



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, SEPTEMBER 23, 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

Beth Ashman – Planning Director and Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m., in the City Council chamber.

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

- Frank Corrao - DPW Director - could not be present.

Also present: Jonas Bruggemann – Assistant Planning Director, Brianna Valcourt – Senior Planner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- August 19, 2026 – Special Meeting

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Mr. Mulcahy and seconded by Mr. Pikul, the Committee voted (4-0) to approve the August 19, 2026 minutes.

- September 2, 2026 – Regular Meeting

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Mr. Mulcahy and seconded by Mr. Pikul, the Committee voted (4-0) to approve the September 2, 2026 minutes.

TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

- **“INDEPENDENCE WAY CONDOS”** **PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL** **(no votes taken)**
Master Plan – Major Land Development
Proposal: Construction of forty-two (42) townhouse-style dwelling units with access to public water and sewer. Requires change of zoning district and amendment of the Future Land Use Map.
Zoning: MPD (Mixed Plan Development)
AP 32, Lot 860
0 Independence Way

The Committee reviewed a proposed condominium development on Independence Way, a dead-end roadway accessed from Plainfield Pike. Justin Mateus of Crossman Engineering appeared on behalf of the

applicant, Summit Capital LLC. Mr. Mateus explained that the proposal consists of 42 condominium units in seven buildings on the Western side of Independence Way. The development would be served by public water and sewer, with underground electric and gas utilities available along Independence Way. The applicant has proposed on-site stormwater management facilities designed to address runoff generated by the development as well as runoff originating from areas north and west of the site that naturally drain through the property.

Parking and Drive Aisles

The Committee discussed the proposed visitor parking areas and the width of the internal drive aisles. The applicant explained that the visitor parking spaces are not required to satisfy the project's minimum parking requirement, which is met through the proposed garages and driveways. The additional spaces are intended to accommodate guests and prevent visitors from having to park off-site.

The Committee also questioned whether the proposed 24-foot-wide drive aisles could be reduced to minimize pavement. Mr. Mateus explained that 24 feet is the minimum width required under the zoning regulations and is necessary to accommodate vehicles backing out of perpendicular parking spaces.

Emergency Vehicle Access

The Committee discussed emergency vehicle access, particularly the turning movements near the first group of condominium buildings adjacent to the easement. Mr. Mateus reported that he had spoken with the Fire Marshal, who had concerns regarding the turning movements in this area.

The Committee discussed whether the design could incorporate a hammerhead or otherwise provide additional turning area. Relocating the adjacent parking area was also discussed as a potential means of creating additional maneuvering space. The applicant agreed to revise the design as necessary to accommodate the required emergency vehicle movements.

Crosswalk and Pedestrian Circulation

A substantial portion of the discussion focused on the relationship between the proposed driveways, existing sidewalks, and the existing crosswalk on Independence Way.

Committee members expressed concern about the proposed diagonal crosswalk and whether it would provide the safest and most logical pedestrian connection. The Committee discussed several potential locations farther north, including a location closer to the shopping center and a location that could align more directly with an existing or proposed driveway and function similarly to a four-way intersection.

The Committee ultimately requested that the applicant and reviewing staff evaluate the segment of Independence Way between the existing crosswalk and the area farther north and determine the most appropriate location based on pedestrian circulation, roadway visibility, driveway locations, and overall traffic safety. The Committee did not support the proposed diagonal crossing as the preferred solution.

Zoning and Rezoning

The Committee discussed the zoning status of the property. Mr. Mateus initially stated that the project complied with the zoning ordinance; however, it was clarified that the property is currently within the MPD district and is proposed to be rezoned to C-2.

The Committee discussed the history of the zoning on the site. The property had originally been planned in conjunction with Independence Place, with residential development anticipated in one area and commercial development anticipated on the subject property. The zoning configuration subsequently changed, including conversion to the MPD district. The applicant is now seeking to return the property to the C-2 district. The Committee expressed support for the proposed residential use at the site and noted that the proposed redevelopment appeared appropriate in the context of the property's location.

Existing Easement and Future Access

The Committee asked about the purpose of the easement crossing the property. The applicant explained that it is an access easement benefiting the property to the rear and that it may ultimately serve as a future roadway. The Committee discussed the potential future driveway connection and whether adequate separation would remain between the future access point and the proposed development's driveways. The applicant indicated that the easement is sufficiently wide to accommodate the anticipated future access.

Common Space and Amenities

The Committee asked whether the condominium development would include common outdoor amenities or community space. Mr. Mateus explained that the individual units would have rear decks but that no formal common amenity area, clubhouse, pool, or community facility is currently proposed.

The applicant noted that a small dog park had previously been considered but was removed from the proposal. The applicant indicated that the idea could be reconsidered if the Committee believed it would be beneficial.

The Committee discussed the potential value of providing some common outdoor space for residents, particularly because there are no public parks immediately associated with the development.

The applicant explained that the southern portion of the property has challenging topography, including slopes of approximately 15 percent, which may limit its suitability for common recreational uses. The applicant stated that the area had largely been left undisturbed because of these conditions.

The applicant also explained that existing trees between and around the buildings would be retained where feasible, while some clearing would occur to create usable rear yards. New trees are also proposed within the landscaped median areas. The Committee emphasized that landscaping and tree preservation would be important to the overall appearance of the development from Independence Way.

The Committee clarified that common space was being raised as a planning consideration rather than as a specific requirement of the Committee at this stage.

Site Grading

The Committee asked whether the challenging southern topography would require substantial regrading or retaining walls. Mr. Mateus explained that site grading was still being developed and that the applicant was currently working through the cut-and-fill calculations.

The applicant stated that the design may ultimately require stepped units or smaller retaining walls adjacent to portions of the driveways, although the applicant would prefer to minimize retaining walls. The final approach will depend upon the grading and the amount of soil that can be balanced on-site.

The Committee asked whether the grading requirements could result in a partial redesign. Mr. Mateus indicated that the current design remained the applicant's preferred approach but that the layout could be adapted if necessary to address grading requirements.

Mailboxes and Site Circulation

The Committee asked where the mailboxes would be located. Mr. Mateus stated that all units would likely share a centralized mailbox location near the front parking area. The location would also accommodate access by the postal vehicle.

The Committee requested that the general mailbox location be shown on the site plan, even if the final design had not yet been determined. The Committee noted that a centralized mailbox area could also provide an opportunity for residents to interact and could potentially function as part of a common gathering area.

The Committee also discussed refuse collection and snow removal. The applicant indicated that refuse facilities would be located toward the rear of the development, consistent with the surrounding apartment developments, and that snow could be temporarily stored in designated parking spaces.

Summary of Outstanding Items

The Committee identified the principal items requiring additional consideration as:

1. **Emergency vehicle turning movements**, particularly near the first group of condominium buildings adjacent to the easement, including review using the City's largest applicable emergency vehicle.
2. **Crosswalk location and pedestrian safety**, including evaluation of alternative locations and avoidance of a diagonal crossing where a safer and more direct alignment can be achieved.
3. **Mailbox location**, which should be generally depicted on the site plan.
4. **Landscaping and tree preservation**, particularly given the visibility of the development from Independence Way.
5. Continued consideration of whether **common outdoor space or amenities** could reasonably be incorporated into the development.

The Committee noted that the proposal was generally consistent with the applicable zoning requirements and that the above items were primarily site design and coordination considerations.

Future Land Use Map and Comprehensive Plan

Before concluding the discussion, the Committee addressed the proposed future land use designation associated with the requested rezoning.

Mr. Mateus stated that the project attorney, Brian LaPlante, was preparing the required mailing affidavit, which was expected to be submitted to the Planning Department by the end of the week. Mr. LaPlante was also preparing the draft coordinates associated with the proposed zoning change and future land use map amendment for inclusion with the Master Plan materials.

A Committee member noted that the application did not identify a specific requested future land use designation. Staff explained that the current Comprehensive Plan does not provide detailed definitions for the various future land use designations. However, the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, which forms the basis for the current Future Land Use Map, contemplated either a multifamily or neighborhood commercial designation for this type of area.

Staff indicated that, based on the existing alternatives, the multifamily designation appeared to be the more directly applicable designation, as the neighborhood commercial designation is intended primarily for neighborhood-serving commercial uses. The applicant agreed to ensure that the requested designation is identified in the formal application materials.

Traffic Impact Study

The applicant asked when a traffic impact study would be required. Staff indicated that the traffic impact study would generally be required as part of the Master Plan submission.

The applicant stated that the development was expected to have a relatively limited effect on the surrounding roadway network but agreed to prepare the necessary traffic calculations, including peak-hour trip generation and related information.

Adjournment (Next Meeting | October 7, 2026)

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Stephen Pikul and seconded by Stanley Mulcahy, the Committee voted (4-0) to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.