

Hon. Kenneth J. Hopkins
Mayor

Beth E. Ashman, MCP, AICP
Chair / City Planning Director



Armand Niquette
Fire Marshal

Stanley Pikul
Building Official

Frank Corrao, P.E.
Public Works Director

Stephen Mulcahy
DPW: Traffic Safety Division

DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

City Hall – 3rd Floor, Room 309
869 Park Avenue – Cranston, Rhode Island 02910

MINUTES CITY HALL – 3rd FLOOR, COUNCIL CHAMBER 9:30AM – WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2026

All interested parties are welcome to participate during the public comments portion for docketed items on this agenda. All materials will be posted to the City's website prior to the meeting at:

<https://www.cranstonri.gov/departments/planning/>

CALL TO ORDER

Jonas Bruggemann – Assistant Planning Director called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m., in the City Council chamber.

The following members were in attendance for the meeting: Frank Corrao - DPW Director, Stephen Mulcahy - Traffic Safety Manager, Scott Weller – Deputy Fire Marshall, and Stanley Pikul – Building Official.

- Armand Niquette – Fire Marshal, and Beth Ashman – Planning Director and Committee Chair, could not be present.

Also present: Brianna Valcourt – Senior Planner, and Jamie Ray – Planner Technician.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- May 20, 2026 – Regular Meeting

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Mr. Pikul and seconded by Mr. Corrao, the Committee voted (5-0) to approve the May 20, 2026 minutes.

- May 27, 2026 – Special Meeting

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Mr. Corrao and seconded by Mr. Mulcahy, the Committee voted (5-0) to approve the May 27, 2026 minutes.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

- **“Crave Cafe”** PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL (vote taken)
Waiver of Application
Proposal: Request for waiver from DPR process for a change of use with no extensive construction of improvements for a new café.
Zoning: C-4, A-6
AP 6, Lots 747, 758, 748, and 749

599 Reservoir Avenue

The Committee continued its review of the proposed Crave Café project. The applicant provided an update following comments received at the previous meeting and discussed potential revisions to the proposal.

The applicant explained that the concept is intended to provide a health-focused café offering smoothies, acai bowls, coffee, and similar products, serving as an extension of existing businesses operated in Cranston and Warwick. The applicant stated that a drive-through component was a key element of the business model and was viewed as necessary to generate sufficient revenue to justify the investment required for the project. The applicant noted that significant financial resources had already been committed toward the development and sought guidance regarding the feasibility of obtaining approvals for a drive-through on the site.

The applicant's consultant informed the Committee that several revisions requested at the previous meeting had been incorporated into updated plans currently being finalized. He explained that parking circulation had been revised to include angled parking spaces intended to improve visibility and vehicle maneuverability near the site exit. He also discussed a conceptual proposal to increase parking capacity through the installation of automated two-tier parking systems on a portion of the property, which he believed could effectively double the available parking area.

Committee Discussion

Planning staff advised that while many of the improvements discussed by the applicant could potentially be pursued, they would need to follow the appropriate review process. Staff explained that a drive-through use would require zoning relief and additional review beyond the scope of the current waiver request.

Committee members discussed the distinction between the current application and a full Development Plan Review process. Staff explained that the application before the Committee was a request for a waiver from full Development Plan Review associated with a change of use. Because the applicant was now contemplating a drive-through facility and additional site modifications, a more comprehensive review would likely be required, including engineered site plans, surveys, traffic circulation analysis, and review by other agencies.

Staff further explained that the proposal would likely require approvals from the:

- Zoning Board of Review for use and dimensional relief;
- Rhode Island Department of Transportation for any driveway modifications;
- Potentially the City Plan Commission if the project required full Development Plan Review jurisdiction.

The applicant asked whether the café could initially open without a drive-through and pursue the drive-through component at a later date as a second phase. Staff confirmed that a future drive-through application could be pursued separately but emphasized that such an application would trigger additional reviews, studies, and permitting requirements, including a potential traffic impact study.

Parking and Site Layout

A substantial portion of the discussion focused on parking requirements and potential future seating capacity.

Committee member **Stanley Pikul** noted that the Committee had previously requested a detailed parking exhibit and reiterated the importance of receiving accurate parking and seating information before taking action.

The applicant clarified that the revised concept would include:

- Approximately 32 outdoor seats;
- Approximately 30 seats in the basement area;
- Removal of certain lounge seating previously shown on plans.

Staff advised that final seating counts and parking calculations would be required before the Committee

could properly evaluate the proposal.

Sidewalk and Streetscape Improvements

The applicant's consultant requested clarification regarding previous comments requiring improvements along Lambert Street.

Staff confirmed that the project would require both:

- Concrete curbing; and
- A five-foot-wide concrete sidewalk.

Staff clarified that alternative sidewalk materials such as gravel or stone would not be acceptable.

Committee member **Stephen Mulcahy** referenced comments previously provided to the applicant and confirmed that the requirement for curbing and sidewalk improvements was specifically outlined in the review memorandum.

Lot Configuration and Potential Parking Structure

The applicant asked whether merging adjacent lots could assist in obtaining approval for additional parking capacity. Staff explained that although lot mergers could be administratively processed, the property would remain subject to underlying zoning district regulations. Committee members explained that the primary issue was zoning classification rather than lot configuration.

The applicant also sought guidance regarding the feasibility of installing a two-tier parking system. Committee members expressed concern that such a system could be interpreted as a parking structure and would likely require zoning relief. Staff advised that parking relief through conventional zoning processes would likely be a more common and straightforward avenue than seeking approval for a parking structure.

Basement Occupancy and Fire Safety

The applicant discussed a long-term vision for utilizing the basement as an event space for private functions, birthday parties, and gatherings.

A representative of the Fire Department advised that increasing occupancy in the basement could trigger additional life-safety requirements, particularly if occupancy exceeded 50 persons. Potential requirements discussed included:

- Installation of a sprinkler system throughout the building;
- Fire alarm systems;
- Additional means of egress; and
- Compliance with assembly occupancy regulations.

The applicant stated that preliminary discussions had already occurred with the Fire Department and that the project team was prepared to install a sprinkler system and potentially construct an additional exit if necessary.

Committee members emphasized that fire code requirements would need to be fully evaluated through the formal review process.

Continuation

Committee members agreed that the applicant had not been provided sufficient time to prepare the requested revisions following receipt of staff comments. The applicant indicated that revised plans were nearly complete but not ready for submission at the meeting. After discussion, the Committee agreed that additional information was necessary before determining whether to waive Development Plan Review jurisdiction or take jurisdiction over the project.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Mr. Mulcahy and seconded by Mr. Pikul, the Committee voted (5-0) to continue the application to the June 17, 2026, meeting.

Following the motion, the applicant requested further clarification regarding potential future seating capacity and parking relief.

Staff explained that once revised plans are submitted, the Committee will determine whether to:

1. Waive Development Plan Review jurisdiction and direct the applicant to the Zoning Board of Review for any necessary relief; or
 2. Take jurisdiction of the project, requiring review through the City Plan Commission process.
- Staff advised that the determination would depend on the final scope of the proposal and the extent of relief requested.

Adjournment (Next Meeting | June 3, 2026)

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Stanley Pikul and seconded by Stephen Mulcahy, the Committee voted (5-0) to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.