

Kenneth J. Hopkins  
Mayor

Jason M. Pezzullo, AICP  
Committee Chairman  
Director of Planning



John Ireland  
Fire Department

David Rodio  
Building Official

Nick Capezza  
Engineering Division

Stephen Mulcahy  
Traffic Safety Division

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Cranston City Hall  
869 Park Avenue, Cranston, Rhode Island 02910

### DRAFT MINUTES 9:00 AM, WEDNESDAY, January 19, 2022 TELECONFERENCE

Chairman Pezzullo called the Development Plan Review Committee meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. on Zoom.

The following members were in attendance for the meeting: Chairman Pezzullo, Nick Capezza, Carl Santucci, Franklin Paulino, Stan Pikul, and Stephen Mulcahy.

The following Planning Department members were in attendance: Douglas McLean, Principal Planner; Joshua Berry, Senior Planner; and Alex Berardo, Planning Technician.

Also attending: Atty. Robert Murray and Shayna Cimarelli for Giving Tree Day Care, and Frank DiZoglio for Montecatini Properties.

#### 1. "Giving Tree Day Care Expansion"

#### Pre-Application / Jurisdictional

*Location:* 1355 Scituate Avenue, AP 36, Lot 34  
*Zoning District:* A-80 and M-2  
*Owner/applicant:* ARMI LLC  
*Proposal:* The applicant proposes to construct a new day care building to expand on a previously approved use variance for day care operations at this property.

Atty. Robert Murray, representing the applicants (one of whom, Shayna Cimarelli, was in attendance), gave the presentation. He said the applicants had purchased a previously-abandoned house at 1355 Scituate Avenue, renovated it, and opened a day care business inside. He said the business has been successful and now has a waiting list of 35 families, so the applicants would like to expand by adding a second building to the property. Atty. Murray further said that the proposed improvements would require the relocation of an existing septic system, but they expect they will have adequate room for the safe drop-off of children and adequate parking.

Chairman Pezzullo reminded the other committee members that the question of jurisdiction was not clear-cut, as the project constituted a nonresidential development within 200ft of residential. He then asked the members for comments.

Mr. Capezza asked whether DEM raised any issues when the existing septic system was created. Atty. Murray said he believed it didn't require any variances to be installed. Mr. Pikul said that relocating the septic would require a fresh review, so there wouldn't be a need to track down old approvals. Atty. Murray added that the applicant didn't intend to submit new septic plans to RIDEM before they knew if their project was likely to be approved.

Mr. McLean saw no issues with the existing parking or drop-off areas. However, he said that the vegetated buffer could prove a point of concern since there was a stretch of open space adjacent to residential abutters. Mr. Santucci said Mr. McLean's comment regarding the buffer was his only concern. Mr. McLean asked Ms. Cimarelli if she had ever heard complaints from abutters; she said no.

Mr. Mulcahy asked how many classrooms were planned for the new building. Atty. Murray said the state regulations are expressed in terms of square footage per student, and that the applicant wants three

classrooms, assuming 15 children per room. Mr. Mulcahy then expressed some concern over what the traffic impacts of the additional children might be on the site and questioned whether the driveways had sufficient space for stacking. Ms. Cimarelli said that the drop-offs are staggered and so far traffic has not been an issue.

Mr. Paulino asked what the staffing impacts of the expansion would be. Atty. Murray said a staff of six would work in the new building. He also said that the day care currently serves 42 children, but that number could rise closer to 100 if the new addition allows them to move families off the waiting list.

Chairman Pezzullo then asked whether or not the board preferred to handle the application internally or under DPR. The Committee's preference was split, with Chairman Pezzullo, Mr. Mulcahy, and Mr. Paulino preferring the DPR review, and Mr. Pikul, Mr. Santucci, and Mr. Capezza preferring the internal review.

Chairman Pezzullo ultimately proposed a compromise: to handle the application via internal review, incorporating comments from each committee member into the staff memo for the ZBR use variance application to the Plan Commission. The Committee agreed with the proposal.

## **2. "Montecatini Properties / Domain Realty"**

## **Pre-Application / Jurisdictional**

<i>Location:</i>	846 Oaklawn Avenue – AP 15/2, Lot 361
<i>Zoning District:</i>	C-3 General Business
<i>Owner/applicant:</i>	Domain Realty LLC, 800 Oaklawn Avenue, Cranston, RI 02920
<i>Proposal:</i>	The applicant proposes to convert single-family residence into a commercial / retail establishment consistent with the recently changed Comprehensive Plan designation and zone change.

The applicant, Frank DiZoglio, presented his own application. Mr. DiZoglio sought to renovate and reuse a house at 846 Oaklawn Ave for commercial purposes. He said that he intended to relocate one of his two tenants in the building next door, which he also owns, into 846 Oaklawn Ave. He said this will allow upgrades to the neighboring building, which will subsequently allow the remaining tenant to expand.

Mr. Pikul noted his three areas of concern, namely traffic flow, lighting, and signage. He said that the parking and signage arrangements shown on the plans didn't meet zoning; Mr. DiZoglio said that a revised parking layout was shown on another plan, and the signage was below 30" in height, which exempted it from sight line considerations. Mr. Pikul also said he wanted to review the plans as a collective, since the renovations and tenants for the two buildings were connected. Mr. DiZoglio clarified that the buildings themselves would not be connected, but that the garage and breezeway at 846 Oaklawn Ave would be demolished as part of the work.

Mr. Berry said that the demolition of the garage would factor into the review and needed to be shown on the plans submitted for review. Concerning parking, he added that an insufficient number of spaces was provided for the floor area of the building. Mr. DiZoglio said the plans before the Committee were based on a calculation of floor area that did not include the breezeway or garage but another set of plans includes the proper amount of parking spaces.

Chairman Pezzullo said the plan Mr. DiZoglio described verbally was not the same as the printed plans, so he recommended continuing the review to the following month.

Upon motion made by Mr. Pikul and seconded by Mr. Capezza, the Development Plan Review Committee unanimously voted to continue the matter.

Upon motion made by Mr. Pikul and seconded by Mr. Capezza, the Development Plan Review Committee unanimously voted to conclude the pre-application meeting at 9:50 a.m.