

City Planning Department



Memo

To: Cranston City Plan Commission
From: Doug McLean, AICP, Principal Planner
Date: March 2, 2023
Re: "Residences at Oaklawn Ave", AP 17, Lot 670
Ordinance #1-23-01: Comprehensive Plan Amendment to "Multi-Family"
Ordinance #1-23-02: Zone Change to "B-2 with conditions"

I. Proposal

This memo contains background information, staff analysis, findings, and the recommendation for the two (2) Ordinance petitions noted above. Since the two (2) petitions are closely related, all of the background and analysis are being addressed together. Based on the fact that this action requires two (2) separate decisions, the staff findings and recommendations on each decision are being handled separately at the end of this memo. It should be noted that a third decision is needed by the Plan Commission on the proposed Major Land Development - Master Plan application that is further detailed in a separate staff memo. All staff memos and application materials on this matter can be found at the following link: <https://www.cranstonri.gov/plan-commission-3.7.23/>

Ordinance #1-23-02 is seeking a zone change from "A-8" (single-family dwellings on lots of 8,000 sqft.) to "B-2 with conditions" (Single-family, two-family and multi-family dwellings). The specific "conditions" associated with this zone change are that the subject property shall be allowed a density bonus of up to 12 housing units, and that at least two (2) of those housing units shall be deed restricted as affordable. This would provide an affordable housing percentage of 16.7%. The inclusion of affordable housing as part of this zone change has been requested by the Planning Department to assist in fulfilling the City's affordable housing goals. It should be noted that multi-family dwellings are an allowed use within the B-2 zoning district.

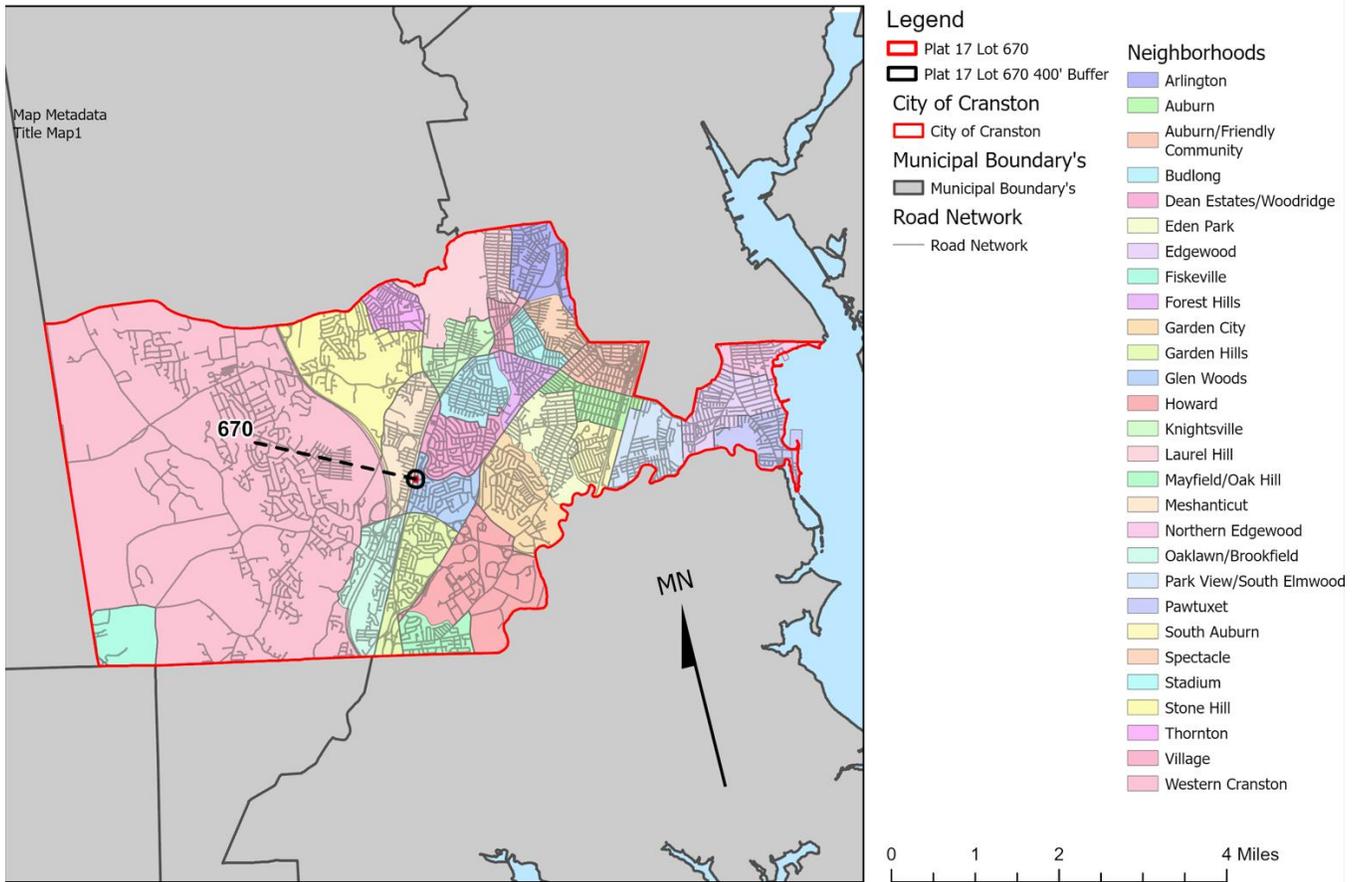
Ordinance #1-23-01 is seeking a corresponding Comprehensive Plan Amendment that is needed to make the proposed zone change consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The specific amendment being proposed is to change the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map designation of the property from "Single Family Residential 7.26 To 3.64 Unit Per Acre" to "Multi-Family." This Comprehensive Plan amendment is a necessary element to ensure the proposed zone change will not be inconsistent with the current Plan.

The City Plan Commission is charged with reviewing the staff findings and recommendations and providing a formal recommendation on Ordinance #1-23-01 and #1-23-02 to the City Council. The actual language and format of the two (2) ordinances is attached at the close of this memo for reference.

The subject property is 34,743 SF in area with 233 feet of frontage.

LOCATION

THIS MAP IS TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY



AERIAL VIEW

THIS MAP IS TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY



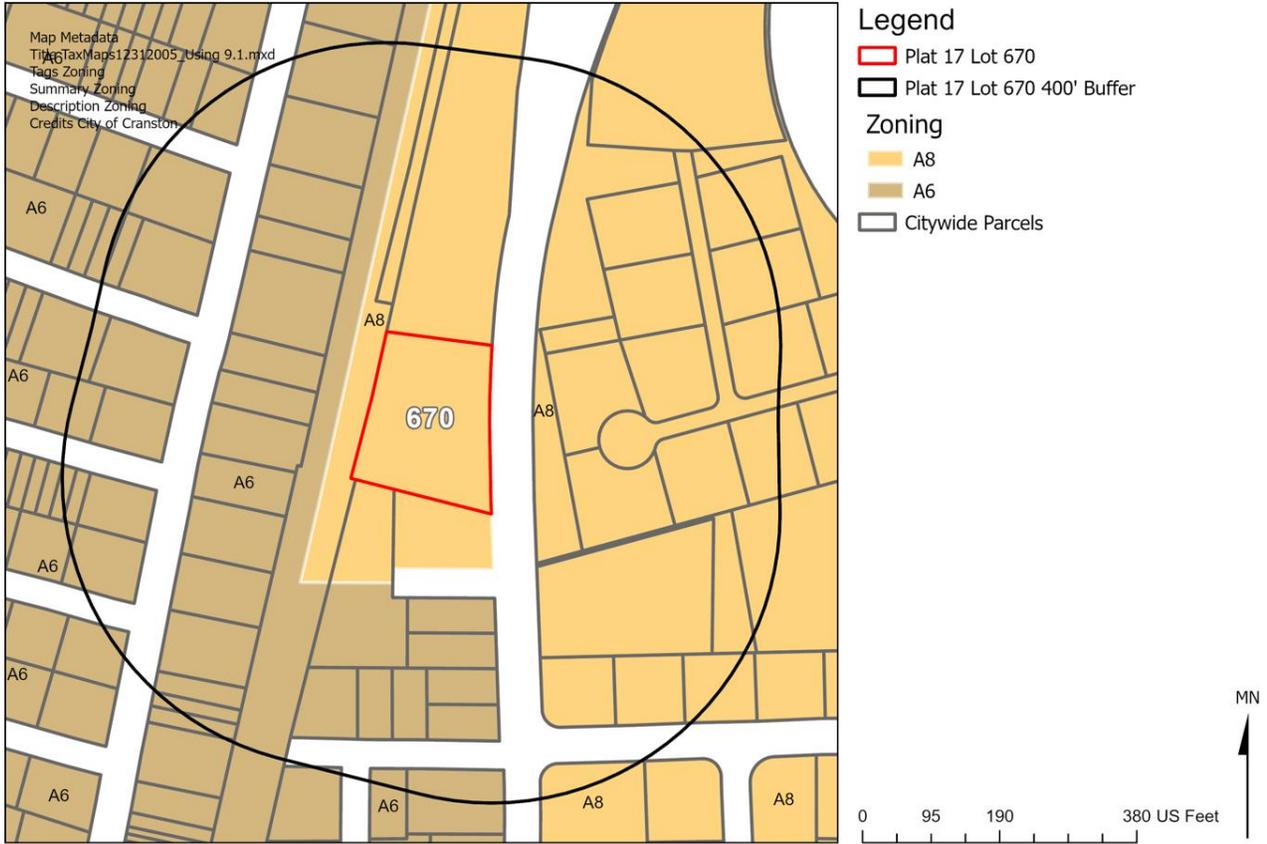
Legend

- Citywide Parcels
- Plat 17 Lot 670
- Plat 17 Lot 670 400' Buffer



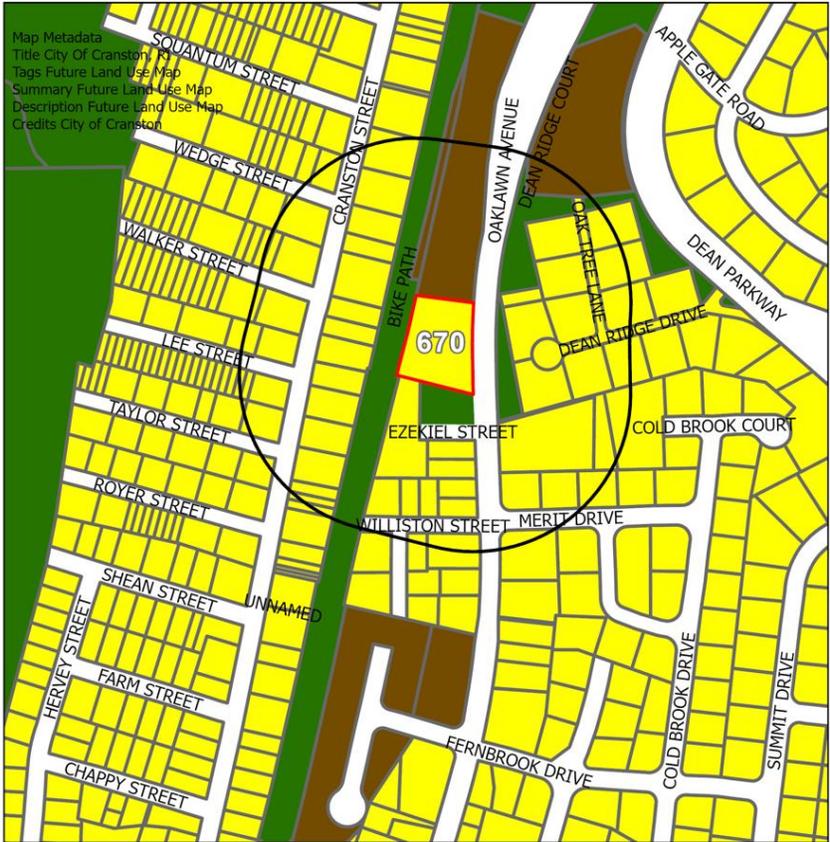
ZONING

THIS MAP IS TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY



FUTURE LAND USE

THIS MAP IS TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY



Legend

Plat 17 Lot 670 400' Buffer

Plat 17 Lot 670

Citywide Parcels

Future Land Use

Multifamily

Open Space

Single Family Residential 7.26 To 3.64 Unit Per Acre

0 175 350 700 US Feet



3-D VIEW



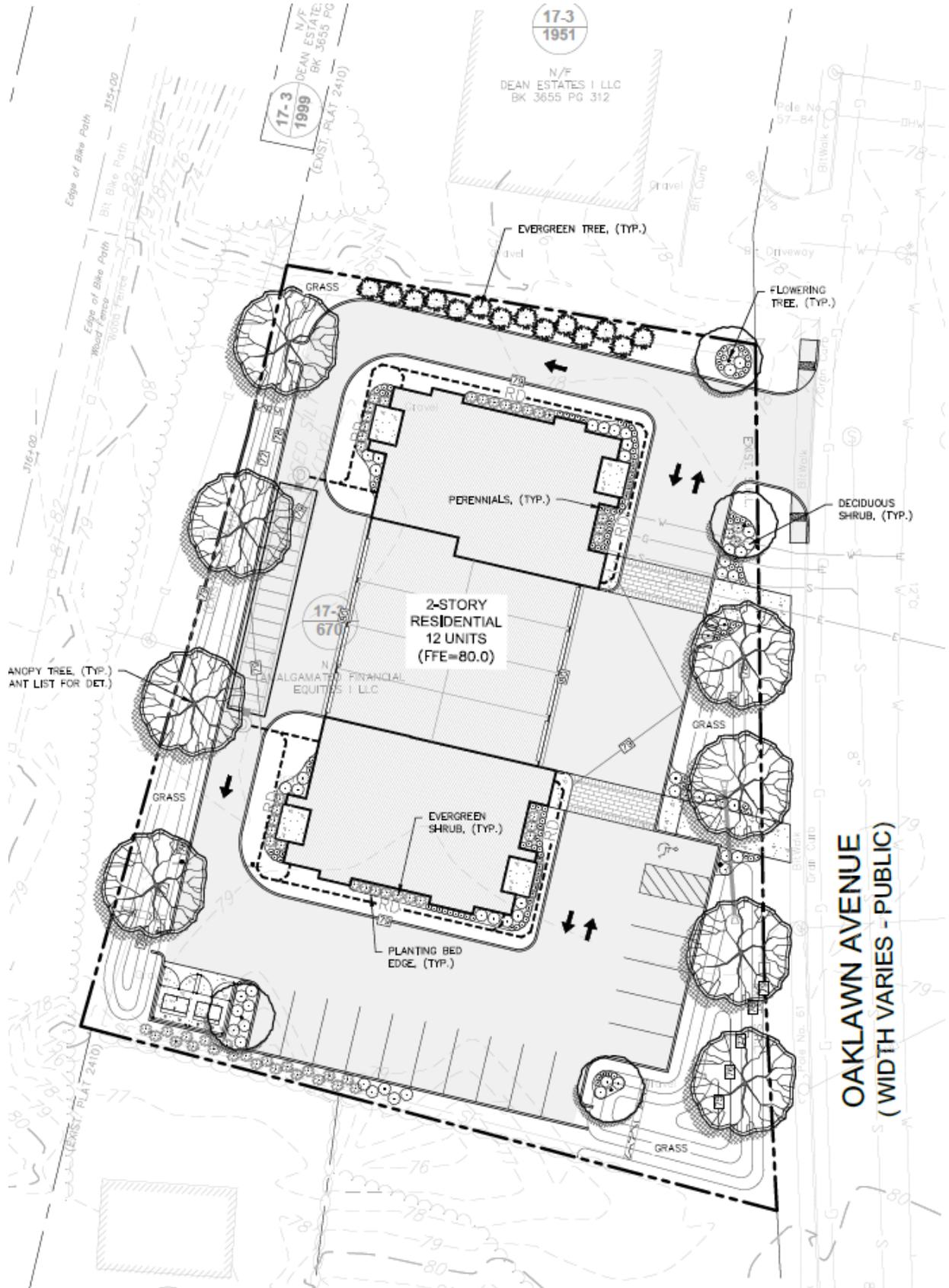
STREET VIEW
(from Oaklawn Ave facing subject property)



STREET VIEW
(from Oaklawn Ave facing opposite side as subject property)



PROPOSED MASTER PLAN



OAKLAWN AVENUE
(WIDTH VARIES - PUBLIC)

II. Planning Analysis

The consideration of the proposed zone change and Comprehensive Plan amendment petitions should be done in tandem as the two (2) ordinances are meant to achieve a singular vision for the property. The zone change is seeking to go from “A-8” (single-family dwellings on lots of 8,000 sqft.) to “B-2 with conditions” (Single-family, two-family and multi-family dwellings). The specific “conditions” associated with this zone change are that the subject property shall be allowed a density bonus of up to 12 housing units, and that at least two (2) of those housing units shall be deed restricted as affordable (equal to 16.7%). The Comprehensive Plan Amendment I seeking to modify Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designation of the property from “Single Family Residential 28 7.26 To 3.64 Unit Per Acre” to “Multi-Family.” This Comprehensive Plan amendment is a necessary element to ensure the proposed zone change is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan amendment to “Multi-family” would allow for the density level being sought by the zone change. In fact, there is no established maximum density allowance for a number of units per acres within the “Multi-Family” designation. The definition of the Multi-Family FLUM designation, as established within the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element page 43, is as follows:

“Multi-Family: The Plan identifies the larger existing complexes of rental or condominium developments as Multi-family. The appropriate zoning designation for Multi-family is B-2, C-1 and C-2.”

The corresponding zone change is seeking a B-2 base designation, which is consistent with this proposed FLUM designation. Aside from the FLUM, the Comprehensive Plan has numerous policies on the subjects density bonuses and affordable housing that can be found in the Housing Element. Staff has reviewed the totality of policies within the Housing Element and finds that the change of zone is consistent with these policies with regard to both the density bonus allowance and the inclusion of 16.7% affordable housing. Some of the Housing Element policies that are particularly relevant are:

“HA-1: Increase affordable housing in new subdivisions and development projects as appropriate through incentives and bonuses.”

“HA-2: Require a proportion of units as affordable housing (as defined by State regulations) in each new housing project over ten units in size.”

“HA-10: Provide density bonuses for developments that incorporate a specified proportion of affordable housing.”

“Plan Strategies and Actions

As an initial goal, this Plan proposes that the City take active steps to bring it into conformity with the State’s mandate for affordable housing...”

It should be noted that when considering an amendment to the FLUM, staff bases its review of consistency with the Comprehensive Plan based on both the Plan’s policy framework (as outlined above) and the designations of the surrounding properties. In this case, there is an immediate abutting property to the north that has a “Multi-Family” designation as well as a handful of properties approximately 600 feet to the south that also have a Multi-Family designation. This would create a congruent designation

between the these neighboring properties and provides a positive finding in support of the specific FLUM amendment being proposed herein. Based on the above, staff is of the view that the two (2) proposed ordinances are both consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

When considering the merits of this zone change and Comprehensive Plan amendment, it is important to review the details of the corresponding Major Land Development to better understand the specific development outcomes of these Ordinances. The proposed Major Land Development application is required to receive a positive vote from the Plan Commission in order for these Ordinances to move forward to the Ordinance Committee and City Council level of review. In this case, the Major Land Development – Master Plan proposal is to construct a single apartment building with a total of 12 units with interior and exterior parking. No dimensional relief is being sought, so the proposed building and lot characteristics will conform to all required zoning provisions aside from the density bonus of 12 housing units. The subject property is unique in that the properties immediately surrounding the subject lot are not typical for a single-family residential neighborhood, such as: a large apartment complex to the north, a bike path to the east, a single-family dwelling (with large garage abutting subject land) and cemetery to the south, and a wall structure across the street to the west (see image on page 7 of this memo). Based on the uses and conditions of the direct abutting properties, and based on the fact that the proposal is seeking a residential use without need for relief from required minimum setbacks, building height, building lot coverage, or parking, staff finds that the proposal is generally compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

The project has received the requisite approval from the Town Council for taking action within 25 feet of a historic cemetery. No adverse historic impacts will result from this project.

It should be noted that this application is accompanied by a number of “expert documents” related to the issues of planning, traffic, fiscal impact, and historic cemetery impact. These documents provide positive support for the application and are available for review at the following link:

<https://www.cranstonri.gov/plan-commission-3.7.23/>

Additional detail regarding civil engineering, drainage, lighting, and a more refined review of landscaping will be part of future Preliminary Plan stages of this application, if it should receive positive consideration at this Ordinance/Master Plan stage.

III. Findings

Findings for Comprehensive Plan Amendment – Ordinance 1-23-01:

Cranston Comprehensive Plan 2010

The proposed Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map amendment from “Single Family Residential 7.26 To 3.64 Unit Per Acre” to “Multi-Family” has been reviewed with respect to consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. As detailed within this staff memo, this petition is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan based on the congruent Future Land Use Map designations of abutting and nearby properties. Additionally, the proposed amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s policy framework

with specific regard to the requested density bonus and the inclusion of affordable housing that would be achieved through the proposed project.

Findings Under §17.04.010 City Code

Sec. 17.120.030 requires that the City Plan Commission as part of its recommendation to the City Council “Include a demonstration of recognition and consideration of each of the applicable purposes of zoning as presented in Section 17.04.010 of this title.” Section 17.04.010 set forth the General Purpose for Title 17 (Zoning Ordinance) of the City Code. To the extent that any development of the subject property will be required to comply with all aspects of the Zoning Ordinance, including Development Plan Review, and will be required to comply with City of Cranston Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, staff finds that the proposed rezone will adequately address the appropriate purposes detailed in §17.04.010.

Findings for Zone Change – Ordinance 1-23-02:

Cranston Comprehensive Plan 2010

The proposed zone change from “A-8” to “B-2 with conditions” has been reviewed with respect to consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. As detailed within this staff memo, this petition is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan based on its consistency with the proposed Future Land Use Map designations of Multi-Family. Additionally, the proposed zone change is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s policy framework with specific regard to the requested density bonus and the inclusion of affordable housing that would be achieved through the proposed project.

Findings Under §17.04.010 City Code

Sec. 17.120.030 requires that the City Plan Commission as part of its recommendation to the City Council “Include a demonstration of recognition and consideration of each of the applicable purposes of zoning as presented in Section 17.04.010 of this title.” Section 17.04.010 set forth the General Purpose for Title 17 (Zoning Ordinance) of the City Code. To the extent that any development of the subject property will be required to comply with all aspects of the Zoning Ordinance, including Development Plan Review, and will be required to comply with City of Cranston Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, staff finds that the proposed rezone will adequately address the appropriate purposes detailed in §17.04.010.

IV. Recommendations

Ordinance #1-23-01: Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Based on the findings that Ordinance #1-23-01 is consistent with City’s Comprehensive Plan and adequately addresses the appropriate purposes detailed in §17.04.010, and based on the fact that the proposal is a seeking a residential use that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, and based on the fact that the proposed development includes 16.7% affordable housing to further the City’s stated affordable housing goals,

staff recommends that the Plan Commission send a **positive recommendation** on this application to the City Council.

Ordinance #1-23-02: Zone Change

Based on the findings that Ordinance #1-23-02 is consistent with City's Comprehensive Plan and adequately addresses the appropriate purposes detailed in §17.04.010, and based on the fact that the proposal is seeking a residential use that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, and based on the fact that the proposed development includes 16.7% affordable housing to further the City's stated affordable housing goals, staff recommends that the Plan Commission send a **positive recommendation** on this application to the City Council.

THE CITY OF CRANSTON

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
IN AMENDMENT OF THE 2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE CITY OF
CRANSTON, AS AMENDED
(Oaklawn Avenue)

No.

Passed:

Jessica M. Marino, Council President

Approved:

Kenneth J. Hopkins, Mayor

It is ordained by the City Council of the City of Cranston as follows:

Section 1. That the Cranston 2010 Comprehensive Plan, as adopted by the City Council on
September 24, 2012 and endorsed by the Mayor on September 25, 2012, as amended, is hereby
further amended:

1. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN 2012:

Change the property located at Oaklawn Ave and more particularly designated as Tax
Assessor's Plat 17-3, Lot 670 from the present designation of "Single Family Residential
7.26 To 3.64 Unit Per Acre" to "Multi-Family."

Section 2. This ordinance shall take effect upon its final adoption.

Positive Endorsement:

Negative Endorsement: (Attach reasons)

City Solicitor

Date

City Solicitor

Date

Referred to: Ordinance Committee March 16, 2023

Petition filed by: Amalgamated Financial Equities I LLC

Sponsored by Council President Marino

THE CITY OF CRANSTON

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

IN AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 17 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON,
2005, ENTITLED 'ZONING'
(CHANGE OF ZONE – Oaklawn Avenue Plat 17 Lot 670)

No.

Passed:

Jessica M. Marino, Council President

Approved:

Kenneth J. Hopkins, Mayor

It is ordained by the City Council of the City of Cranston as follows:

Section 1. That the Zoning Map accompanying and made a part of Chapter 17 of the Code of the City of Cranston, Rhode Island, 2005, entitled "Zoning", as adopted December 1, 2016, as amended, is hereby further amended, as follows:

by deleting therefrom the following:

the A-8 Zoning District from Lot 670 of Plat 17-3 (Oaklawn Avenue).

And by adding thereto the following:

the B-2 Zoning District with Conditions on Lot 670 of Plat 17-3 (Oaklawn Avenue).

Referenced "Conditions" include:

1. **Density:** Lot area requirements prescribed by Code Section 17.20.090 *Specific Requirements* shall not apply. The prescribed density shall not exceed **twelve (12) residential units** for the subject parcel.
2. **Affordable Housing:** Two (2) residential units shall be deemed affordable according to Rhode Island Housing for a period of thirty (30) years.

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Section 2. This ordinance shall take effect upon its final adoption.

Positive Endorsement:

Negative Endorsement: (Attach reasons)

City Solicitor

Date

City Solicitor

Date

Petition filed by: Amalgamated Financial Equities I LLC

Sponsored by Council President Marino

Referred to: Ordinance Committee March 16, 2023



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CRANSTON
CITY CLERK

CITY OF CRANSTON

APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF ZONE

Name(s) and address(es) of property owner(s): Amalgamated Financial Equities I LLC
1414 Atwood Ave
Johnston RI 02919

Zoning Plat Number: 17-3 Lot No.(s)* 670

Street Address or Location on Street Oaklawn Avenue

*If only a portion of lot, please attach a full metes and bounds description.

Present Zoning: A-8

Zoning Requested: B-2 with Conditions

Property to be used for: Multi-family residential

(listed use must be specific)

Date: 10-25-2022

Owner (Print and Sign)

Moses Ryan Ltd. as attorney for applicant/owner

Owner (Print and Sign)

Applicant (Print and Sign)

Applicant (Print and Sign)

Reviewed and approved by the Planning Department:

12/22/2022