

City Planning Department



Memo

To: Cranston City Plan Commission
From: Gregory Guertin, Senior Planner
Date: January 20th, 2023
Re: Use Variance Application at 72 Rolfe Square

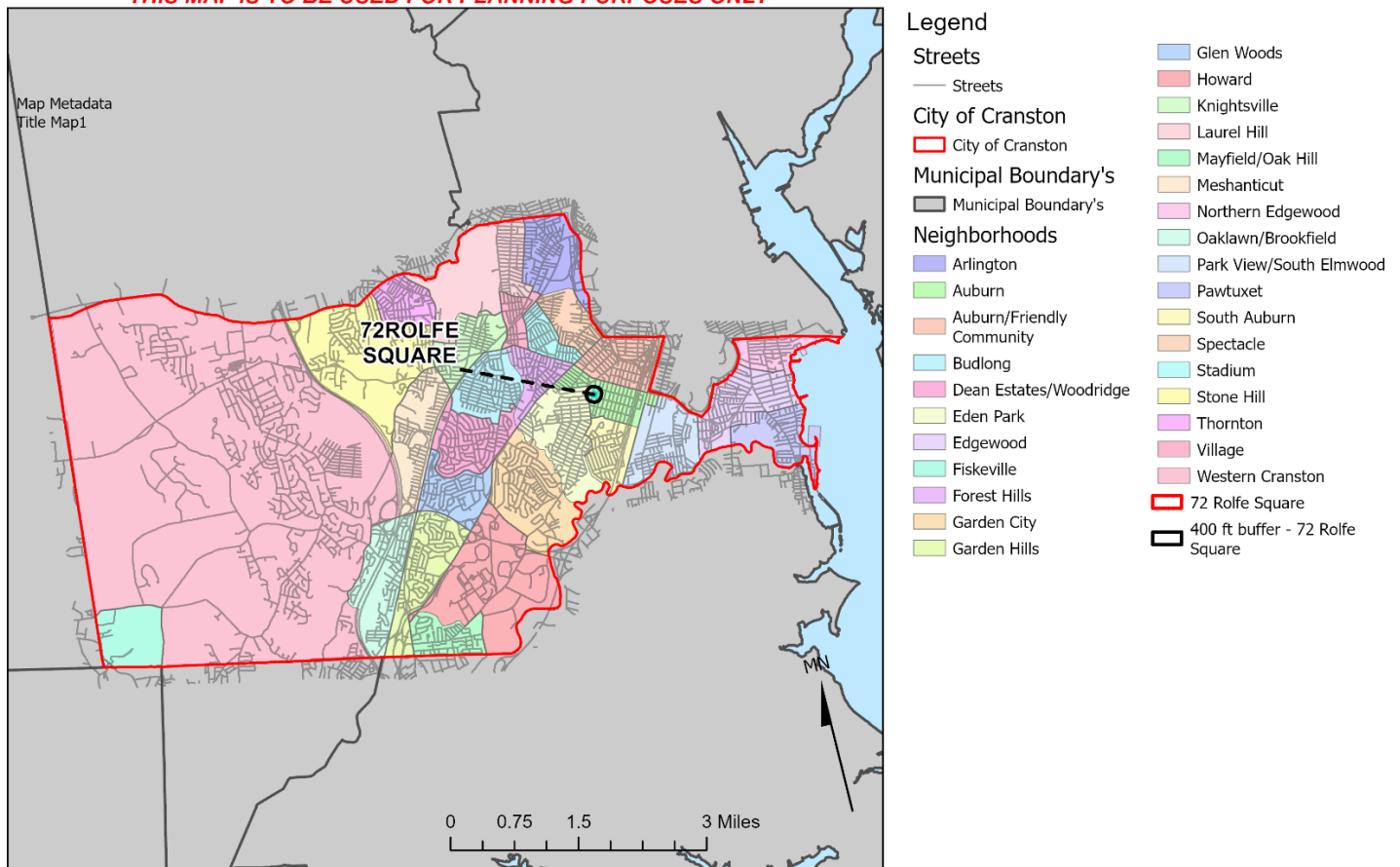
Owner: Force Realty LLC
Applicant: Antler Ale Works LLC dba Iron Stag Brewing
Location: 72 Rolfe Square, Cranston RI 02910 Plat 5 Lots 604, 1835
Zone: C3 (General Business)
FLU: Neighborhood Commercial Services

USE VARIANCE REQUEST:

To allow the operation of a brewery in a C3 zone [17.20.30 – Schedule of Uses].

LOCATION

THIS MAP IS TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY



AERIAL VIEW

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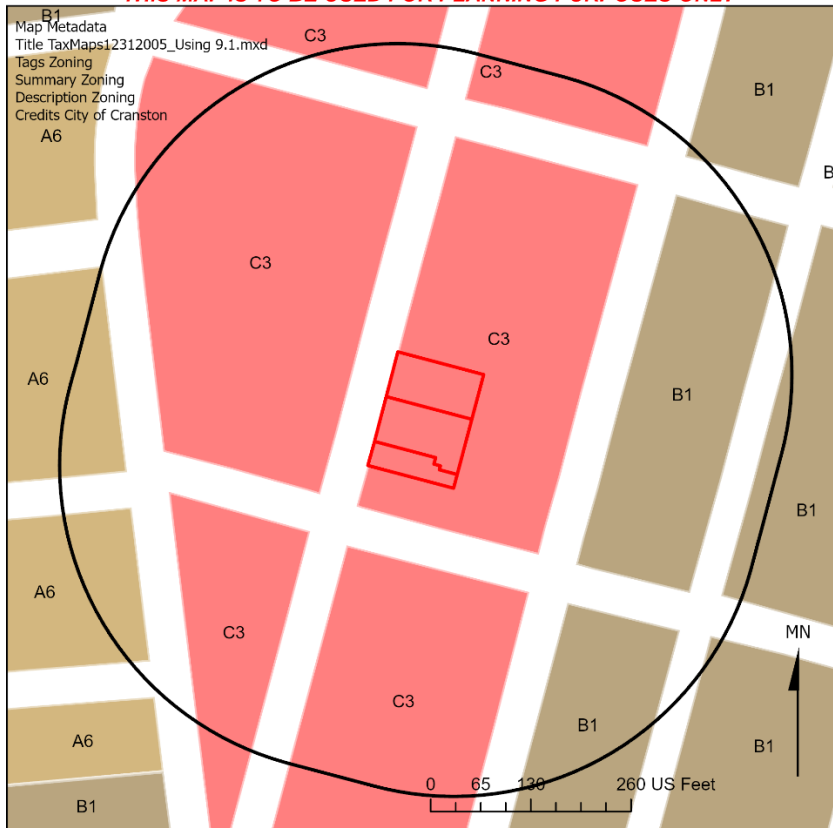
Legend

- Citywide Parcels
- 72 Rolfe Square
- 400 ft buffer - 72 Rolfe Square



ZONING

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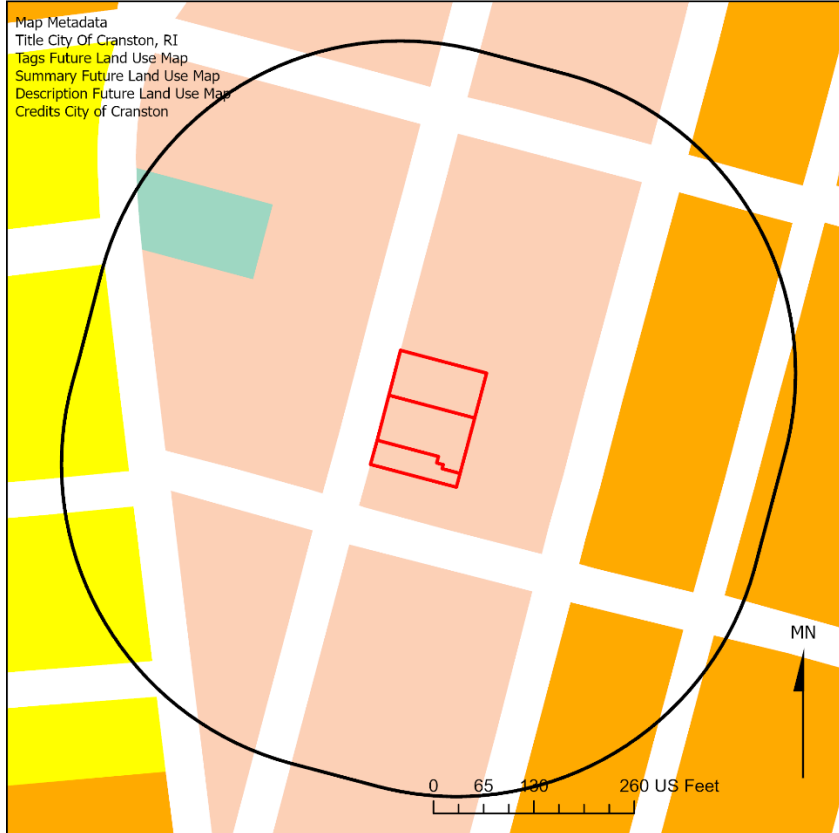
Legend

Zoning

- A6
- B1
- C3
- 72 Rolfe Square
- 400 ft buffer - 72 Rolfe Square

FUTURE LAND USE

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Legend

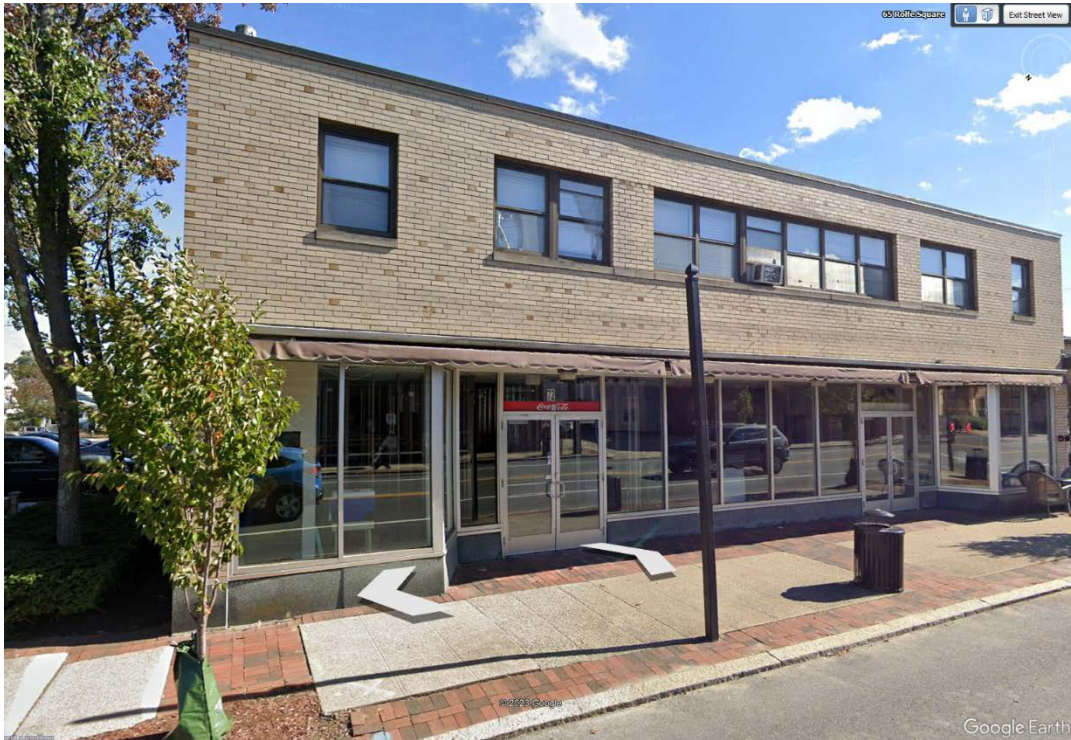
Future Land Use

- Governmental/Institutional
- Neighborhood Commercial/Services
- Single Family Residential 7.26 To 3.64 Unit Per Acre
- Single/Two Family Residential Less Than 10.89 Units Per Acre
- 72 Rolfe Square
- 400 ft buffer - 72 Rolfe Square

3-D AERIAL VIEW



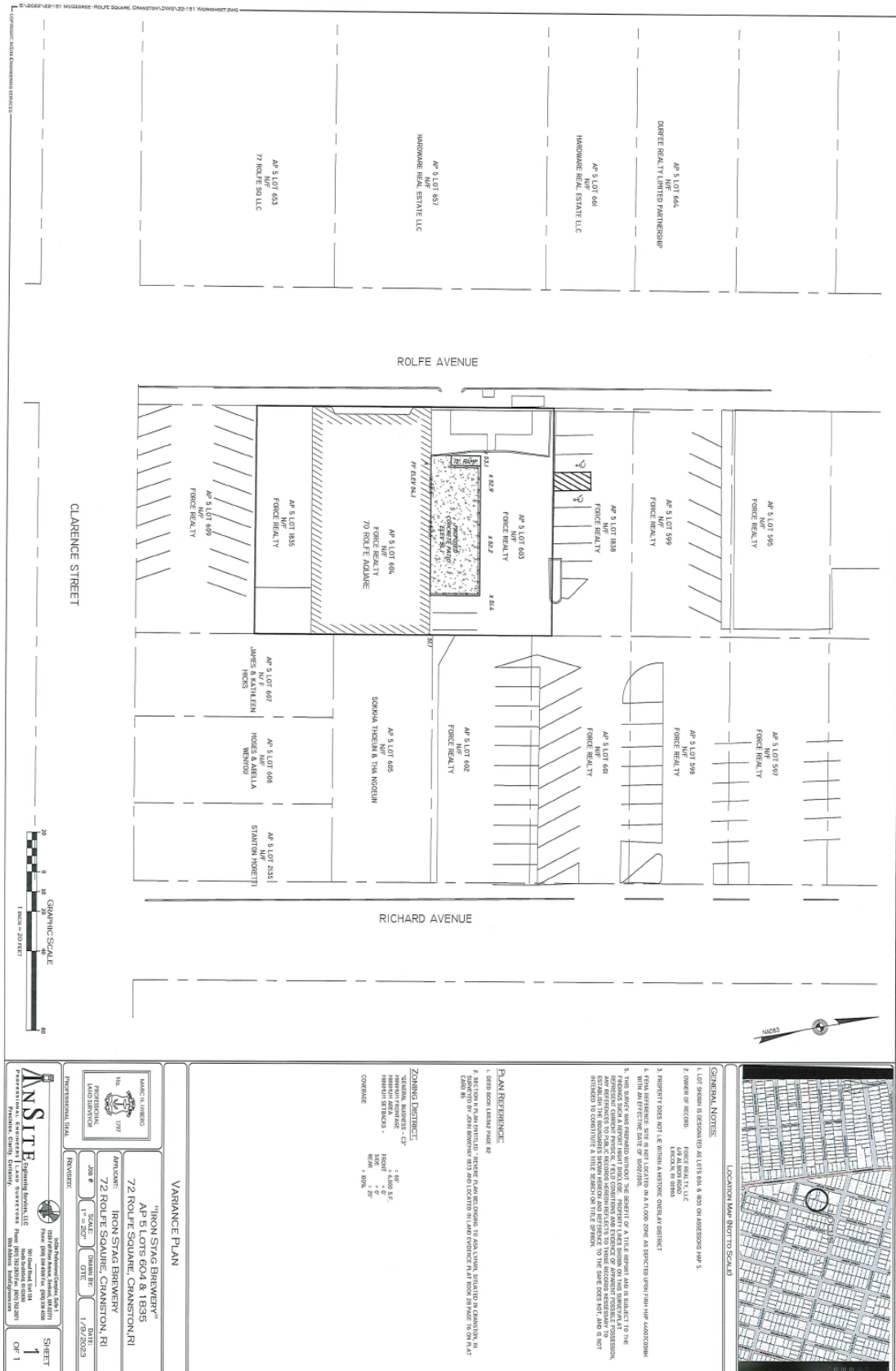
STREET VIEW (Façade)

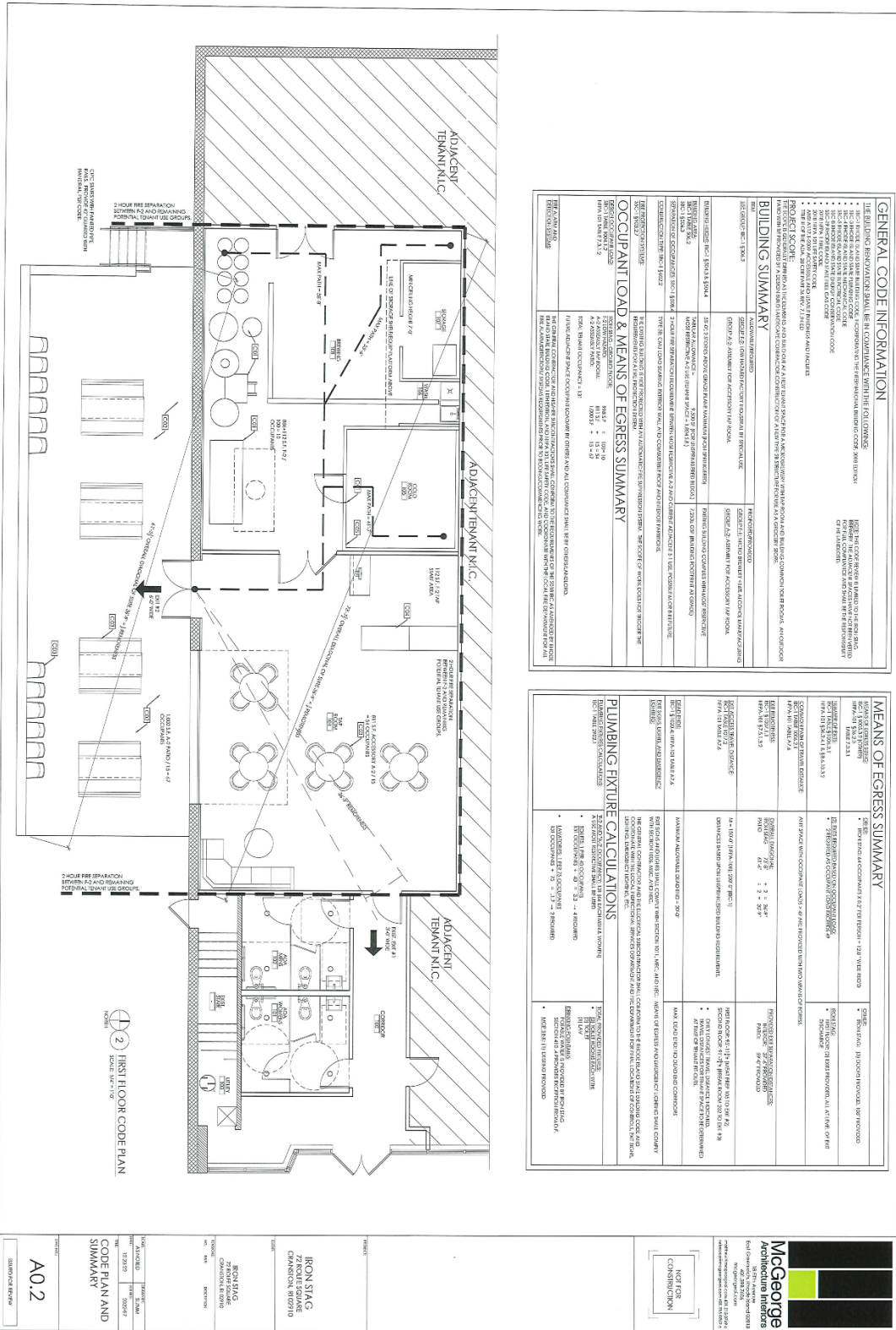


STREET VIEW (Rear Parking)



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FINDINGS OF FACT:

- The applicant itemized specific relief requests in their application form, namely the following elements: Permitted Uses – Schedule of Uses (17.20.30): “The code allows a brew pub in the C-3 zone but not a brewery. The State of Rhode Island issues different licenses for each type of brewery related activity.”
 - 17.92.010 Variance: “Applicant desires to operate a brewery that is not permitted in the C-3 zone”
- It should be noted that that this application requires a use variance which calls for a higher standard of review.
- The proposed use of a brewery is not allowed in a C3 zone; however, this application has received full DPRC approval with no conditions or concerns. Additionally, representatives from neighboring businesses attended the DPRC meeting on February 1st, 2023 in support of this project.
- Based on Planning staff review, in consideration with the uses compatibility with the surrounding area that the proposed use does not appear to impose undue nuisances beyond any other allowed by-right use on this site.
- The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the subject parcel as *Neighborhood Commercial Services*
 - Per the Comprehensive plan, “C-1, C-2, & C-3 are appropriate zoning classifications for Neighborhood Commercial Services.”
 - Cranston’s Zoning code makes a distinction between “Brew Pubs” which are relegated to commercial zones and “Breweries” which are relegated to industrial zones.
 - The distinction is made regarding the amount of floor area taken up by brewing equipment and the total amount of beer brewed on-site. Iron Stag Brewing exceeds both of those metrics, classifying the business as a brewery as opposed to a brew pub.
 - Although this classification is technically accurate, in planning staffs view the distinctions made by the future land use map and zoning code did not account for a brewery at this scale and in this location.
 - Planning staff have no concerns with this scale of operation for a brewery at this location.
- The Comprehensive Plan outlines goals and policies pertaining to Rolfe Square which planning staff believe to support the approval of this project, specifically:
 - *Economic Development Goal 6*: Target development sites for Smart Growth projects.
 - *Economic Development Policy 6.4*: Encourage redevelopment opportunities at locations near Garden City Center, **Rolfe Square**, Knightsville and along I-295
 - *Economic Development Goal 7*: Improve/build neighborhood commercial areas at various sites through formulating and implementing revitalization projects.
 - *Economic Development Policy 7.1* Promote the development or redevelopment of neighborhood commercial centers to service local market areas to reduce cross-town traffic... Redevelopment of neighborhood centers should continue to occur at Pawtuxet Village, Knightsville, and **Rolfe Square**.
 - *Economic Development Goal 11*: Target sites for industrial and commercial projects.
 - *Economic Development Policy 11.3*: Promote leisure and/or entertainment-related businesses to compliment the Park Theater redevelopment in **Rolfe Square**.
- In review of the comprehensive plan staff finds that the application is neither directly consistent nor inconsistent with the Future Land Use map designation. However, upon review of the goals and policy framework within the comprehensive plan that is supportive of this proposal the weight of evidence within the plan is supportive of the application.

RECOMMENDATION:

Due to the findings that the applicant's proposal is generally consistent with the Cranston Comprehensive Plan, and is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, staff recommends the Plan Commission forward a **positive recommendation** on the application to the Zoning Board of Review.