing the applicant, then briefly addressed the Commission, explaining that the logic behind the proposed amendment is that it has become more cost-efficient to reuse an existing building for the Club House than to construct a new one.

David Taglianetti, Vice President of Development with the Carpionato Group, began by noting the applicant has used the names “Champlin Hills” and “Champlin Heights” to refer to Phases 1 and 2 (respectively) of the same overall development, which would soon be rebranded as “Meridian Point.” He said the precise unit breakdown of the total project had not yet been decided, but it would likely be 50% studio and one-bedroom and 50% two-bedroom units. He said Carpionato understood the Commission’s expectation that 15% of units in new multifamily projects would be deed-restricted as affordable but asked that they consider deferring that condition to the 152-unit Phase 2 (Champlin Heights) of the development. He confirmed the total number of affordable units would be 37 regardless of whether the Commission entertains that request.

Mr. Taglianetti then gave a brief presentation of his own to review specific aspects of the project, as well as various characteristics of the site and its surroundings. He drew the Commission’s attention to a few key details, including the elimination of one existing curb cut, the location of retention basins, plans for emergency vehicle access (which were developed in conjunction with the Fire Department following discussions during the project’s Development Plan Review hearing), and the expansion of a landscape buffer (one of the original conditions of approval). He also confirmed that grading, landscaping, lighting, stormwater design, and utility design plans had all been prepared. Finally, he also noted that the applicant didn’t submit a new traffic study because it conducted peak-hour traffic counts the previous week, compared them against the project’s 2015-16 traffic study, and found that peak traffic levels are lower today than they were then.

Mr. Frias asked Atty. Moses to recount the history of the project having been granted a use variance. Atty. Moses said the Club House would constitute an accessory use to the apartments, but the parcel’s zoning is A-20. The applicant discussed the situation with Director Pezzullo and Solicitor Marsella and decided that would be cleaner to request a standalone use variance. He also recalled that the use of the specific site on which the applicant intends to locate the proposed Club House has evolved, originally meant to be residential, later commercial, and finally as a Club House.

Ms. Lanphear asked what assurances the applicant could give the Commission, if it chose to grant the request to defer construction of all affordable units to Phase 2, that the applicant would, in fact, build Phase 2 of the project. Atty. Moses said Phase 2 is already vested under the original Master Plan, and since it's been fully permitted, if Carpionato chose not to build it, another developer would take the opportunity. He suggested the Commission could make it a condition of approval if they preferred.

Chairman Smith then opened the matter to public comment. Only one member of the public wished to speak:

- Donna Andrews, of Scituate Ave, expressed concern about the project's possible impacts on traffic and the surrounding area's rural character.

Upon motion made by Ms. Mancini, and seconded by Mr. Exter, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to close the public comment period.

Ms. Lanphear asked whether the Water Quality and Insignificant Alteration permits that the applicant secured when it originally received approval had expired by this point and whether the Commission should factor that situation into its decision. Mr. Taglianetti said that his understanding is that the applicant would still be vested under those permits because it began construction within the necessary timeframe. Solicitor Marsella added that enforcement of lapsed permits would not fall within the Commission's purview regardless, but is rather the domain of RIDEM.

Mr. Mateus asked a few questions regarding sewer upgrades on Phenix Avenue; observing that the sewer plan does not yet show a stamp, he also asked whether the plan was subject to change. Mr. Taglianetti said the plan technically could change and that applicant cannot receive a Sewer Connection Permit from Veolia until they submit sewer calculations that meet Veolia's standards.

Upon motion made by Mr. Mateus, and seconded by Mr. Frias, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to **approve** the Major Amendment to the recorded Major Land Development, subject to the following conditions:

- The applicant shall obtain all necessary relief from the ZBR prior to Final Plan recording
- 15% of the fully-realized (Champlin Hills and Champlin Heights) project's total residential units will be deemed affordable under Rhode Island state law for a period of no less than 30 years.

Director Pezzullo then gave a brief presentation reviewing the nature of the project's associated variance applications. The three-story multifamily building (which would be built in the Club House's originally-intended location) will require a dimensional variance for height, while the Club House will require a use variance. Staff recommended forwarding positive recommendations on both.

Due to the finding that the application is consistent with the Cranston Comprehensive Plan and is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, upon motion made by Ms. Mancini, and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the City Plan Commission voted 7-0 to forward a **positive recommendation** to the Zoning Board of Review.

- **"747 Pontiac Ave. Residential Apartment Conversion"** (vote taken)
PUBLIC HEARING
 PRELIMINARY PLAN – Major Land Development without street extension
 18-unit multi-family apartment conversion from a pre-existing nonconforming office use
 15% of total units (3 out of 18) will be deed restricted as affordable at 80% AMI
 Zoned C-2 with conditions
 AP 9, Lot 146 (28,020 sq.ft. portion of)
 747 Pontiac Avenue

Principal Planner Doug McLean gave the Staff presentation. He reminded the Commission that the project had been heard last fall for Master Plan and Zone Change approvals, noting that one condition was a requirement to provide 15% affordable housing units.

In its Preliminary Plan application, the applicant (whose representatives, Bill DiStefano and Mick Hogan, were in attendance for the meeting) is proposing to convert an existing building which formerly housed small offices into an 18-unit multifamily property comprised of 15 one-bedroom and 3 studio apartments.

Mr. McLean then showed the proposed site plan and associated maps and graphics. He reviewed some of the minor changes and additions that have been made since the previous round of review. Among them were the replacement of a proposed chain-link fence with a wrought-iron fence; a new ADA-accessible down ramp; new wall-mounted exterior lights; a dumpster and associated enclosure; and new plantings as specified in the Landscaping Plan. He stated that Staff made a positive recommendation on the application.

Chairman Smith asked for public comment, but seeing none, he then asked for a motion to close the public comment period. Upon motion made by Ms. Mancini, and seconded by Mr. Zidelis, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to close public comment.

Finally, upon motion made by Mr. Zidelis, and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the Preliminary Plan – Major Land Development application.

EXTENSION OF TIME

(vote taken)

- Champlin Heights (152 Unit Multi-Family) – Preliminary Plan one-year extension

Director Pezzullo introduced the matter by noting the applicant has asked for an extension on the project's approval one time before.

Atty. Tenessa Azar, representing the applicant, provided additional context, noting that this project is the second phase of the same development discussed earlier in the evening (and the 152 units this phase will add are the same ones subject to the condition regarding affordability). She thanked the Commission for granting extensions before and asked that they do so once more to ensure the project remains vested.

Upon motion made by Mr. Exter, and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to grant a one-year extension of time to the Champlin Heights Preliminary Plan approval.

ZONING BOARD OF REVIEW – RECOMMENDATIONS

(votes taken for all items)

- **GARFIELD AVE FOODS, LLC. (OWN) and LAMAR CENTRAL OUTDOOR, LLC (APP)** have filed an application for special permit to modify an existing double-sided billboard to an electronic double-sided billboard at **110 Garfield Avenue**, A.P. 7, lots 2561-62, 2593-97, and 3768, area 29,091 sf. zoned M2. Applicant seeks relief per Sections 17.92.010 Variance; 17.72.010 (7) Signs. 17.92.020 Special Permit; 17.20.120 Schedule of Intensity Regulations.

Due to the findings that the proposed application is inconsistent with the Cranston Comprehensive Plan, incompatible with the surrounding area and that there are potential safety concerns with Digital LED billboards, upon motion made by Ms. Lanphear, and seconded by Mr. Zidelis, the City Plan Commission voted 7-0 to forward a **negative recommendation** to the Zoning Board of Review.

- **OLDCASTLE APG NORTHEAST INC (OWN) and LAMAR CENTRAL OUTDOOR, LLC (APP)** has applied to convert an existing electronic billboard sign to an equal sized standard vinyl billboard at **0 Park Avenue**, A.P. 11, lot 1870; area 2.04 ac, zoned M1. Applicant seeks relief per Sections 17.92.010 Variance; 17.72.010 (7) Signs. 17.92.020 Special Permit; 17.20.120 Schedule of Intensity Regulations.

Due to the findings that the proposed application is inconsistent with the Cranston Comprehensive Plan, incompatible with the surrounding area and that there are potential safety concerns with Digital LED billboards, upon motion made by Ms. Mancini, and seconded by Mr. Zidelis, the City Plan Commission voted 7-0 to forward a **negative recommendation** to the Zoning Board of Review.

- **JOSEPH DECRISTOFARO (OWN/APP)** has applied to the Board to construct a new single-family dwelling on an under-sized lot at **0 Armington Street**, A.P. 2, lot 3268; area 5,500 sf; zoned B2. Applicant seek relief per Section 17.92.010- Variances; Sections 17.20.120- Schedule of Intensity Regulations.

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, upon motion made by Mr. Zidelis, and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the City Plan Commission voted 7-0 to forward a **positive recommendation** to the Zoning Board of Review.

- **SCW18, LLC (OWN/APP)** has filed an application to subdivide an existing lot into two parcels allowing three existing accessory structures (not to be used for residential dwellings) to remain on lot 2 with reduced frontage, side, and rear setbacks at **295 Oaklawn Avenue / 0 Dean Street**, A.P. 17, lot 1338, Parcel 2. Applicant seek relief per Section 17.92.010- Variances; Sections 17.60.010(A), - Accessory Uses; 17.20.120- Schedule of Intensity Regulations.

Due to the findings that the application runs contrary to City Code section 17.60.010.a and that it constitutes an instance in which the applicant would create its own hardship, upon motion made by Ms. Lanphear, and seconded by Mr. Frias, the City Plan Commission voted 7-0 to forward a **negative recommendation** to the Zoning Board of Review.

- **RSR INVESTMENTS & CONSTRUCTION, LLC (OWN/APP)** has filed an application to grant relief on an existing single family dwelling encroaching into the side setback on an undersized lot merged by zoning at **64 Westwood Avenue**, A.P. 2, lot 1386; area 4,000 sf.; zoned A6. Applicants seek relief per Section 17.92.010- Variances; Sections 17.20.120- Schedule of Intensity Regulations, 17.88.010- Substandard lots of record.

Upon motion made by Mr. Frias, and seconded by Mr. Exter, the City Plan Commission voted 7-0 to **continue** the matter to the June 6th, 2023 Regular Agenda of the City Plan Commission.

- **RSR INVESTMENTS & CONSTRUCTION, LLC (OWN/APP)** has applied to the Board to allow a new single-family dwelling to be constructed on an undersized lot merged by zoning at **0 Westwood Ave**, A.P. 2, lot 1387; area 4,000 sf.; zoned A6. Applicants seek relief per Section 17.92.010- Variances; Sections 17.20.120- Schedule of Intensity Regulations, 17.88.010 Substandard lots of record.

Upon motion made by Mr. Frias, and seconded by Mr. Exter, the City Plan Commission voted 7-0 to **continue** the matter to the June 6th, 2023 Regular Agenda of the City Plan Commission.

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- **Natick Avenue Solar** – Master Plan – Public Informational Meeting (vote taken)
 - Discussion to reschedule and renotify the continued Master Plan meeting

Chairman Smith said that due to schedule conflicts, the parties involved in the Natick Solar hearing agreed that rather than continuing the matter to a Special Meeting on May 17th, they would be amenable to moving the discussion to the June 6th Regular Meeting. Mr. Frias asked if consent from both the applicant and the abutters had been gained. Atty. Murray, part of the applicant's legal team, confirmed that the applicant could meet on other days as well, but would be happy to continue the discussion to the June meeting. Director Pezzullo said he contacted Council President Marino, who confirmed the June meeting date should work for both the Council and Atty. Dougherty (counsel for the opposition).

Director Pezzullo said the agenda for the regular June meeting would most likely be light, as there were no major projects in the queue to be heard, but noted the applicant would need to renotify in any case.

Mr. Frias asked Solicitor Marsella if he felt there were any Open Meetings issues with rescheduling the meeting and wondered if it would suffice to post notices on the doors of City Hall on May 17th to ensure interested members of the public who were not present at tonight's meeting will know the rescheduled meeting date. Solicitor Marsella said as long as notice is properly posted to the RI Secretary of State's Open Meetings portal and the City's website, voting to reschedule the meeting this evening would not be an issue. Atty. Murray added he would ensure notice was mailed to all present and former abutters within a 400-foot radius of the subject parcel and that he would attempt to find mailing addresses for all those who made public comments regarding Natick Solar during the past few months.

Upon motion made by Mr. Frias, and seconded by Mr. Zidelis, the City Plan Commission voted 7-0 to **reschedule** the Natick Avenue Solar hearing from the proposed May 17, 2023 Special Meeting date to the regular June City Plan Commission meeting on Tuesday, June 6, 2023.

In other business, Director Pezzullo said Planning Intern Amelia Lavallee was concluding her time with the Department as she finished her MPA degree from URI and prepared to pursue a graduate degree in planning at UMass in the fall. He then asked the Commission to welcome Jacob Barnds, a RIC student who would soon begin an internship of his own with the Department.

Lastly, Mr. Frias asked Director Pezzullo if he would begin to provide monthly updates on Comp Plan progress as a regular component of his Director's Reports. Director Pezzullo then noted the Commission should start to expect two meetings per month – one Regular Meeting to handle its usual regulatory responsibilities with regard to applications, and another meeting for long-range planning matters, especially the Comp Plan update.

UPCOMING MEETINGS / ADJOURNMENT

(vote taken)

- Tuesday, June 6th, 2023, 6:30PM – **Regular City Plan Commission Meeting** – City Hall Council Chambers, 869 Park Avenue

Upon motion made by Mr. Zidelis, and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to **adjourn** the meeting at 10:22 p.m.