

City Planning Department



Memo - REVISED

To: Cranston City Plan Commission
From: Gregory Guertin
Date: July 21, 2023
Re: **Dimensional Variance @ 846 Oaklawn Ave**

Owner/App: Domain Realty LLC
Location: 846 Oaklawn Ave, Cranston, RI
Zone: C-3 (General Business)
FLU: Highway Commercial Services

DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE REQUEST:

1. The applicant seeks relief from multiple sections in the code of ordinances to erect a freestanding sign on a privately owned parcel at the corner of Weaver Street and Oaklawn Avenue. [17.72.10 – SIGNS & 17.20.100 - Corner visibility]

Please note: two separate forms of relief were requested for this proposal; this memo only relates to the dimensional relief regarding the location of the proposed sign.

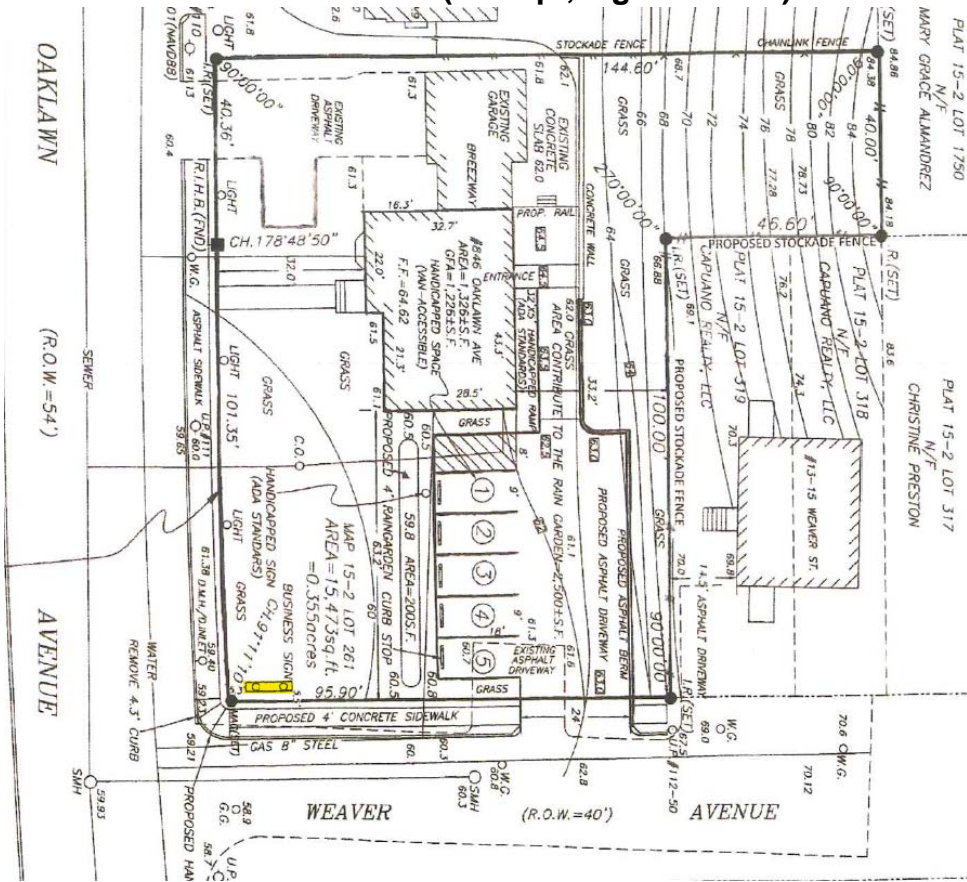
AERIAL VIEW



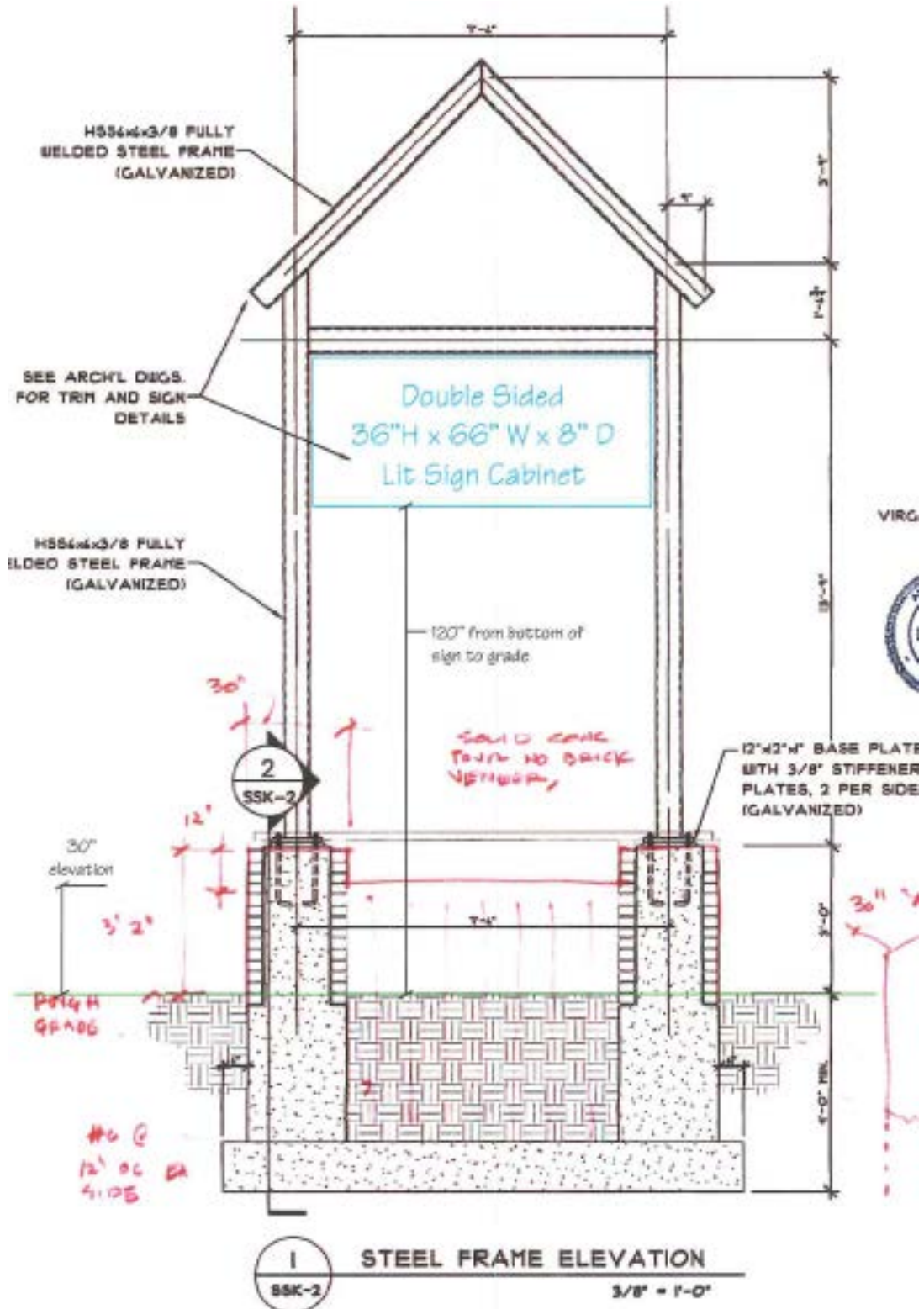
STREET VIEW



SITE PLAN (excerpt, sign location)



SITE PLAN (excerpt, sign dimensions)



PLANNING STAFF FINDINGS

1. The applicant seeks to complete construction of a sign on a corner lot located in a C-3 zone that exceeds the standards as written in the City of Cranston Code of Ordinances in a number of ways, as follows:
 - a. The location of the proposed sign is located within the 5' allowed setback from the property line;
 - b. The proposed sign exceeds the allowable height;
 - c. The concrete base of the proposed sign exceeds the height for any construction which would impede motorist vision between a height of 2 ½' and 10' above the centerline grades of the intersecting streets at the intersection of a corner lot.
 - d. The proposed sign is also located within an area of the parcel within 30' from the corner of either **intersecting street** which is deemed as having the potential to impede motorists vision
2. The applicant has already constructed the concrete base of the sign prior to seeking relief as shown in the aerial view image taken from the city's GIS mapping application.
3. The Comprehensive Plan does not contain any language which would address this proposal in any way, either favorably or negatively.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Staff finds that the hardship from which the applicant seeks relief is **not** due to the unique characteristics of the subject land nor to the general characteristics of the surrounding area. Additionally, staff believe that granting this variance request could impair the intent and purpose of the zoning ordinance by way of creating a potentially hazardous circumstance for motorists exiting Weaver Avenue onto Oaklawn Avenue. Planning staff sought additional guidance from the Department of Public Works Traffic Safety Manager who advised planning staff that the erection of this sign has the potential to impair motorists' view of Oaklawn Avenue while exiting from Weaver Avenue.

RECOMMENDATION

Due to the findings that the application is neither consistent nor inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and that it would alter the character of the neighborhood by way of creating a potential hazard for motorists traveling on both Oaklawn Avenue and Weaver Avenue, staff recommends the Plan Commission forward a **negative recommendation** on the application to the Zoning Board of Review.