

City Planning Department



Memo

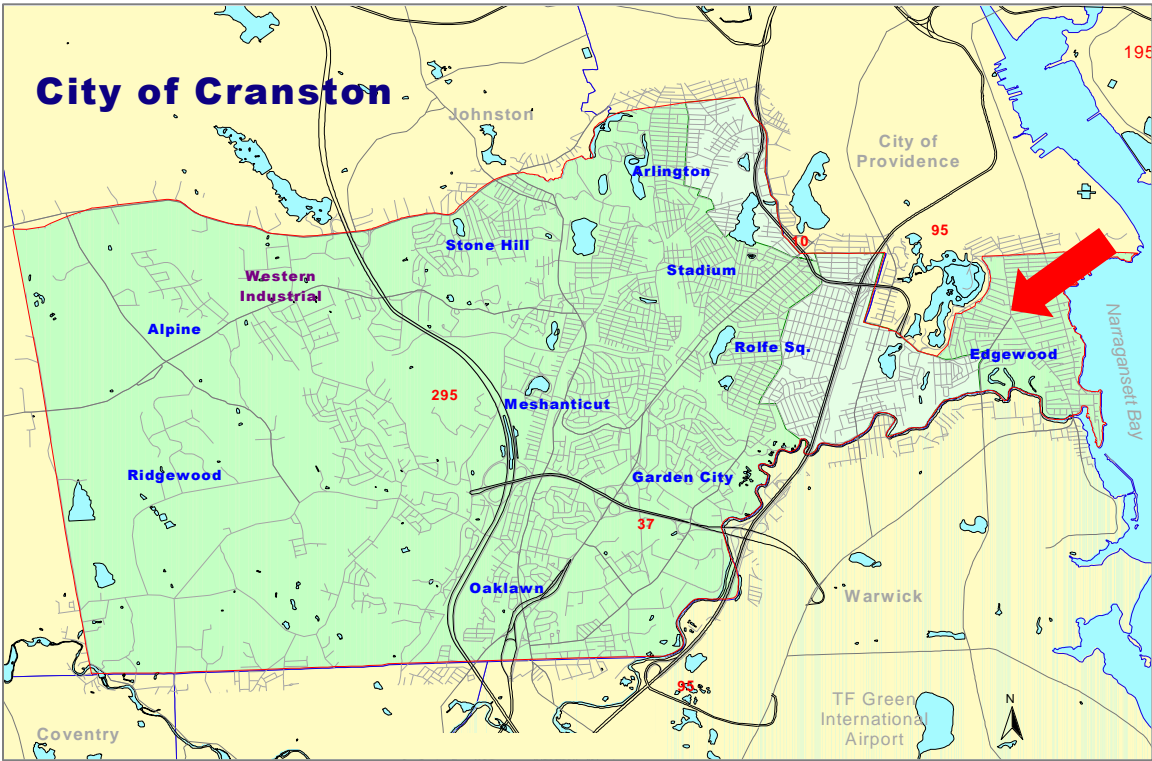
To: Cranston City Plan Commission
From: Alexander Berardo – Planning Technician
Date: September 1, 2022
Re: **Dimensional Variance @ 1732 Broad Street**

Owner/App: LUC Realty Holdings, LLC
Location: 1732 Broad Street, AP 2, Lot 2524
Zone: C-1 (Office Business)
FLU: Neighborhood Commercial/Services

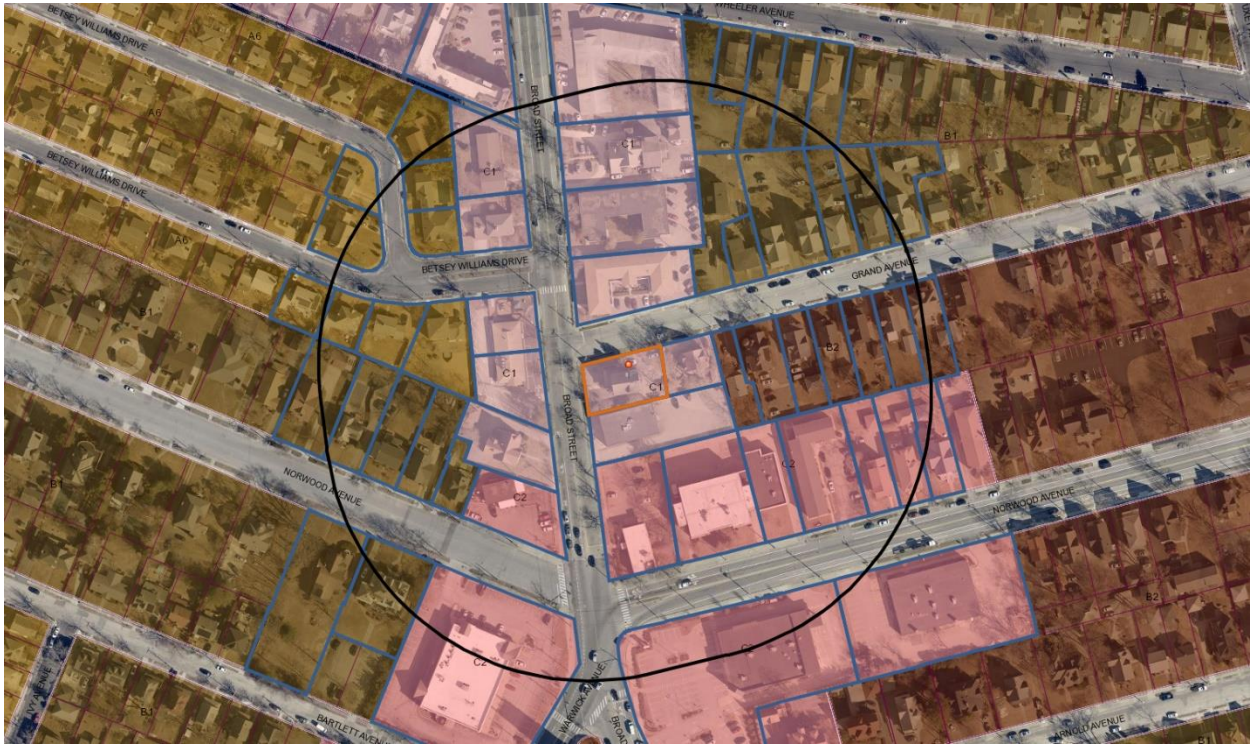
DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE REQUEST:

- 1. To allow the conversion of a professional office into a dwelling unit in a mixed-use building, resulting in a four-unit multifamily use. [17.20.090(A) – Specific Requirements]

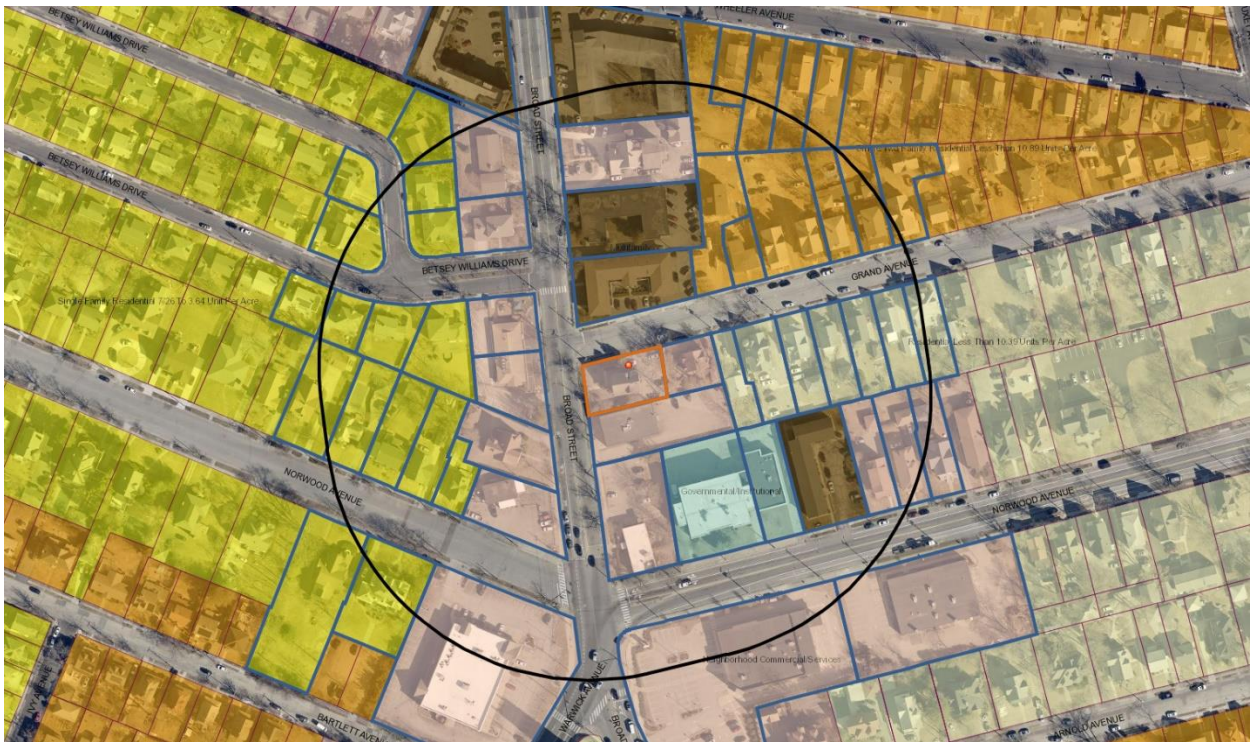
LOCATION MAP



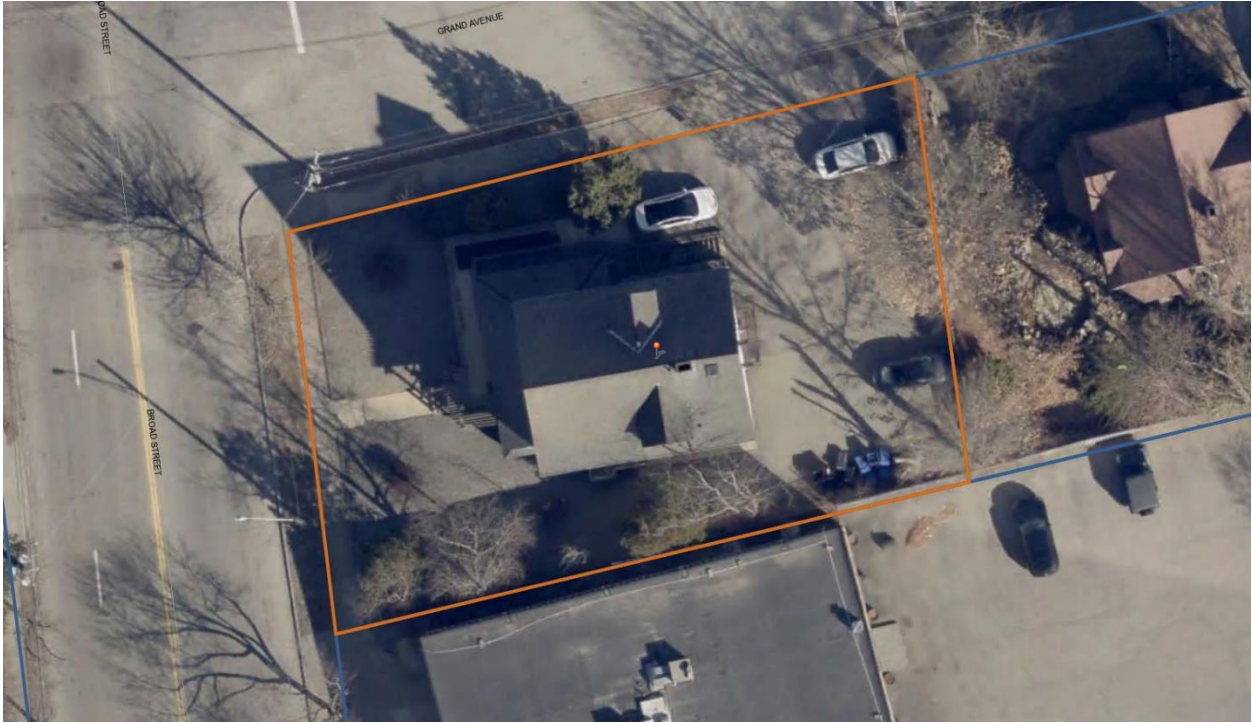
ZONING MAP



FUTURE LAND USE MAP



AERIAL VIEW



3-D AERIAL VIEW (facing west)



STREET VIEW (from Broad St)



STREET VIEW (from Grand Ave)



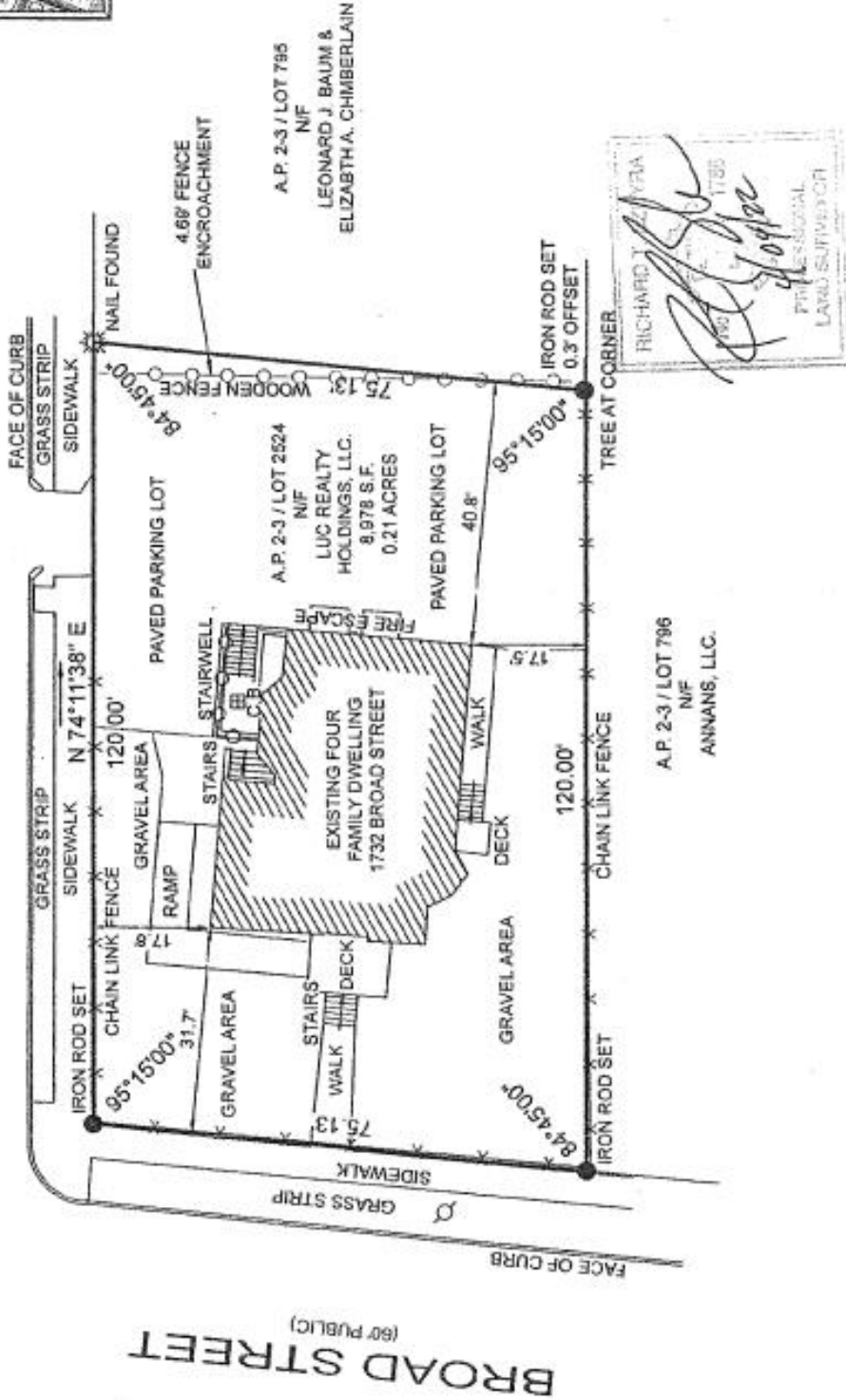
SITE PLAN



FACE OF CURB

GRAND AVENUE
(60' PUBLIC)

LOT 77 ON "THE ROGER WILLIAMS PARK
D AND PLATTED DECEMBER 28, 1856
BY 13TH 1872 BY N.B. SCHUBARTH" P.C. 67



BROAD STREET
(60' PUBLIC)

RICHARD T. ...
 1796 ... 1785
 PROFESSIONAL
 LAND SURVEYOR

SPECIFICATION:
 THE PLAN HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE SURVEY AND FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE PLAN AS FOLLOWS:
 THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF EVIDENCE WERE USED TO CONSTRUCT THIS SURVEY: RECORDED FOUND

PLANNING STAFF FINDINGS

1. The subject parcel is a corner lot with Broad Street and Grand Avenue. Dimensionally, it is a conforming lot of 8,978 ft² in a C-1 zone. The present use of the building on site – three residential units and ground-floor commercial – is allowed within the C-1 zone, but the area calculations defined by Section 17.20.090(B) would require 12,000 ft² for the present mix of uses.
2. The applicant is proposing to convert the ground-floor commercial unit into a residential unit. The dimensional relief requested is to allow four residential units on a roughly 9,000 ft² lot where the calculations detailed in 17.20.090(A) specify 18,000 ft² would be required for new by-right construction of a four-unit multifamily building.
3. As the existing building was built in 1904 (which means it predates zoning and is a pre-existing non-conforming structure), and as the proposal would only entail an interior retrofit, the applicant does not need relief for other non-conformities that are not impacted by the proposal, such as for exceeding the 35-foot height limit or for encroaching into the front setback along Grand Avenue.
4. Per the Comprehensive Plan, the Neighborhood Commercial Services designation encompasses the C-1, C-2, and C-3 zones. Because multifamily residential uses are permitted by-right in the C-1 zone with no associated density standards, the proposal is consistent with the parcel's Future Land Use designation.
5. Both commercial and residential uses can be found along the stretch of Broad Street within a 400-foot radius of the subject parcel. The block directly to the north on the same side of Broad Street hosts several multifamily buildings, so the proposal is consistent with the character of the existing neighborhood.
6. The applicant did not provide details confirming that there is sufficient off-street parking, but Staff notes that an initial review of aerial imagery shows the existing parking situation is contained in a lot on the eastern side of the property (off Grand Ave), which suggests the applicant can 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. Whether there is sufficient space to accommodate eight vehicles (two for each of the four residential units) should be verified by the Zoning official.
7. Granting 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.*"
8. Staff could not verify past approval for three residential units in the building (records show two residential units and one office). The legality of the additional residential unit should be verified by the Zoning official, particularly if the third residential unit is located in the basement of the building, as the floor plans submitted with the application seem to indicate.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Staff finds that granting relief to allow the conversion of a ground-floor commercial unit into a residential unit would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Housing Goal 4. Particularly

given the previous issues with commercial tenants in this location, Staff also finds the proposal consistent with promoting neighborhood needs and quality of life as described in Land Use Principle 4.

Staff believes that multifamily buildings are consistent with the character of the neighborhood, particularly given that the four lots directly to the north along the same side of Broad Street host this same use. Provided that the applicant can evidence that there is sufficient off-street parking to accommodate four residential units, **staff finds that relief 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 and does not alter the character of the neighborhood, staff recommends the Plan Commission forward a **positive recommendation** on the application to the Zoning Board of Review.