

# City Planning Department



## Memo

To: Cranston City Plan Commission  
From: Alexander Berardo – Planning Technician  
Date: September 30, 2022  
Re: **Dimensional Variance @ 1340 Plainfield Street**

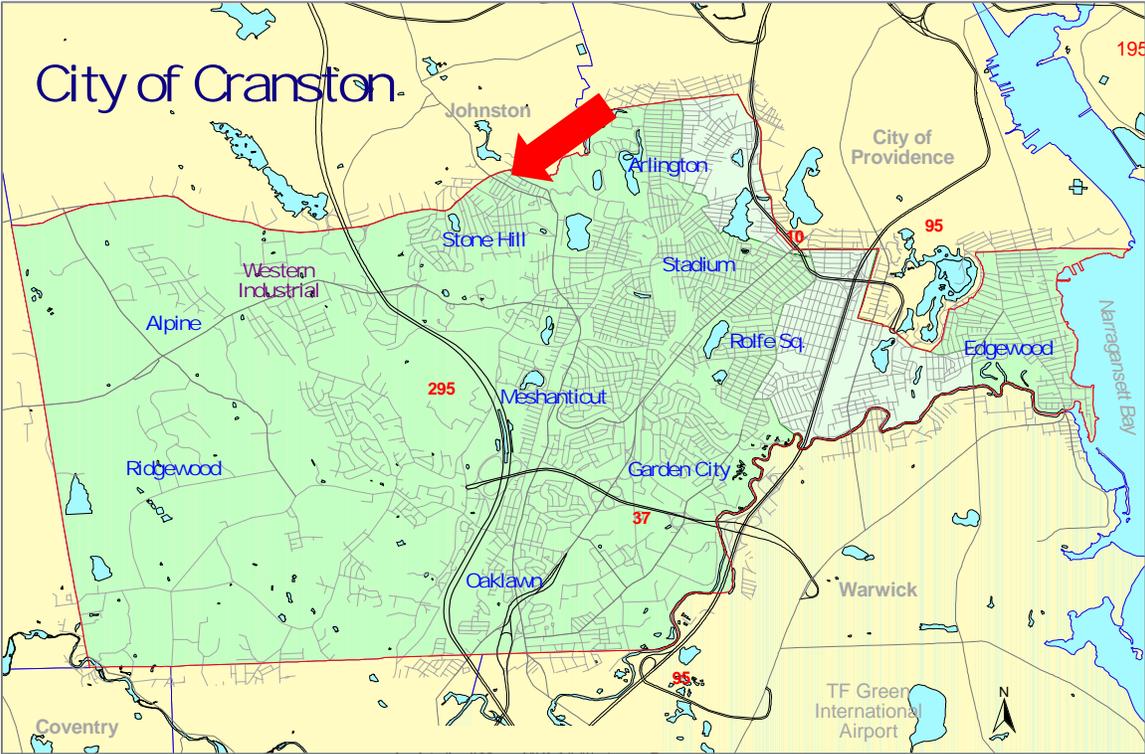
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**Owner/App:** Anyyong Suk Woo  
**Location:** 1340 Plainfield Street, AP 12, Lots 406 & 409  
**Zone:** C-2 (Neighborhood Business)  
**FLU:** Highway Commercial Services

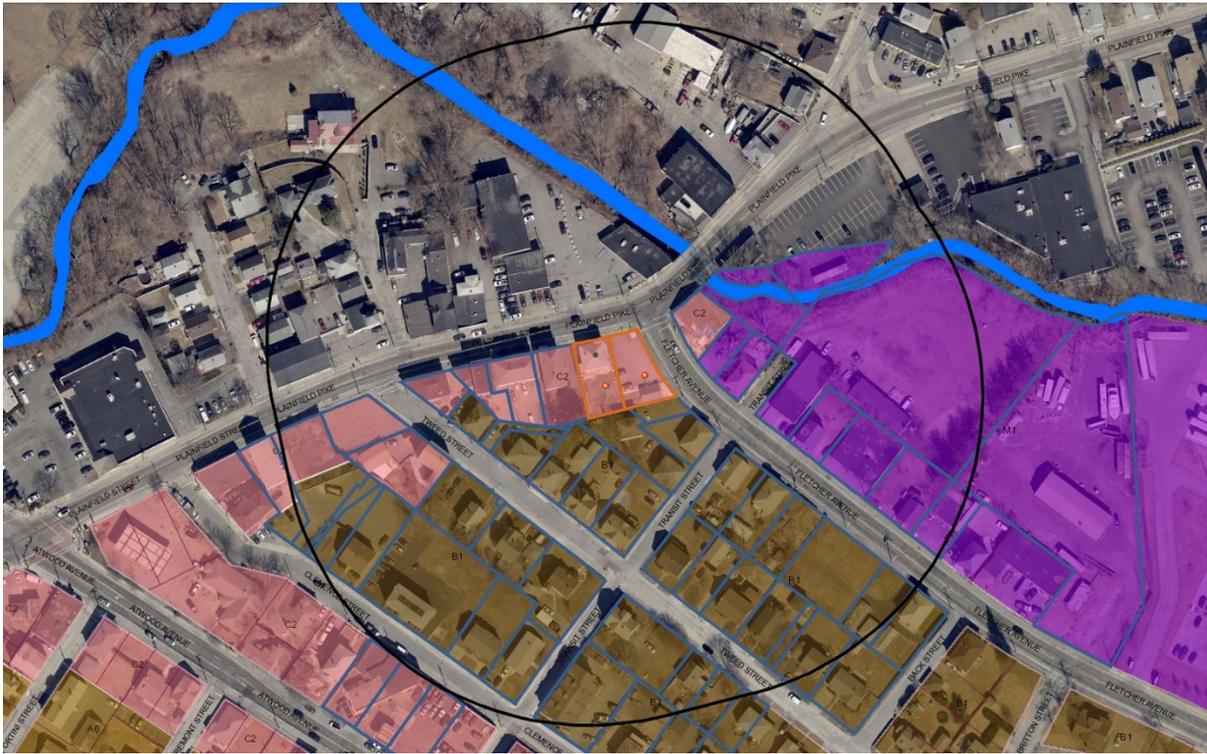
**DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE REQUEST:**

1. To allow the construction of an addition to an existing two-family house to create two additional living units. [17.20.120 – Schedule of Intensity]

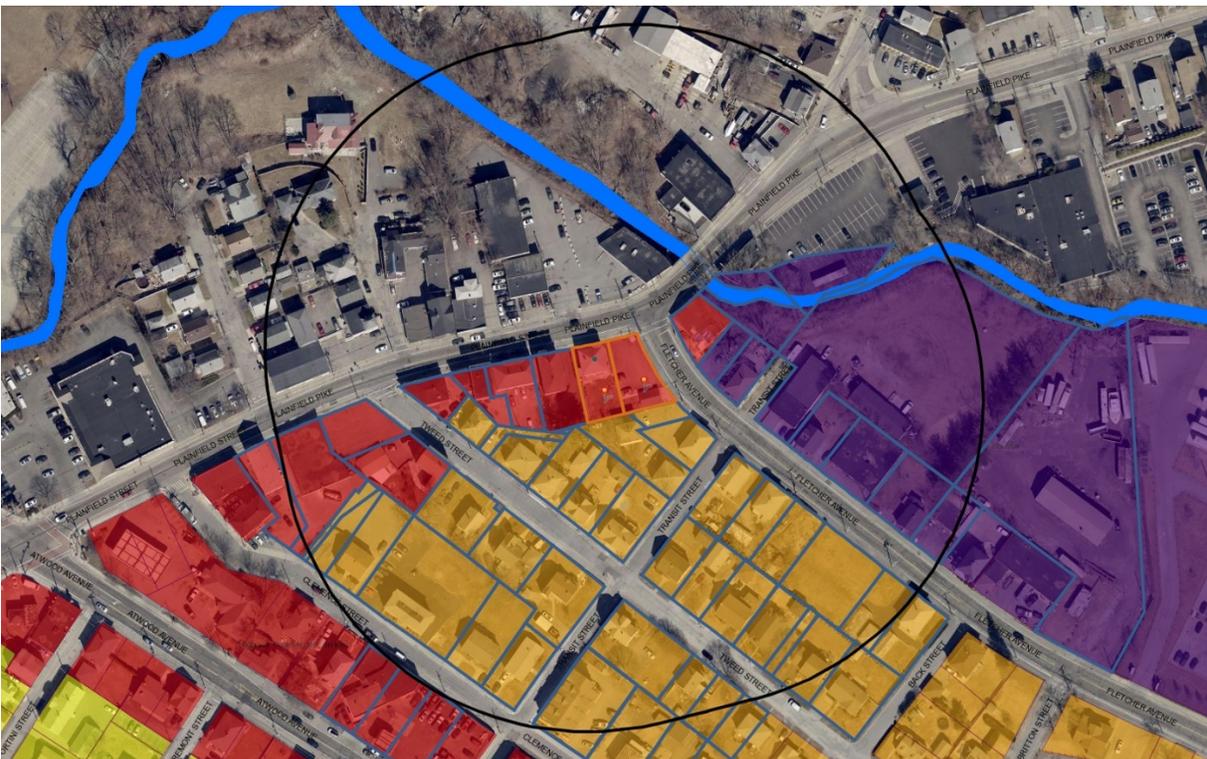
### LOCATION MAP



# ZONING MAP



# FUTURE LAND USE MAP



# AERIAL VIEW



# 3-D AERIAL VIEW (facing west)



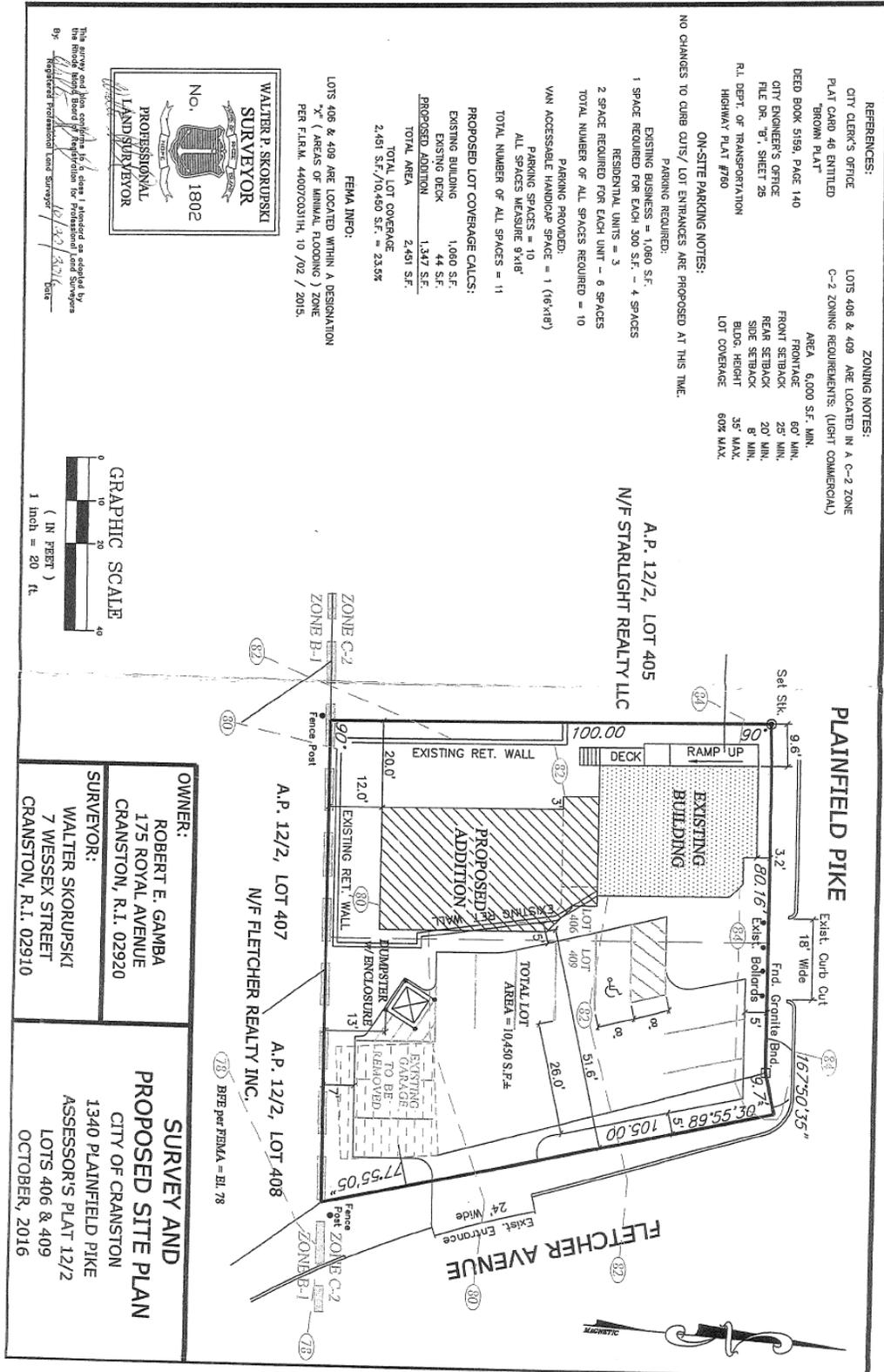
**STREET VIEW** (from Plainfield St)



**STREET VIEW** (from Fletcher Ave)



# SITE PLAN



**ZONING NOTES:**  
 LOTS 406 & 409 ARE LOCATED IN A C-2 ZONE  
 C-2 ZONING REQUIREMENTS: (LIGHT COMMERCIAL)

**REFERENCES:**  
 CITY CLERK'S OFFICE  
 PLAT CARD 46 ENTITLED  
 "BROWN PLAT"  
 DEED BOOK 5158, PAGE 140  
 CITY ENGINEER'S OFFICE  
 FILE DR. 'B', SHEET 25  
 R.L. DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION  
 HIGHWAY PLAT #780

**ON-SITE PARKING NOTES:**  
 NO CHANGES TO CURB CUTS/ LOT ENTRANCES ARE PROPOSED AT THIS TIME.

**PARKING REQUIRED:**  
 1 SPACE REQUIRED FOR EACH 300 S.F. - 4 SPACES  
 RESIDENTIAL UNITS = 3  
 2 SPACE REQUIRED FOR EACH UNIT - 6 SPACES  
 TOTAL NUMBER OF ALL SPACES REQUIRED = 10

**PARKING PROVIDED:**  
 VAN ACCESSIBLE HANDICAP SPACE = 1 (16'x48')  
 PARKING SPACES = 10  
 ALL SPACES MEASURE 9'x18'

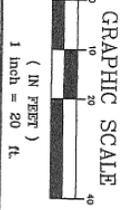
**PROPOSED LOT COVERAGE CALCS:**  
 EXISTING BUILDING 1,080 S.F.  
 EXISTING DECK 44 S.F.  
 PROPOSED ADDITION 1,317 S.F.  
 TOTAL AREA 2,491 S.F.

**TOTAL LOT COVERAGE:**  
 2,451 S.F./10,450 S.F. = 23.5%

**FEMA INFO:**  
 LOTS 406 & 409 ARE LOCATED WITHIN A DESIGNATION  
 'X' (AREAS OF MINIMAL FLOODING) ZONE  
 PER FLR.M. 44007C0311H, 10 /02 / 2015.



This Survey and Plan comply with all laws, ordinances and regulations of the City of Cranston, R.I. and the State of Rhode Island. I, the undersigned, a duly Licensed Professional Land Surveyor, certify that this Survey and Plan were prepared by me or under my direct supervision and that I am a duly Licensed Professional Land Surveyor.



**OWNER:**  
 ROBERT E. GAMBIA  
 175 ROYAL AVENUE  
 CRANSTON, R.I. 02920

**SURVEYOR:**  
 WALTER SKORUPSKI  
 7 WESSEX STREET  
 CRANSTON, R.I. 02910

**SURVEY AND PROPOSED SITE PLAN**  
 CITY OF CRANSTON  
 1340 PLAINFIELD PIKE  
 ASSESSOR'S PLAT 12/2  
 LOTS 406 & 409  
 OCTOBER, 2016

**FLETCHER AVENUE**

**PLAINFIELD PIKE**

A.P. 12/2, LOT 405  
 N/F STARLIGHT REALTY LLC

A.P. 12/2, LOT 407  
 N/F FLETCHER REALTY INC.

A.P. 12/2, LOT 408



## PLANNING STAFF FINDINGS

1. The subject parcel is composed of two adjacent, substandard lots of record which are merged for zoning purposes to create one conforming lot of 10,450 ft<sup>2</sup> in a C-2 zone.
2. The applicant proposes to construct a two-story addition in the rear of the existing two-story building, which will render the structure a multifamily building by adding two new units to the existing two units. This will increase the lot coverage from 15% to 27%, well below the maximum allowable lot coverage (60%) in a C-2 zone. New by-right construction of a four-unit multifamily building would require 18,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of lot area.
3. The parcel is a corner lot, so its buildable envelope is inherently constrained by the additional front setback. The proposed addition would come within 12 feet of the lot line it shares with AP 12, Lots 407 and 408. If this lot line is interpreted as a side lot line instead of a rear lot line, the addition would conform to the 8-foot setback requirement.
4. The applicant also proposes to demolish the existing garage in the rear of the property (nearer to Fletcher Ave) and replace it with three surface parking spaces. The site plan shows a total of 11 off-street parking spaces being provided on the Fletcher Ave side of the parcel, which would exceed the minimum 8 required spaces (two for each of the four residential units) and comply with Section 17.64.010(F)(1)'s requirement that "vehicles will leave and enter the street with a forward motion" for multifamily residential uses.
5. Multifamily dwellings are a permitted use in the parcel's C-2 zone; however, they are not permitted under the parcel's Future Land Use Map designation of Highway Commercial Services. In instances where a parcel's Zoning and Future Land Use disagree on permitted uses, Zoning controls. Staff would also note that the Highway Commercial Services FLUM designation is intended to encompass C-3, C-4, and C-5 zoned parcels. Parcels zoned C-1, C-2, and C-3 are typically given a FLUM designation of Neighborhood Commercial Services, and multifamily buildings are an allowed use under this designation.
6. Relief would be consistent with Comprehensive Plan Land Use Principle 4, "*Protect and stabilize existing residential neighborhoods by basing land use decisions on neighborhood needs and quality of life...*" (p. 34), and Housing Goal 4, to "*Promote housing opportunity for a wide range of household types and income levels.*"
7. A variance application for this same proposal was conditionally approved by the Zoning Board of Review during its January 11, 2017 meeting. The previous owner sold the property before pursuing the construction of the proposed addition; the new owner now wishes to pursue the project, but needed to resubmit due to the amount of time that has passed since the Zoning Board originally granted its conditional approval.

## STAFF ANALYSIS

The Comprehensive Plan's Housing Goal 4 advises to "*Promote housing opportunity for a wide range of household types and income levels.*" Staff finds that granting relief to allow the construction of the proposed addition would represent a step towards achieving this goal. It should be taken into consideration that the applicant's property is located on a corner lot which imposes an additional front setback, which renders it more constrained in terms of the buildable area.

The parcel's proposed multifamily use is consistent with its present Zoning status and would be consistent with the Future Land Use designation one would normally expect for a C-2 zoned

parcel. Staff would note again that Zoning controls in instances where Zoning and Future Land Use disagree on permitted uses. Considering the prevalence of two-family and multifamily buildings in close proximity to the subject parcel, including some (such as the 6-unit multifamily building next door at AP 12, Lot 405), **staff finds that granting relief to allow the construction of the proposed two-unit addition would not negatively alter the character of the neighborhood and is generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Due to the findings that the application is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, that it does not alter the character of the neighborhood, and that it was previously approved by the Zoning Board of Review in January 2017, staff recommends the Plan Commission forward a **positive recommendation** on the application to the Zoning Board of Review, subject to the two conditions that the Zoning Board required in its previous approval:

1. The accessible parking space shall be reviewed and approval by the Building Official to be installed closest to the entrance providing an ADA-compliant accessible route.
2. Any landscaping and planting areas disturbed as a result of parking reconfiguration shall be reviewed and approved by the Building Official.