

Kenneth J. Hopkins
Mayor

Jason M. Pezzullo, AICP
Committee Chairman
Director of Planning



Jim Woyciechowski
Fire Department

Stanley Pikul
Building Official

Justin Mateus
Engineering Division

Stephen Mulcahy
Traffic Safety Division

DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

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

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES 9:00 AM, WEDNESDAY, November 2, 2022 CRANSTON CITY HALL – 3RD FLOOR COUNCIL CHAMBER

1. Call to Order

Chairman Jason Pezzullo called the Development Plan Review Committee meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. in the City Council chamber.

The following members were in attendance for the meeting: Justin Mateus, Steve Mulcahy, Franklin Paulino, and Jason Pezzullo.

The following Planning Department staff members were in attendance: Doug McLean, Principal Planner; Gregory Guertin, Senior Planner; Alex Berardo, Planning Technician; and Amelia Lavalley, Planning Intern.

2. Approval of Minutes

- 10/19/22 Meeting (vote taken)

Upon motion made by Mr. Mulcahy and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the Development Plan Review Committee unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the 10/19/22 meeting.

3. "Tasca Building Expansion" Preliminary Plan (vote taken)

Location: 1300 Pontiac Avenue, Assessor's Plat 13, Lot 76
Zoning District: C-5 (Heavy Business, Industry)
Owner/App: Tasca Enterprise Inc.
Proposal: Applicant proposes to enlarge the existing Tasca car dealership by constructing a 2,565 sq.ft. Service Bay Expansion as well as a 9,200 sq.ft. building addition for an additional line of vehicles.

Chairman Jason Pezzullo reminded the Committee members that this matter had recently come before them as a Pre-Application Review before turning the discussion over to Brian Thalmann, Senior Project Engineer with DiPrete, who represented the applicant team.

Mr. Thalmann began by thanking the staff of both the Planning and Building Departments for their prompt and diligent help in advancing the proposal through the application process. He then noted that since the project last came before the DPRC, the applicant discovered a sewer manhole in the way of the proposed 2,500 ft² service intake addition to the Ford dealership building, so in the interest of time they are dropping the concept. He clarified that both the Lincoln and Mazda service intake expansions are still in the plans.

Mr. Thalmann briefly reviewed other areas of progress made since the Pre-Application discussion, including the securing of a RIPDES permit; the creation of landscaping, lighting, and floor plans; the selection of a new, "jellyfish"-style stormwater runoff treatment system for the site that will treat runoff before feeding into the existing system; and the designing of elevations for the building additions.

Chairman Pezzullo then asked for the Committee members' comments.

Mr. Mulcahy asked if there were any changes being proposed for the portion of the parking lot that was covered by a signature block on the version of the site plan that the applicant had provided. Mr. Thalmann confirmed that there was a slight change to traffic circulation that would be visible in that portion of the plan, so Chairman Pezzullo said they could either remove or relocate the signature block to make it easier to see.

Mr. McLean, speaking on behalf of Mr. Woyciechowski (who was unable to attend the meeting), reported that Fire had reviewed the plans and was comfortable with the Committee voting on the matter without a Fire Department representative present. That being said, Mr. Woyciechowski asked Mr. McLean to relay that Fire would like a condition of approval to the effect that Fire has an opportunity to review and approve the Final Plan prior to recording.

Mr. Mateus said that the applicant will need to submit a maintenance record for its stormwater runoff treatment system to the City on an annual basis.

Mr. Paulino asked how many jobs would be created as a result of the expansion; Mr. Thalmann estimated roughly 25.

Mr. McLean asked Mr. Thalmann if the applicant would be requesting any landscaping waivers with this application, but he said no. Mr. Thalmann then asked if the applicant could prepare and submit as-built plans to the City once the work is completed to ensure that the City has an accurate look at the site, which has seen several expansions over the years. Mr. Mateus welcomed that course of action.

Chairman Pezzullo asked if there were any members of the public who wished to speak to the matter, but none did. He then asked for a motion.

Upon motion made by Mr. Mulcahy, and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the Development Plan Review Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to approve the Preliminary Plan application subject to the following condition:

- Fire will have an opportunity to review and approve the plans prior to Final Plan recording

4. “60 Amflex Drive”

**Pre-Application
Jurisdictional Consideration**

**(no vote taken)
(vote taken)**

Location:	60 Amflex Drive, AP 36, Lot 114
Zoning District	M-2 (General Industry)
Owner/App	295 Industrial Park LLC
Proposal:	Applicant seeks to utilize the existing industrial site for truck and dumpster container storage with an accessory office use.

Atty. Robert Murray, representing Waste Express LLC (which has entered into a Purchase and Sale Agreement with the property's current owner, 295 Industrial Park LLC), said that his client was interested in using the site for vehicle and dumpster storage. He provided photographs of the site's existing conditions and Waste Express LLC's equipment and said that the applicant would not be storing trash on site, but rather empty dumpsters and vehicles. Because this proposal would not contemplate any changes to the building or site (landscaping, lighting, etc), the applicant sought a non-jurisdictional vote from the DPRC so it could proceed to seeking a building permit. Chairman Pezzullo said the site went through Site Plan Review (predecessor to Development Plan Review) around 2010 and that he wanted to give the Committee a chance to discuss before taking a jurisdictional vote.

Mr. Mulcahy asked how many containers would be stored on-site; Atty. Murray said he wasn't sure, but the number could probably fluctuate somewhat on a day-to-day basis because some portion of the equipment pool will be in use off-site at any given time. Mr. Mulcahy then asked if the company would have an office in the existing building or elsewhere on site, to which Atty. Murray said yes, likely in the same office space that the current tenant occupies in the existing building.

Mr. McLean asked if the site plan would show which portion(s) of the site would hold the dumpsters, and Atty. Murray said it would.

Upon motion made by Mr. Mulcahy, and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the Development Plan Review Committee voted unanimously (3-0) not to take jurisdiction on the matter.

5. “Proposed Commercial Condominiums” Pre-Application (no vote taken)

Location: Plainfield Pike, AO 36, Lots 8 and 37
Zoning District: M-2 (General Industry)
Owner: Dinis and Maria Pedroso, 132 Harvard Street, Cranston, RI 02920
Applicant: Haus 001, LLC, 81 Crest Drive, Cranston, RI 02921
Proposal: Applicant seeks to construct twelve (12) commercial condominium units on the 9.63 acre parcel.

Mr. McLean provided context for the Committee members, observing that the applicants (Rob Calise Jr. and Rob Calise Sr., who were joined by Ben Caito, P.E. with Millstone Engineering at the meeting) had previously considered commercial condominiums in the past for this site, but were now thinking about self-storage.

Chairman Pezzullo began the discussion by asking for clarification on what the applicant’s specific intention for the site would be, as commercial condominiums imply small business tenants and are not allowed in an M-2 zone. Mr. Calise Jr. said they envisioned storage and warehousing, but he also acknowledged they intended to provide water and sewer service for each unit (each unit would have its own restroom). Chairman Pezzullo said that would make the proposal too close to a commercial condominium concept, and if this was the use the applicant wished to pursue for the site, the proper channel to achieve that goal would be to seek a Special Zone change tailored to their plans. He explained that the activity isn’t particularly problematic for that site, but the use simply isn’t allowed under the parcel’s current zoning designation.

Mr. McLean agreed with Mr. Pezzullo’s assessment of the situation and briefly explained the enforcement issues inherent to commercial condominiums to say that the Committee’s steering of the applicant toward a Special Zone change is to avoid the chance of receiving a Cease-and-Desist order. Mr. McLean said the Planning Department has been through this process for commercial condominiums once before and would be lenient with regard to the variety of tenants that could be allowed to use the facility, but they would be strict in prohibiting tenants from using the units as points of sale. Mr. Calise Jr. said the applicants didn’t intend any retail activities of that nature occurring in the facility.

Mr. Caito asked if the Committee could point to any examples for the applicant team to emulate. Mr. McLean said he had sent an example to the applicants during last year; Chairman Pezzullo recalled that the CubeSmart project was another comparable example, and it required a review of utility usage on a unit-by-unit basis because different tenants had different needs. Chairman Pezzullo asked about wetlands; Mr. Caito said RIDEM verification was underway and some flagging had been done.

Chairman Pezzullo summarized by saying that the Committee was recommending the applicant seek a Special Zone Change for this proposal. He also confirmed that stormwater has been fully engineered. Mr. McLean said that if the applicant could submit its Special Zone change request to the City Council by mid-January, the Committee could take up the project in DPR while the applicant waits for its City Plan Commission and City Council meetings in March. Mr. Mateus suggested the applicant begin working on its sewer design, and Mr. McLean also suggested they start working to secure their Physical Alteration Permit from RIDOT.

6. *Adjournment* (next meeting date TBD) (vote taken)

Finally, upon motion made by Mr. Mulcahy, and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the Development Plan Review Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 a.m.