

A meeting of the Cranston Zoning Board of Review was called to order in Cranston City Hall Council Chambers by Chairperson Christopher E. Buonanno on **Wednesday November 8, 2023 at 6:32 pm**. Also present were Joy Montanaro, Dean Perdikakis, Carlos Zambrano, and 3<sup>rd</sup> alternate Frank Corrao III

The following matters were heard before the Board:

### OLD BUSINESS

#### Ward 6

**COMMONWEALTH ASSOCIATES, LLC (OWN) and J&J GASBARRO OAKLAWN LIQUORS (APP)** have applied to the Board to install a new sign exceeding the allowable area and add a new LED message center at **985 Oaklawn Avenue**, A.P. 18, lot 1232, area 66, 646 s.f. zoned C2. Applicants seek relief per Section 17.92.010- Variances; Section 17.72.010- Signs. Application filed 5/11/2023. David V. Iglizzi, Esq.

**On a motion made by Ms. Montanaro and seconded by Mr. Perdikakis, the Board voted unanimously to Approve in part and Deny in Part on November 8, 2023**

#### CONDITIONS:

1. The re-located **free-standing sign** measuring 7'-0" x 5'-0" is **approved** as installed.
2. The proposed **LED message board** is **Denied**.

The Board made their decision based on the following findings of facts:

1. The subject parcel (AP 18, Lot 1232) is located at 985 Oaklawn Avenue in the C-2 zone designated for Neighborhood business.
2. The applicant seeks to install a digital electronic sign (message board) to an existing exterior sign in a retail plaza on Oaklawn Avenue.
3. Per the city's sign code, in the C-2 zone "Total sign area shall not exceed the lesser of the following: one hundred (100) square feet or twenty (20) percent of the street-facing facade wall area" [17.72.010(3) – Signs].
  - a. The total sign area between the existing sign and proposed LED sign is (49.58 ft<sup>2</sup>).
4. The applicant requires relief for sign type due to the inclusion of an LED/electronic message board component.
5. The building has several existing signs that are in excess of the individual signage standards (as pictured previously on the 'existing signage' slide).
6. Electronic LED message signs of any type are not permitted in the zoning code in any zone. Per Zoning Sect 17.72.010.G. [Signs Prohibited Under This Section]: "*All signs not expressly permitted under this section or exempt from regulation hereunder in accordance with the previous section are prohibited in the city.*"
7. There are no other known "animated signs" in the nearby area. There are several nearby gas stations that do have signs with LED gas pricings, but these are technically not "animated signs" as defined by City Code as a sign must change more than eight times per day to meet the definition. It is a subjective determination as to whether the sign would be out of character with the commercial area.
8. The applicant supplied testimony from a representative of the sign company and there was an objector to the project that supplied information concerning unpermitted signage at the property.

The Board unanimously voted to deny the request for an LED sign due to the fact that is was not in conformance with the neighborhood and not the least relief necessary

The Board voted to partially accept the staff finding of fact and applying the facts above to the standard for a variance, the Board further finds that the application for the fixed sign involves a hardship that is not due to a physical or economic disability of the applicant, that the hardship does not result primarily from the desire of the applicant to realize greater financial gain, will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the Zoning Ordinance or the comprehensive plan, and is the least relief necessary as to the fixed sign. In granting partial relief the Applicant met the requirements of the Zoning Code and relief per Section 17.92.010 Variance; Section 17.72.010- Signs.

**Ward 6**

**DOMAIN REALTY, LLC (OWN/APP)** has applied to the Board to construct a new free-standing sign within the required setbacks from the street(s) and within the area required as to not impede corner visibility; and to waive the required Development Review Process for the site at **846 Oaklawn Avenue**, A.P. 15, lot 361; area 15,490 s.f. zoned C3. Applicant seeks relief per 17.92.010- Variances; Sections 17.20.100(A)- Corner Visibility; 17.72.010- Signs; 17.84, et seq- Development Plan Review. Application filed 7/06/2023. Joseph P. Carnevale, Esq.

On a motion made by Mr. Corrao and seconded by Mr. Zambrano, this matter was unanimously voted on to be continued to the December 13, 2023 meeting at the request of the applicant.

**NEW BUSINESS****APPEAL OF THE DECISION OF THE BUILDING OFFICIAL**

AN APPEAL HAS BEEN TAKEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CITY OF CRANSTON MUNICIPAL CODE TITLE 17, SECTION 17.116.010- APPEAL POWERS FOR THE SUBJECT PROPERTY LOCATED AT **846 Oaklawn Avenue**, A.P 15, lot 361. The Building Official has determined that a proposed sign does not meet the required setbacks, height, or area for the C3 zone as required by 17.72.010 (4)- Signs. The sign base constructed without benefit of permit has been determined to encroach into the required corner visibility area and impede vision as indicated in 17.20.100 (A)- Corner visibility Application filed 9/13/2023. Joseph P. Carneval, Esq.

On a motion made by Mr. Zambrano and seconded by Mr. Corrao, this matter was unanimously voted on to be continued to the December 13, 2023 meeting at the request of the applicant.

**Ward 1**

**BRIDGE GROUP, LLC (OWN/APP)** has filed an application for permission to convert an existing industrial building to residential use with two dwelling units at **5 Aborn Street**. AP 1, lot 30, area 5217+/- SF, zoned C-3. Applicant seeks relief per 17.92.010 -Variances; Sections 17.20.030- Schedule of uses; 17.20.120- Schedule of Intensity Regulations. Application filed 9/24/2023. Robert D. Murray, Esq.

On a motion made by Mr. Corrao and seconded by Mr. Zambrano, this matter was unanimously voted on to be continued to the December 13, 2023 meeting at the request of the applicant.

**Ward 1**

**NICHOLAS & DONNA USENIA (OWN/APP)** ) have applied to the Board for permission to convert an existing detached garage to be used as personal recreation with restricted setbacks at **96 Armington Street**, A.P. 2, lot 3283; area 6,930 SF, zoned B2. Applicant seeks relief per 17.92.010 -Variances; Sections 17.20.120- Schedule of Intensity Regulations; 17.60.010 (B)- Accessory Uses. Application filed 10/11/2023. Edward R. McCormick, Esq.

On a motion made by Mr. Zambrano and seconded by Mr. Corrao, this matter was unanimously voted on to be continued to the December 13, 2023 meeting at the request of the applicant.

**Ward 1**

**BRIAN LONGO (OWN/APP)** has filed an application for permission to convert an existing industrial building to residential use with two dwelling units at **45 Windsor Road**, A.P. 2, lot 2406; area 6,000 SF, zoned B2. Applicant seeks relief per 17.92.010 -Variances; Sections 17.20.030- Schedule of uses; 17.20.120- Schedule of Intensity Regulations. Application filed 10/11/2023. Joseph C. Manera, Esq.

On a motion made by Mr. Corrao and seconded by Mr. Perdikakis, this matter was unanimously voted on to be continued to the December 13, 2023 meeting at the request of the applicant.

**Stanley Pikul**  
**Secretary, Zoning & Platting Boards**

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM**

---