

**CITY PLANNING  
DEPARTMENT**



## Memorandum – FINAL

**To:** City Plan Commission  
**From:** Gregory Guertin, MA – Senior Planner  
**Date:** September 29, 2023  
**RE:** 15 Taft Street – Assessors Plat 2-5, Lots 2820  
**Application for Dimensional Variance**

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**Owner:** Susan P Sparks & Matthew P Aldred JT  
**Applicant:** David Sisson Architecture  
**Location:** 15 Taft Street  
**Zoning:** A6 – Residential (Single-Family, 6,000 sq. ft.)  
**FLUM Designation:** Single-Family Residential – 7.26 to 3.64 Units Per Acre.

**Subject Property:**

The subject property is a substandard lot of record located at 15 Taft Street, identified as Plat 2-5, Lot 2820, and has a total land area of 3,467± sq. ft. The subject property is a “through lot” with lot frontages on both Taft Street and Drowne Street. The property is currently a single-family home, with a detached garage.

**Request:**

To allow the construction of a new attached garage, in place of an existing detached garage, within the front lot setbacks in an A6 zone (17.20.120 – Schedule of Intensity Regulations).

**AERIAL PHOTO (SUBJECT PARCEL)**



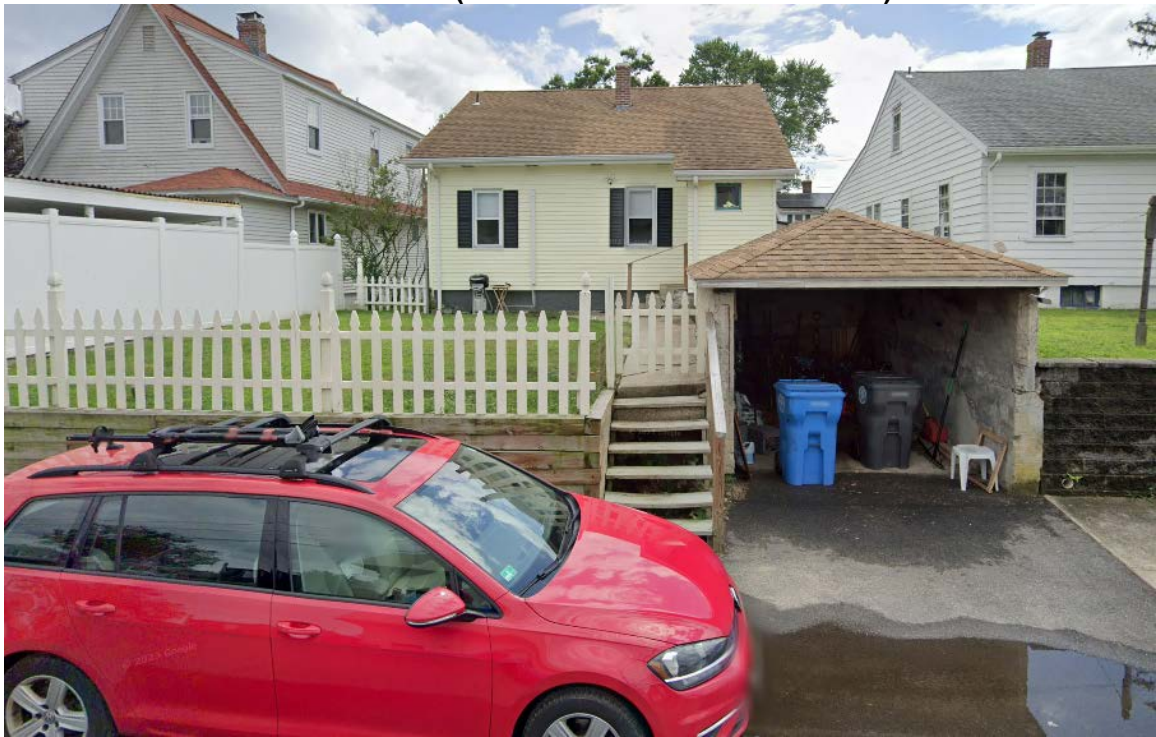
**AERIAL PHOTO (SUBJECT PARCEL AND SURROUNDING HOMES)**



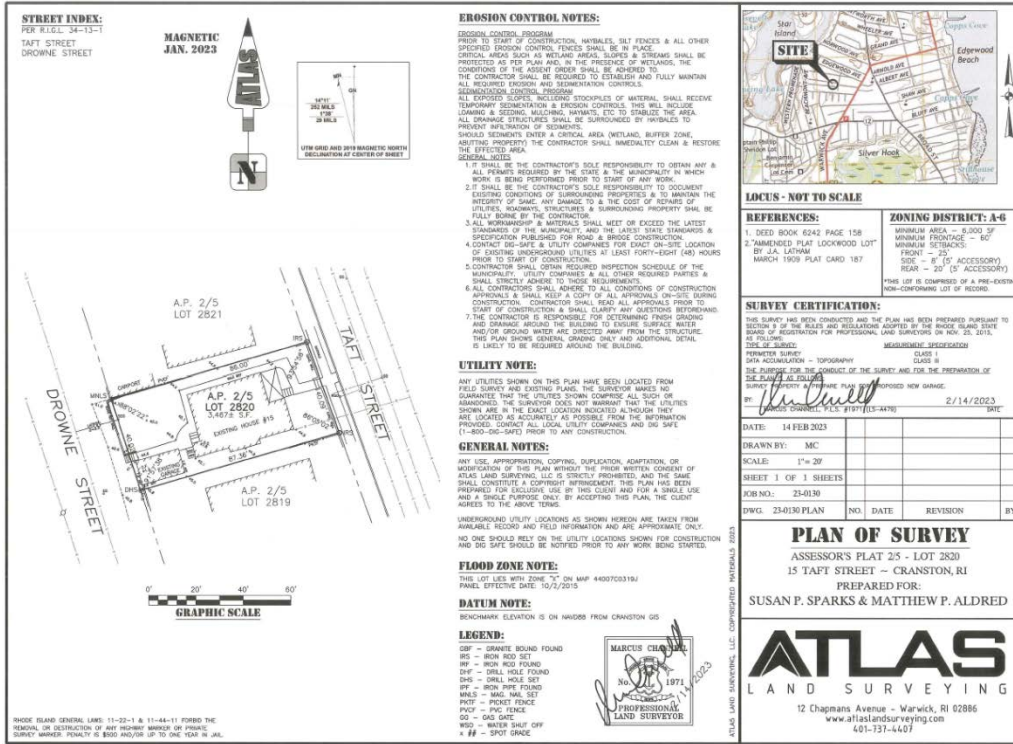
**STREET VIEW (FRONTAGE ON TAFT STREET)**



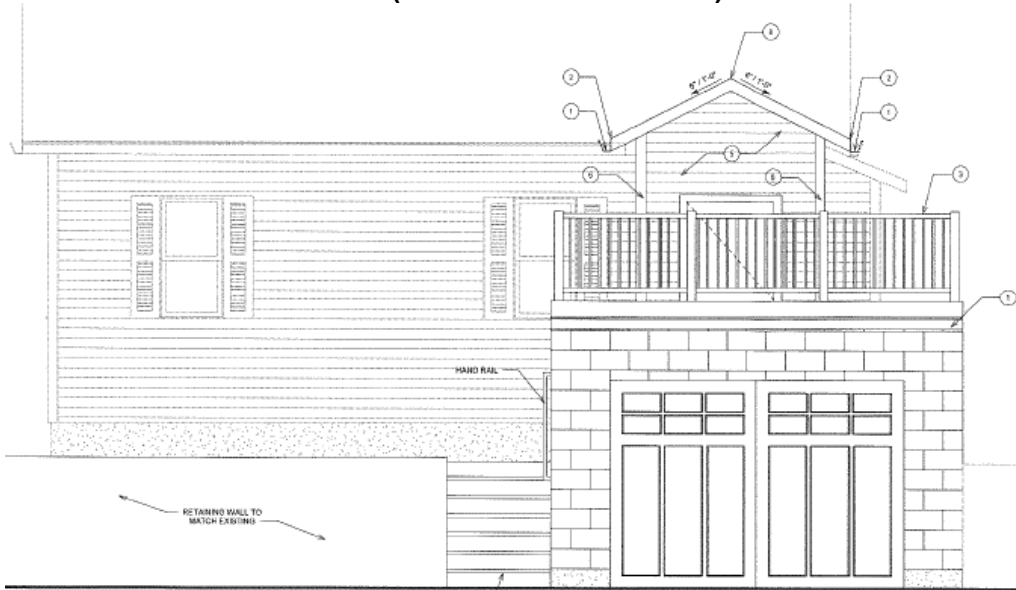
**STREET VIEW (FRONTAGE ON DOWNE STREET)**



# PLAN (SURVEY)



# PLAN (DEPICTION OF GARAGE)



### Planning Staff Analysis

- The applicant has requested specific relief from the zoning ordinance in their application, namely: *17.20.120 – Schedule of Intensity Regulations*
- This application is sought for the construction of an attached garage featuring a roof-top deck and entryway into the home through the basement, where a detached garage currently stands.
- A pre-existing garage is currently located within front and side yard setbacks, and the proposed garage does not further encroach on the public right-of-way, or the adjacent parcel, any more than the existing garage.
  - The subject parcel and its neighboring parcels were platted and developed prior to the existence of the zoning code; the nature of this pre-existing non-conformity is the primary trigger for the requested relief from the zoning code.
- The proposed garage is similar in size to the existing garage and is only slightly larger in width and length, only further extending towards the side and center of the lot. The exception to this is the addition of a roof-top porch, for which planning staff have no concerns.
- The neighboring homes located on Taft Street are of the same size, dimension, and character of the subject parcel. Most of which are substandard lots of record, contain detached garages, attached garages, or other on-site amenities such as pools and patio areas within the front yard setback.

### Findings

As supported by the planning staff analysis, staff have made the following findings:

- Staff finds that there are no inconsistencies between the proposal as submitted and the comprehensive plan.
- Staff finds the proposal to be consistent with following policies, goals, and/or actions as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan:
  - HP-5.1: Review zoning for existing residential neighborhoods to ensure the zoning matches, as closely as possible, the dimensions and unit types of what has already been built.
  - LUP-9.1: Protect and stabilize existing residential neighborhoods by... making the zoning conform to existing uses.
- Staff finds that the proposal is consistent with the general character of the surrounding neighborhood in the following ways:
  - Nearly all the parcels on the same block of the subject parcel are substandard lots found to be pre-existing and non-conforming, more than half of which have accessory structures, by one or more of the following standards as outlined in *Sec.30-17.20.120* of the zoning ordinance: minimum lot area, minimum lot width and frontage, minimum setback requirements, and maximum lot coverage.

### Recommendation:

In accordance with RIGL §45-24-41(b), Staff finds this Application consistent with the goals and purposes of the Comprehensive Plan and is compatible with the general character of the surrounding neighborhood. Staff therefore recommends that the City Plan Commission adopt the Findings of Fact documented above and forward a **POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION** on the Application to the Zoning Board of Review.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Gregory Guertin, MA – Senior Planner