

CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT



Memorandum

To: City Plan Commission
From: Jamie Ray | Planner Technician
Date: September 1, 2026
RE: 118 & 0 Maplewood Avenue – Assessor's Plat 7, Lots 3234 & 3237

Application for Dimensional Relief

This memo pertains to two jointly submitted applications for lots currently merged under zoning

Owner: Phillipe Lafrenaye
Applicant: Jovani Torres
Location: 118 & 0 Maplewood Avenue
Neighborhood: Laurel Hill
Zoning: B-1 – (Single and Two-family Residential)
FLUM Designation: Single/Two Family Residential Less Than 10.89 Units Per Acre

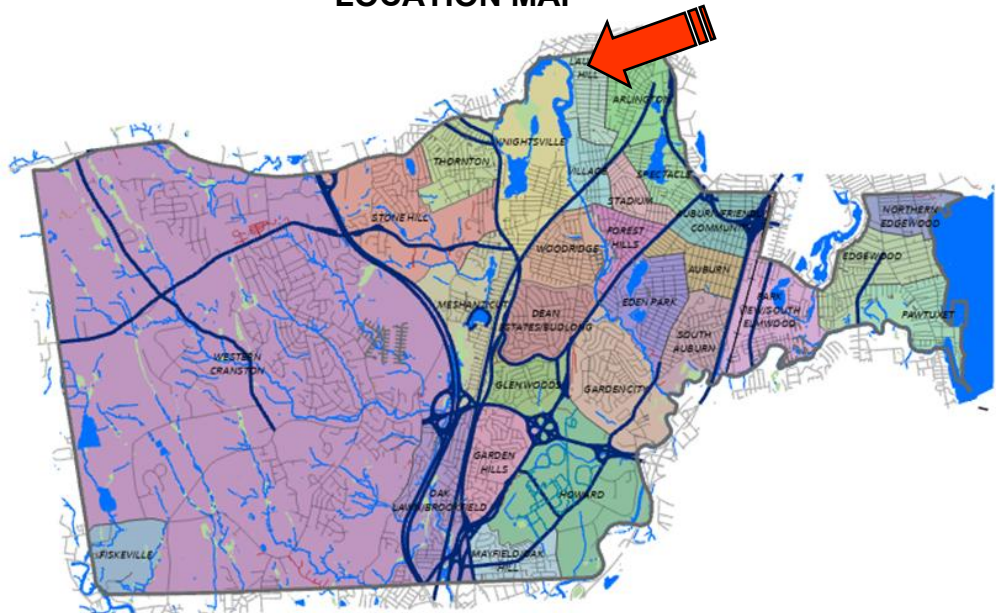
Subject Property:

The subject properties are located at 118 & 0 Maplewood Avenue, identified as Plat 7, Lots 3234 & 3237 and have a land area of 0.1148 ± acres, (5,000 sf) for each of the two lots.

Request:

The applicant have applied to the Board for permission to leave an existing three-family dwelling on an undersized lot with reduced frontage and setbacks previously merged by zoning and to construct a new two-family dwelling on an undersized lot with reduced frontage and setbacks previously merged by zoning. Applicant seeks relief by 17.92.010 - Variance; Section 17.20.120 - Schedule of Intensity Regulations; 17.88.010 Substandard Lots of Record and Lot Mergers; Section 17.20.090 Specific Requirements.

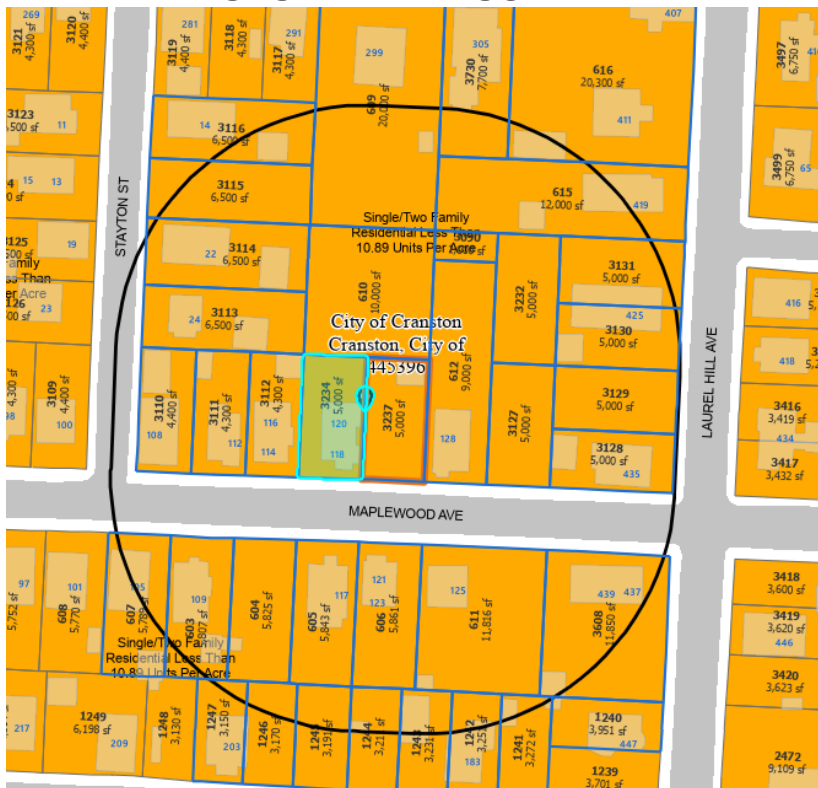
LOCATION MAP



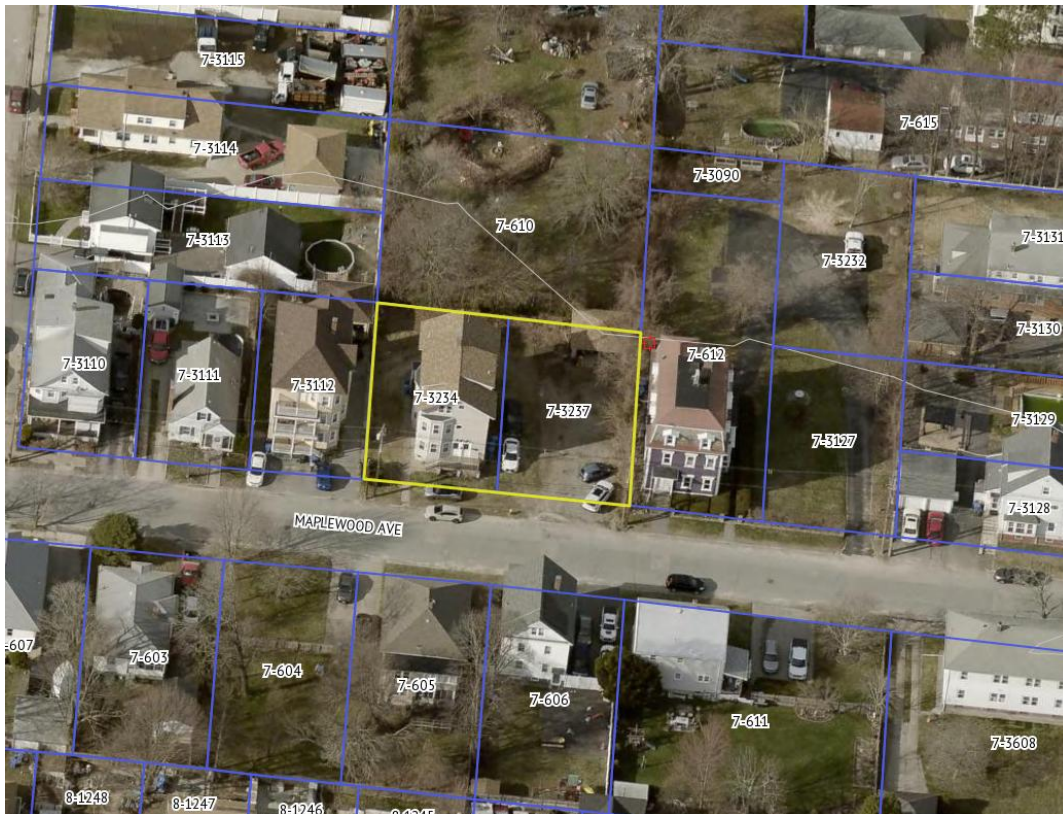
ZONING MAP



FUTURE LAND USE MAP



AERIAL VIEW

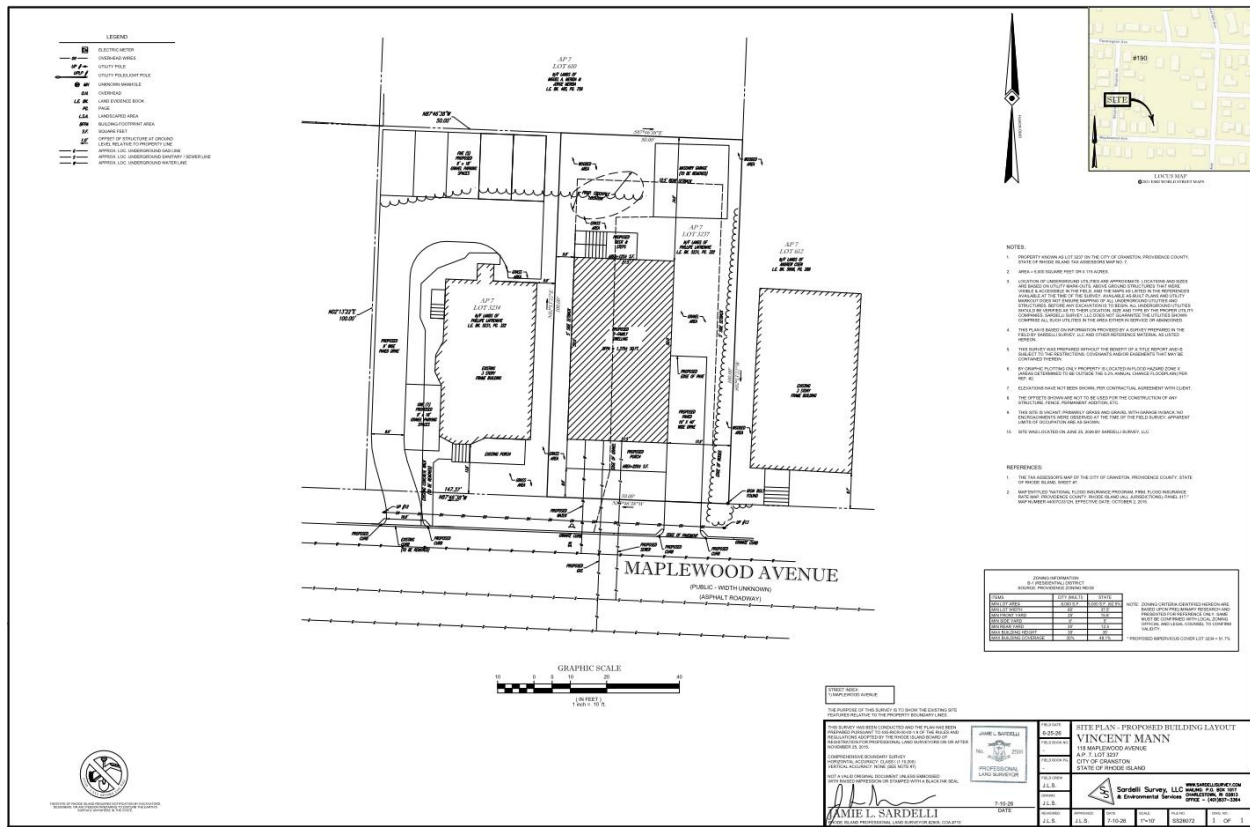


STREET VIEW

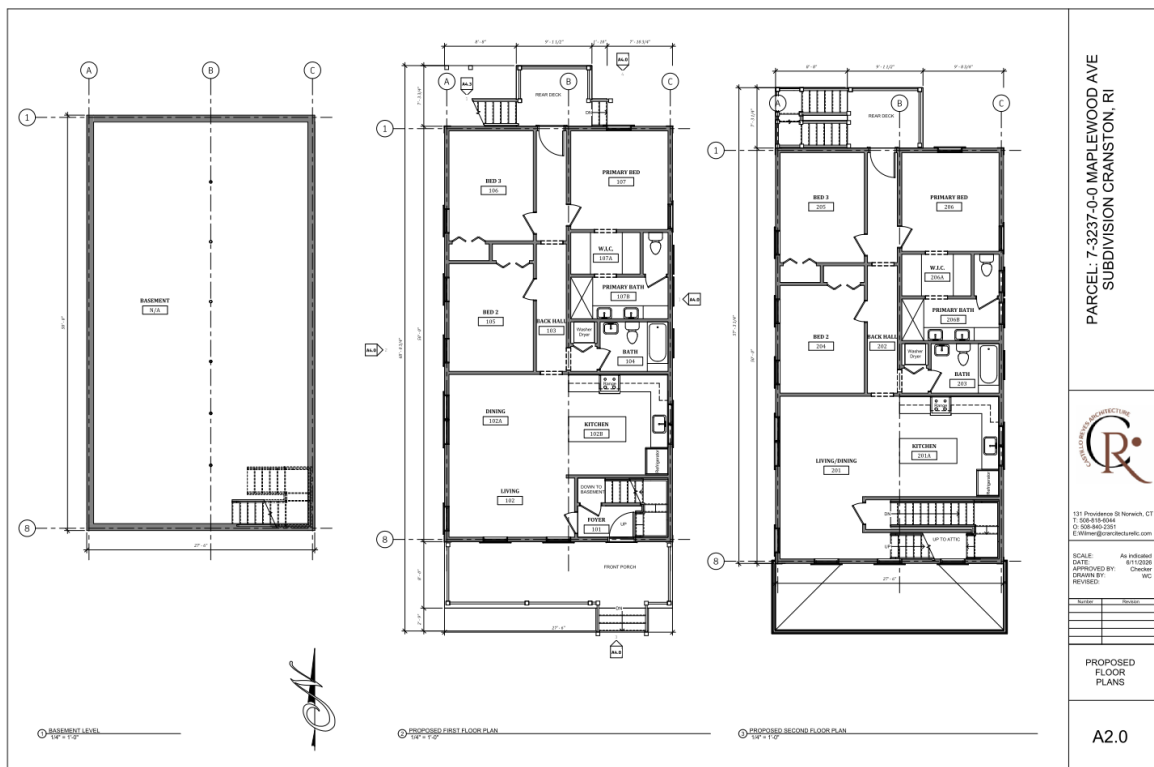


(GOOGLE IMAGERY JUNE 2025)

SITE PLAN



FLOOR PLAN



BUILDING ELEVATIONS



Findings of Fact:

The Applicant has requested specific relief in their application, namely:

- 17.20.120 – Schedule of Intensity Regulations
- 17.88.010 – Substandard lots of record and lot mergers

Relief Sought:

Existing Three-Family Dwelling at 118 Maplewood Avenue:

B-1 Zone	Required	Proposed	Relief Sought
Minimum Lot Size	14,000 sf for Three-Family Dwellings	5000 sf	9000 sf
Minimum Side Setback	8 feet	5 feet	3 Feet
Substandard lots of Record and Lot Mergers	A "substandard lot of record" is a lot which does not satisfy one or more dimensional requirements set forth in Section 17.20.120, but which was shown on a plat or deed recorded prior to January 1, 1966 or an approved plat recorded after January 1, 1966 which has otherwise been legally created and which has not been altered to become more nonconforming since its creation,	Unmerging of the two substandard lots of record	Variance from the substandard lots of record and merger provision.

	except by approval of the city plan commission.		
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Proposed New House at 0 Maplewood Avenue:

B-1 Zone	Required	Proposed	Relief Sought
Minimum Lot Size	6,000 sf for Single-Family Dwellings	5000 sf	1000 sf
Minimum Lot Frontage	60 feet	50 feet	10 feet
Minimum Front Yard Setback	25	8	17
Minimum Side Setback	8 feet	5 feet	3 Feet
Substandard lots of Record and Lot Mergers	A "substandard lot of record" is a lot which does not satisfy one or more dimensional requirements set forth in Section 17.20.120, but which was shown on a plat or deed recorded prior to January 1, 1966 or an approved plat recorded after January 1, 1966 which has otherwise been legally created and which has not been altered to become more nonconforming since its creation, except by approval of the city plan commission.	Unmerging of the two substandard lots of record	Variance from the substandard lots of record and merger provision.

Density and Lot Size Data:

Number of residential lots within 200':	40 Lots (54 Units)**
Number of residential lots smaller than proposed in the application:	10 Lots**
Number of residential lots equal to proposed in the application:	4 Lots** (5,000 SF)
Number of residential lots larger than proposed in the application:	26 Lots**

**** NOT Including Subject Lots**

Existing subject parcels density:	13.06 U/a
Proposed subject parcels density:	21.78 U/a
200' Radius density:	10.12 U/a
Neighborhood Zone density:	8.7 U/a

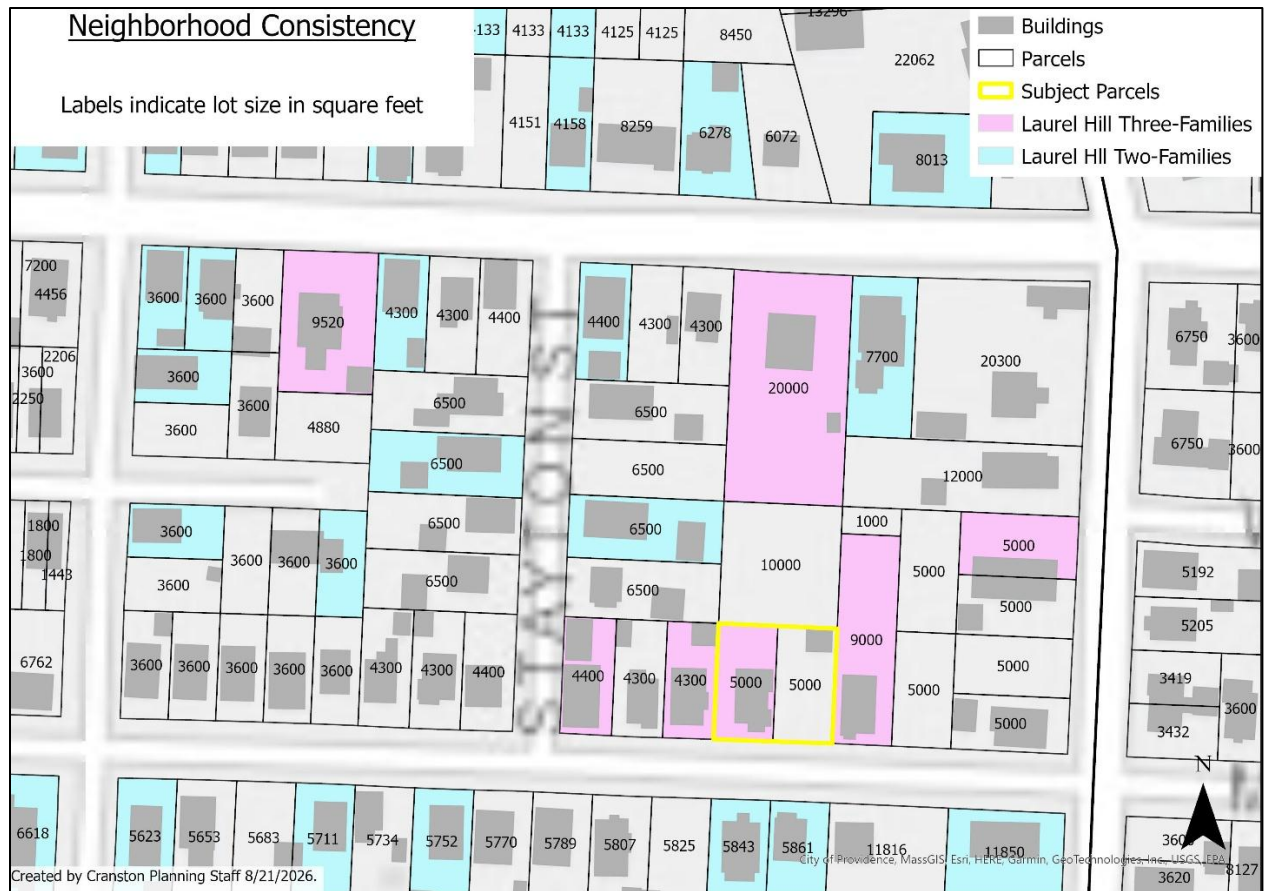
Staff Analysis:

Consistency with the Surrounding Area

Staff has reviewed this Application in consideration of the compatibility with the general character of the surrounding neighborhood, and the request does not impose undue nuisances and is not out of character beyond any uses on this site or within the surrounding area. The subject property and the surrounding area are primarily residential in nature and the request does not propose or encourage incompatible uses that would be disruptive to the surrounding area.

- Staff analysis found that Laurel Hill is a neighborhood comprised of single-family, two-family and three-family dwellings.
- Some Cranston neighborhoods have uniform lot sizes, such as Auburn and most of Eden Park. In contrast, Laurel Hill has some of the highest variability in lot sizes of any neighborhood in Cranston. This phenomenon can be seen on the block where the subject parcel is located. This block contains single-family dwellings on 3,600-10,000 sf lots, two-family dwellings on 5,000-7,700 sf lots, and three-family dwellings on lots as small as 4,300 sf or as big as 20,000 sf.

- Significant diversity in both lot size and density numbers skew calculations, such as average density. As a result, these numbers don't manage to accurately quantify neighborhood characteristics. The coexistence of different sized lots, varying density, and a mix of old and new development is what defines the character of this neighborhood.



- Cranston Traffic Safety Manager, Stephen Mulcahy, reviewed the parking layout in this application. He confirmed that it complies with every section of the Cranston off-street parking regulations.
- Significant increases in impervious surfaces would increase the volume of stormwater runoff from this property. New developments are encouraged to control stormwater on-site to prevent increase in net runoff from before construction to after construction. On-site stormwater management could be accomplished with underground infiltration techniques, as an example.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and FLUM

- The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the subject property as “*Single/Two Family Residential Less Than 10.89 Units/Acre.*”
 - Per the Comprehensive Plan, the B-1 zoning district is an appropriate zoning classification for two-family residential land designation and development.
 - Staff finds that the proposed project lot density (21.78 units/acre) does not conform to the Future Land Use Map density designation of *Single Family Residential Less Than 10.89 Units/Acre.*
 - Density in this area would increase negligibly with the addition of two units.
 - Staff finds that the Application is partially consistent with the Future Land Use Map designation.

- Staff finds that the following goals, policies, and action items outlined in the Comprehensive Plan pertaining to residential development support the approval of this Application:
 - Goal H-2: Permit a variety of residential development types to achieve multiple community objectives.
 - Policy H-3: Enact flexible development standards that attain desired community objectives, but also provide a wide range of building types, uses, subdivisions, and site plans.
 - Policy H-6: Maintain a varied housing stock, with units of different age, size, and type that are affordable to a wide range of incomes.
 - Action LU-29: Protect and stabilize existing residential neighborhoods by making zoning conform to existing uses.
 - A data analysis revealed that much of this neighborhood would be considered “non-conforming” due to a severe mismatch between the built environment and minimum lot size requirements.

Summary

Staff conclude that the proposal is compatible with the general character of the neighborhood, does not provide disruption or nuisance, and supports the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan which promote approval of a wide variety of housing types and flexibility in our development standards. Specifically, the Comprehensive Plan seeks to enable incremental development and enable the expansion of housing options in the City to meet demand, without disrupting the fabric of existing neighborhoods.

Recommendations:

ZBR-26-43 (118 Maplewood Avenue):

In accordance with RIGL § 45-24-41(b) and Section 17.92.010(A) of the Zoning Ordinance, 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 recommend 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.

Suggested Condition of Approval:

1. Storm water runoff is treated using best management practices so that there shall be no increased runoff from development. (All developments shall meet the standards set in the Rhode Island Stormwater Design and Installation Standards Manual as most recently amended.)

ZBR-26-36 (0 Maplewood Avenue

In accordance with RIGL § 45-24-41(b) and Section 17.92.010(A) of the Zoning Ordinance, 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 recommend 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.

Suggested Condition of Approval:

1. Storm water runoff is treated using best management practices so that there shall be no increased runoff from development. (All developments shall meet the standards set in the Rhode Island Stormwater Design and Installation Standards Manual as most recently amended.)

Respectfully Submitted,

James S. Ray

Jamie Ray
Administrative Officer | Planner Technician