

City Planning Department



Memo

To: Cranston City Plan Commission
From: Doug McLean, AICP - Principal Planner
Date: April 28, 2022
Re: **"Sprague Covington Plat"** Preliminary Plan - Major Land Development

Owner/App: Sprague Covington, LLC
Location: 1369 Park Avenue, AP 11, Lots 273 & 4062
Zone: C-2* with condition (allowed to have up to 8 dwelling units on combined property)
FLU: Neighborhood Commercial/Services

I. Proposal

The owner/applicant proposes to construct 8 new dwelling units on a vacant piece of land with frontage on Park Avenue. The subject property is currently zoned C-2 *with conditions* and contains 23,594 sq.ft. (.54 acres). This Preliminary Plan Major Land Development application is consistent with a recently approved Zoning Ordinance amendment (7-21-10) to allow for a density bonus of up to 8 dwelling units by-right on this property. This zoning amendment was granted in 2021 following the Master Plan approval of this application. The proposed use (multi-family residential) is allowed by-right in a C-2 zone. Based on the approved zoning condition, no variances are needed in association with this project. The subject property includes 2 assessors' lots that will be merged into 1 parcel as a result of the subdivision. The property currently contains remnant asphalt from a previous use (restaurant) and 2 large signs. The end result of the project will be the removal of the signs and the development of 8 total dwelling units (to be built as two 4-unit buildings) along with associated parking and landscaping improvements.

II. Documents which are part of the Major Land Development application

1. Preliminary Plan application;
2. Application filing fees;
3. Subdivision plan set entitled "Sprague Covington Plat," prepared by Richard Bzdyra, PLS of Ocean State Planners with date of 3/3/22.
4. Engineering plans and details prepared by Curtis Ructolo, PE of Advanced Civil Design with date of 4/20/22
5. Landscape Plan prepared by Bruce Muoio, LA of Muoio Design Group with date of 3/10/22
6. Preliminary Plan checklist;
7. Project Narrative by Ocean State Planners;
8. 100' radius map, list of abutters;
9. Certificate of Municipal Liens;

NEIGHBORHOOD AERIAL
(subject parcels in orange, 400 ft. radius in black)



PARCEL AERIAL



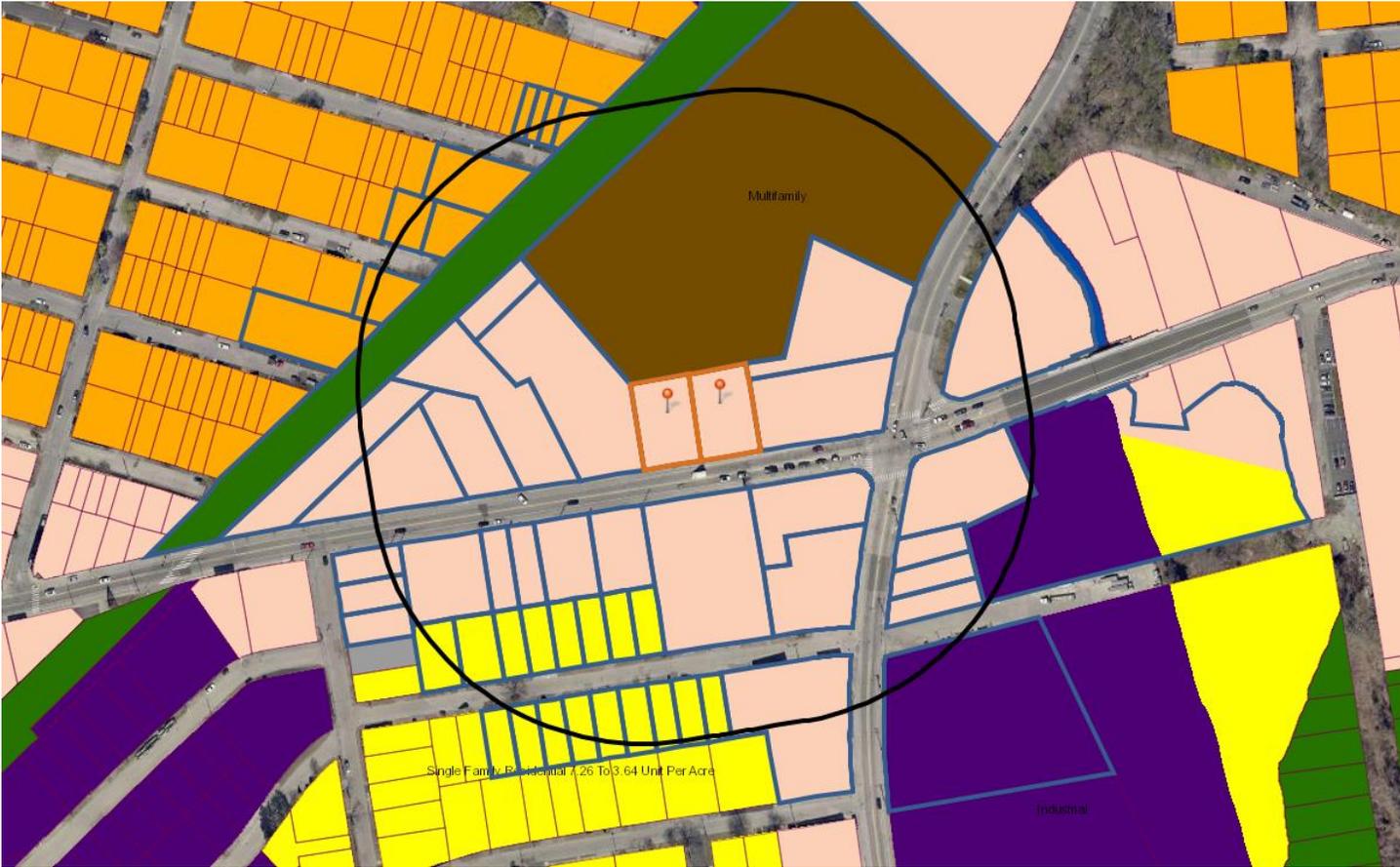
3-D AERIAL (facing north)



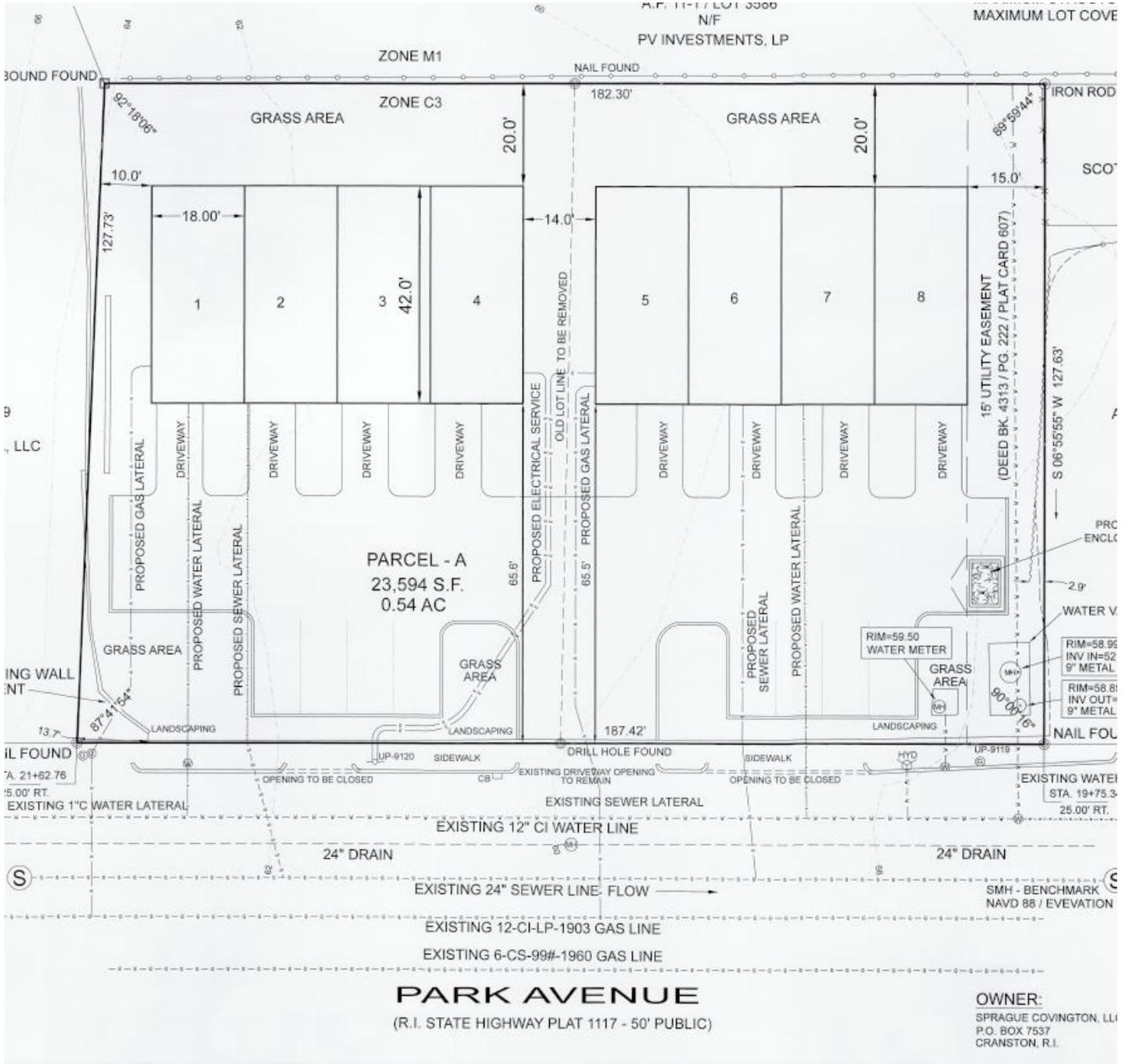
STREET VIEW
(Park Ave. facing north)



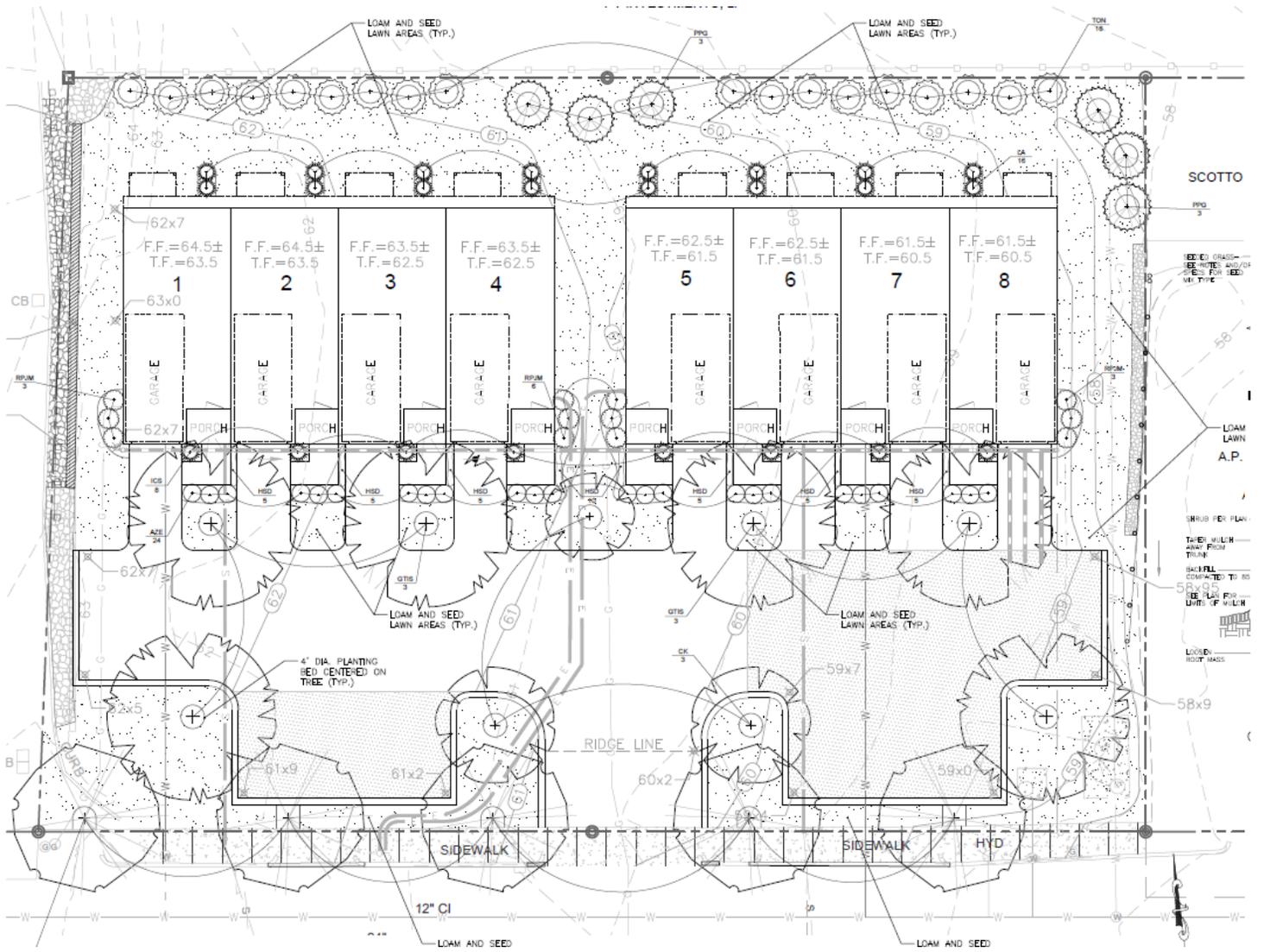
FUTURE LAND USE MAP



SITE PLAN (snippet)



LANDSCAPE PLAN



III. Surrounding land use and context

Analysis using Geographic Information System indicates that:

1. The subject parcel is located in Eastern Cranston with frontage on Park Avenue.
2. The abutting neighborhood contains a wide mix of land uses, ranging from multi-family residential, to commercial plazas, to limited industrial uses.
3. There are no wetlands or other significant natural features within the 400 foot radius of the subject property.
4. The site has minimal topography and slopes gently downward towards the east.
5. The project is free of any regulated floodplains or historic/cultural districts.
6. The 2018 Natural Heritage Map does not show any known rare species located on or near the site.

IV. Staff / Agency Comments

Pursuant to RIGL 45-23-41 A3, these plans were distributed for comment to the Public Works Department, Engineering Division, Traffic Division, Building and Zoning Department, Conservation Commission and the Fire Department. The City Traffic Engineer provided comment during the Development Plan Review process regarding adding dumpster location, removing pervious pavement, and selection of tree species that have all been integrated into the plans for the Preliminary Plan application. No other comments have been received at this time.

V. Interests of Others

None to report at this time.

VI. Planning Analysis

As previously mentioned, the site is currently host to remnant asphalt from a previous use (restaurant) and 2 large signs (see Street View on page 5 of this memo). The proposal will remove the existing signage, which would be considered an aesthetic improvement to the subject site from staff's perspective. Additionally, staff finds the design of the proposed dwelling units will fit the character of the surrounding neighborhood, which contains other multi-family apartment complexes and a range of commercial and industrial uses. Based on the removal of the remnant asphalt and signage, as well as the design of the proposed new dwelling units and landscaping, the final development outcome of this proposal will represent a significant aesthetic improvement to the site compared to current conditions.

Staff reviewed the City's Comprehensive Plan to determine if the proposed Preliminary Plan Application is consistent with the Plan for the use and density being proposed. The property has a Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designation of Neighborhood Commercial/Services which does allow for multi-family dwelling and does not establish a

maximum density for dwelling unit per acre of land. Furthermore, the proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Housing Element in that development of infill lots is encouraged in Eastern Cranston. Based on the above, staff finds that the rezone proposal is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan. Upon review of proposal as compared to the underlying zoning allowances of the C-2 zone, in addition to the special condition to build up to 8 units that was recently approved for this property, staff finds the application is in conformity with the zoning ordinance and no variances are needed.

The Development Plan Review (DPR) Committee reviewed the corresponding DPR Preliminary Plan submission on April 20, 2022 and unanimously voted to approve the DPR application based on its technical merits.

VII. Findings of Fact

An orderly, thorough and expeditious technical review of this Master Plan has been conducted. Property owners within a 100' radius have been notified via first class mail, a display advertisement was published in the Cranston Herald and the meeting agenda has been properly posted.

Staff has reviewed this Master Plan application for conformance with required standards set forth in RIGL Section 45-23-60, as well as the City of Cranston's Subdivision and Land Development Regulations and finds as follows:

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(1) states, “The proposed development is consistent with the comprehensive community plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies.”

1. The proposed subdivision is consistent with the City of Cranston Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designation of Neighborhood Commercial/Services in that multi-family dwelling residential is an allowed use.
2. The proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Housing Element in that development of infill lots is encouraged in Eastern Cranston.
3. Significant cultural, historic or natural features that contribute to the attractiveness of the community have not been identified on site.

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(2) states, “The proposed development is in compliance with the standards and provisions of the municipality's zoning ordinance.”

4. The proposed Major Land Development is in conformity with the zoning ordinance and no variances are needed.
5. The proposal will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the Cranston Zoning Code.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(3) states, “There will be no significant negative environmental impacts from the proposed development as shown on the **final** plan, with all required conditions for approval.” (emphasis added)*

6. This finding pertains specifically to the final plan, however, no significant environmental impacts are anticipated.

7. The Rhode Island November 2018 Natural Heritage map shows that there are no known rare species located on the site.

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(4) states, “The subdivision, as proposed, will not result in the creation of individual lots with any physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable. (See definition of Buildable lot). Lots with physical constraints to development may be created only if identified as permanent open space or permanently reserved for a public purpose on the approved, recorded plans.”

8. The proposed subdivision will not result in the creation of individual lots with such physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable.

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(5) states, “All proposed land developments and all subdivision lots have adequate and permanent physical access to a public street. Lot frontage on a public street without physical access shall not be considered in compliance with this requirement.”

9. The subject property will have adequate permanent physical access to a public right-of-way through conforming lot frontage on Park Avenue.
10. The proposed subdivision provides for safe and adequate local circulation for vehicular traffic.

VIII. Recommendation

Staff finds this proposal consistent with the standards for required findings of fact set forth in RIGL Section 45-23-60 as well as with the City of Cranston’s Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. Staff therefore recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the documented findings of fact and **approve** the Preliminary Plan application, subject to the conditions denoted below.

IX. Condition of approval

1. Payment of the Eastern Cranston Capital Facilities impact fee in the amount of \$4,747.86 (\$593.46 x 8 new units) must be submitted at the time of final plat recording.