



## Memo

To: Cranston City Plan Commission  
From: Gregory Guertin, Senior Planner  
Date: June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Re: **"Gladstone City Elementary School"**  
Preliminary Plan - Major Land Development

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**Owner/App:** City of Cranston/Cranston School District  
**Location:** 50 Gladstone Street, AP 7-4, Lot 2357  
**Zone:** B-1 (Residential with at least 8,000 sq ft.)  
**FLU:** Government/Institutional

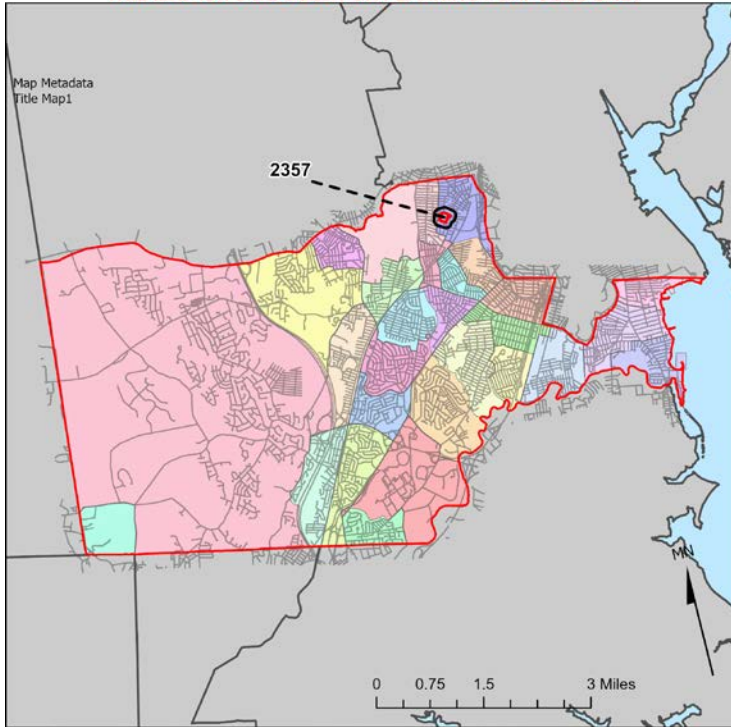
### I. Proposal

The project will entail the demolition and removal of the existing Gladstone Elementary School building and the construction of a new 109,970 sq ft. Gladstone Elementary School building and associated site improvements in its place. The total area of the site is 7.82 acres which will contain the new school as well as existing site elements, such as a playground and associated parking lot along Lawrence Street and the existing driveway along the east side of the site, between Asia Street and Gladstone Street.

The use of a public school and public playgrounds is allowed by right at this location. The project has received a dimensional variance for building height by the Zoning Board of Review on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

## LOCATION

**THIS MAP IS TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY**

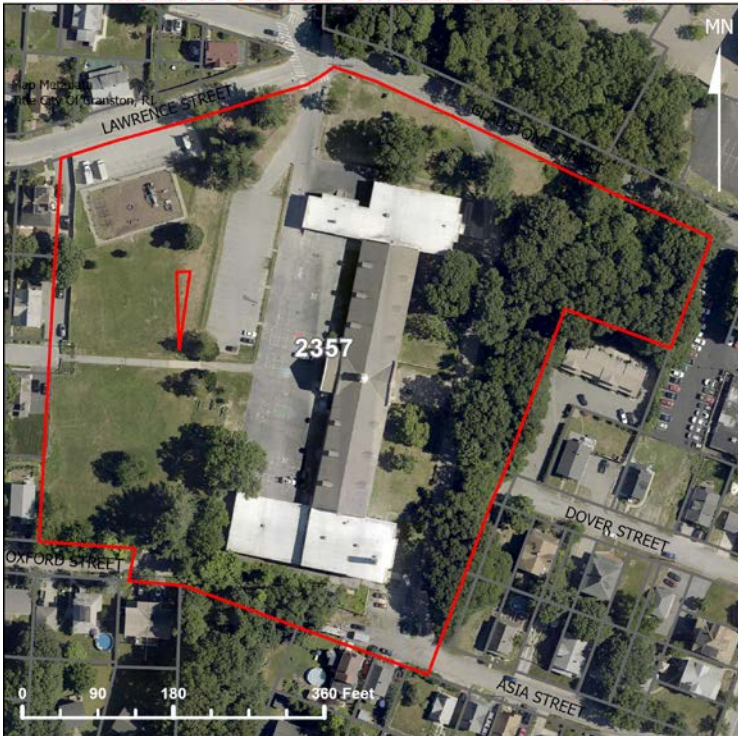


### Legend

- Streets**
- Streets
- Gladstone Elementary School**
- Gladstone Elementary School
  - Gladstone Elementary School 400 ft Buffer
- City of Cranston**
- City of Cranston
- Municipal Boundary's**
- Municipal Boundary's
- Neighborhoods**
- Arlington
  - Auburn
  - Auburn/Friendly Community
  - Budlong
  - Dean Estates/Woodridge
  - Eden Park
  - Edgewood
  - Fiskeville
  - Forest Hills
  - Garden City
  - Garden Hills
  - Glen Woods
  - Howard
  - Knightsville
  - Laurel Hill
  - Mayfield/Oak Hill
  - Meshanicut
  - Northern Edgewood
  - Oaklawn/Brookfield
  - Park View/South Elmwood
  - Pawtuxet
  - South Auburn
  - Spectacle
  - Stadium
  - Stone Hill
  - Thornton
  - Village
  - Western Cranston

## AERIAL VIEW

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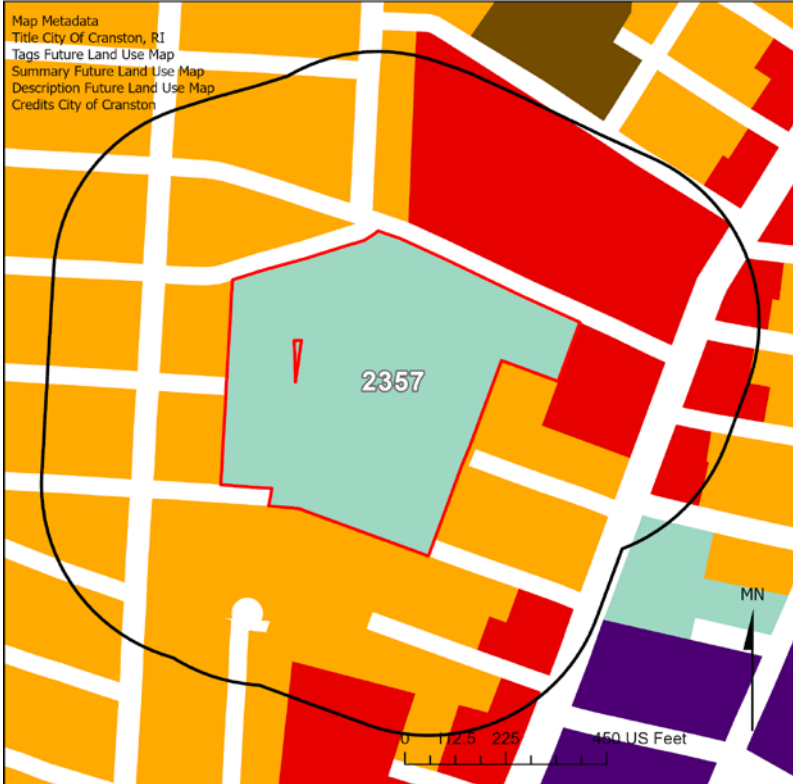
### Legend

- Gladstone Elementary School
- Gladstone Elementary School 400 ft Buffer
- Citywide Parcels
- Streets



## FUTURE LAND USE

THIS MAP IS TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY



### Legend

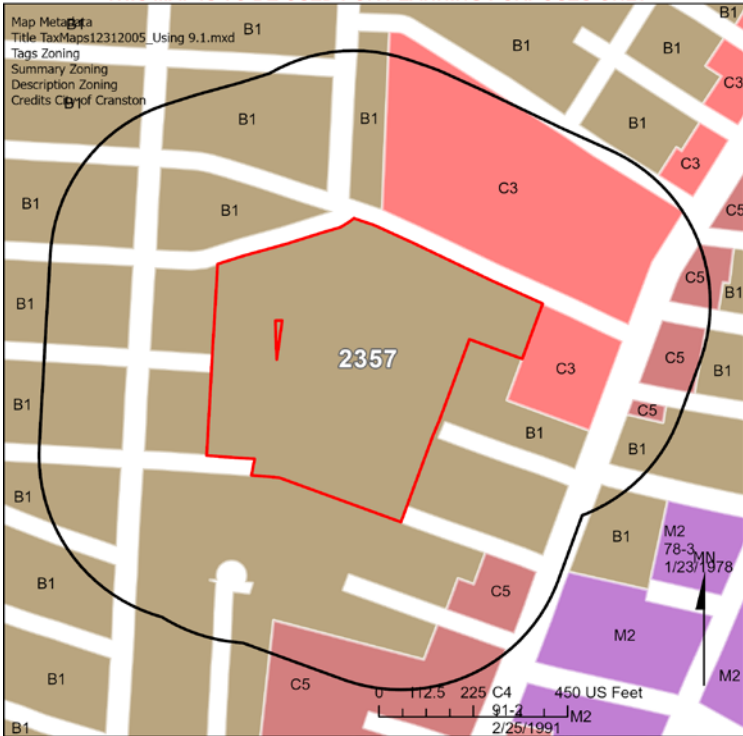
- Gladstone Elementary School
- Gladstone Elementary School 400 ft Buffer

### Future Land Use

- Governmental/Institutional
- Highway Commercial/Services
- Industrial
- Multifamily
- Single/Two Family Residential  
Less Than 10.89 Units Per Acre

## ZONING

THIS MAP IS TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY



### Legend

- Gladstone Elementary School
- Gladstone Elementary School 400 ft Buffer

### Zoning

- B1
- C3
- C4
- C5
- M2

### 3-D VIEW



### STREET VIEW (From Gladstone Street)



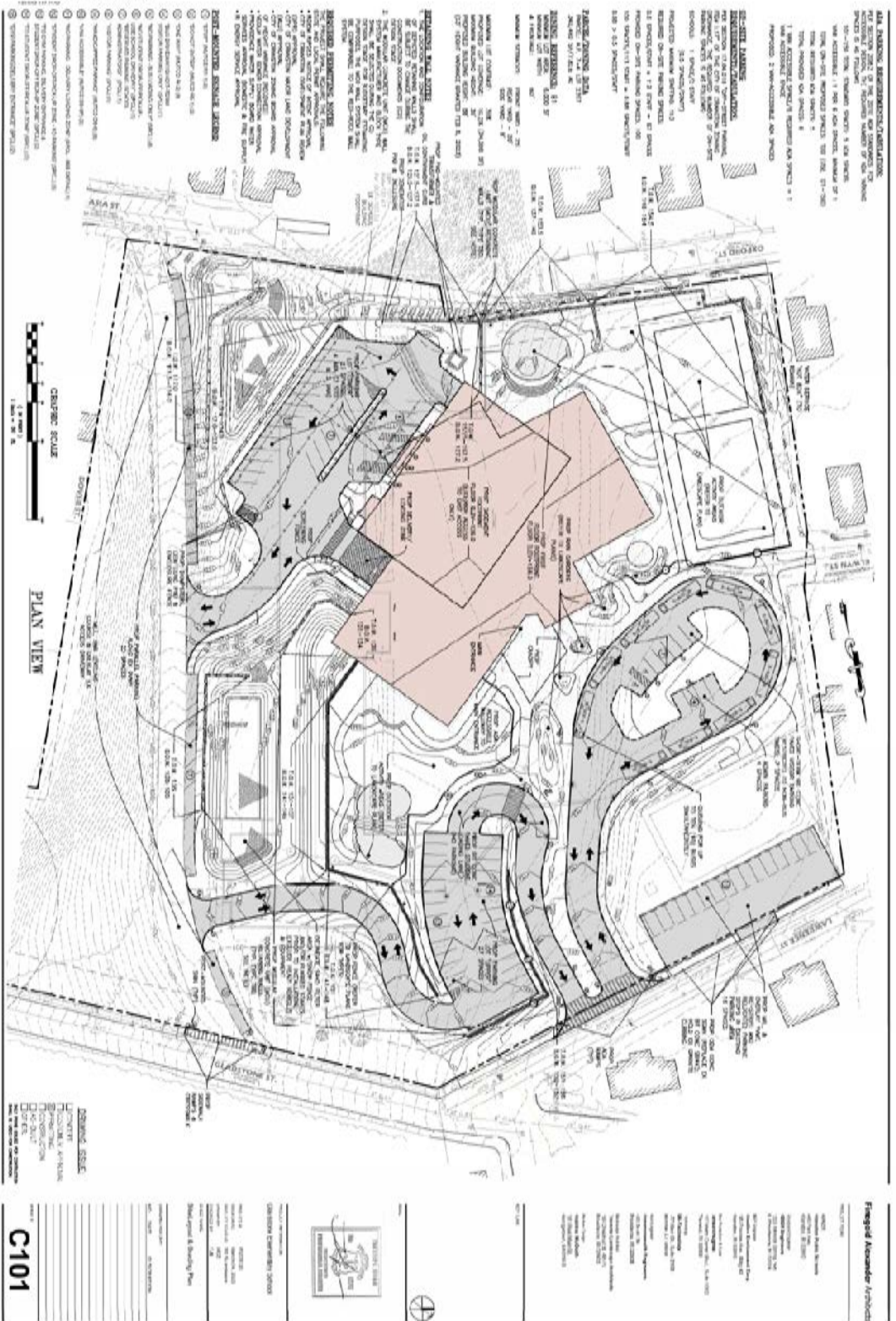
**STREET VIEW (From Lawrence Street)**



**EXISTING SCHOOL (PHOTO FROM NARRATIVE)  
(View to west of center of existing school building;  
cupola visible above roof peak (top elev.  $\approx$ 193))**



# SITE PLAN (SCREENSHOT)



# SITE PLAN – EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS (SCREENSHOT)



2 Exterior Elevation - North  
3/64" = 1'-0"



1 Exterior Elevation - South  
3/64" = 1'-0"

Exterior Elevations

Gladstone Elementary School  
50 Gladstone Street, Cranston, RI 02910-2790

Project: Alexander Architects Inc  
11/2022

## **II. Documents which are part of the Master Plan application and available on the Planning Department webpage:**

1. Preliminary Plan application form and checklist.
2. 500' radius map and list of abutters.
3. Plan set entitled "Gladstone Elementary School" prepared by Finegold Alexander Architects
4. Traffic Impact Analysis Report prepared by Commonwealth Engineers and Consultants, P.E.; David Olster
5. Stormwater Management Plan prepared by Commonwealth Engineers and Consultants, P.E.; Timothy Behan
6. Landscape Plans prepared by Finegold Alexander Architects

## **III. Surrounding land use and context**

Analysis using the City of Cranston Geographic Information System indicates that:

1. The project site is approximately 7.82 acres in size.
2. The subject site is currently occupied by the existing Gladstone Elementary School to be demolished.
3. The subject site is also host to existing playground space to be retained.
4. The subject site is zoned B-1, the surrounding area within a 400' radius is predominately zoned B-1, with some C-3 and C-4 zoned Parcels

## **IV. Staff / Agency Comments**

1. **The Providence Water Supply Board** – Has provided a letter regarding water availability
2. **Veolia Water** – Has provided a letter regarding sewer availability
3. **Public Works Department / Engineering Division** – Provided no comment at this time
4. **Public Works Department / Traffic Safety Division** – If additional parking is needed, the existing playground space could be utilized to enhance parking and site circulation.
5. **Fire Department** – Provided no comment at this time
6. **Building and Zoning Department** – Provided no comment at this time

## **V. Interests of Others**

None to report at this time



## VII. Planning Analysis

### Overview:

The proposal is to demolish and remove the existing Gladstone Elementary School building and site features and to construct a new 35,000 SF Gladstone Elementary School Building with site improvements (walkways, fences, walls, etc.), utility services (sanitary sewer, potable & fire protection water, natural gas, electric and telecommunications), on-site stormwater management measures and landscaping.

The proposal would increase the school's capacity to 800 students, an increase of 250 students. It would also provide for a modern school facility with additional amenities that are not present in the existing building, such as a standalone gymnasium, curiosity center, maker space, and other interior and exterior specialized spaces dedicated to learning.

### Traffic & Parking:

The proposal includes a relocated building, changes to access to the site, increased on-site parking and improved circulation to accommodate the increase in available student enrollment capacity. According to the Traffic Impact Analysis provided by the applicant there will be an increase of 45% of total trips to the site if maximum enrollment were achieved. However, impacts from the school within the surrounding neighborhood is expected to reduce due to the addition of off-street queue storage for drop-offs and pick-ups. A 47% increase of parking spaces is also being proposed, totaling 100 parking spaces. Given the increase of available parking and the addition of the drop-off/pick-up zone is expected to reduce the demand for on-street parking during arrival/dismissal times. Additionally, school buses will be routed through a proposed loop that can fit 10 large buses and includes a sidewalk whereas buses currently route through the existing private street on-site which does not have a sidewalk.

## VIII. Findings of Fact

An orderly, thorough, and expeditious technical review of this Preliminary Plan has been conducted. Property owners within a 100' radius have been notified by first class mail prior to the public meeting, and the meeting agenda has been properly posted.

Staff has reviewed the Preliminary Plan application for conformance with required standards set forth in RIGL Section 45-23-60, as well as the City of Cranston's Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(1) states, “The proposed development is consistent with the comprehensive community plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies.”*

1. The proposed redevelopment of the existing school is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan – Future Land Use Map designation of the parcel as “Government/Institutional” because this designation is suitable for the public school uses as being proposed.

2. Significant cultural, historic, or natural features that contribute to the attractiveness of the community will not be unduly negatively impacted through this proposal.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(2) states, “The proposed development is in compliance with the standards and provisions of the municipality’s zoning ordinance.”*

3. The project is in compliance with the municipalities zoning ordinance having been granted relief for building height per 17.92.010-Variance, Section 17.20.120 Schedule of Intensity Regulations on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 by the Zoning Board of Review.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(3) states, “There will be no significant negative environmental impacts from the proposed development as shown on the **final** plan, with all required conditions for approval.” (emphasis added)*

4. The current site is developed as a school building and surrounding public amenities such as the existing playground. The proposed development will bring the site drainage infiltration into current standards and provide improvements in this regard. The project is subject to all local, state and federal standards regarding environmental impacts. At this point, staff finds that there will be no significant negative environmental impacts from the proposed development as shown on the plan.

5. The Rhode Island November 2018 Natural Heritage map shows that there are no known rare species located on the site.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(4) states, “The subdivision, as proposed, will not result in the creation of individual lots with any physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable. (See definition of Buildable lot). Lots with physical constraints to development may be created only if identified as permanent open space or permanently reserved for a public purpose on the approved, recorded plans.”*

6. The proposed project does not incorporate a subdivision of land or any improvements that would create physical constraints to development such that future building would be impracticable.

7. The design and location of building lots, utilities, drainage and other improvements conform to local regulations for mitigation of flooding and soil erosion.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(5) states, “All proposed land developments and all subdivision lots have adequate and permanent physical access to a public street. Lot frontage on a public street without physical access shall not be considered in compliance with this requirement.”*

8. The property in question has adequate permanent physical access from both Lawrence Street and Gladstone Street, all being improved public roadways located directly around the subject parcel.

## **IX. Recommendation**

Staff finds this proposal consistent with the standards for required findings of fact set forth in RIGL Section 45-23-60 as well as with the City of Cranston's Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. Staff therefore recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the documented findings of fact and **approve** the Major Land Development – Preliminary Plan application.