
I am submitting this written public comment as an abutting neighbor at 435 Hope Road to express serious concerns about the proposed development. We do not support this plan as described.

The project appears inconsistent with the surrounding A-80 zoning district, the rural character of Western Cranston, and the environmental, traffic, safety, and neighborhood impacts associated with this site. I respectfully ask the Planning Commission to give careful consideration to the concerns below.

Additionally, as a 12 year resident, we recently decided to invest in clearing the encroaching bramble from this parcel into our yard to make way for a small farm plot with a greenhouse and garden. The produce is intended at least partially to be used for donations to local food banks and non-profits. The proposed condominium building directly encroaches on this farm plot by reducing eastern sunlight exposure, increasing contaminates and runoff as well as increasing issues with wildlife.

Specific Concerns

1. Density & Suitability of the Site

The developer's own plan shows that only **2.84 acres of the 5.24-acre parcel are suitable for development**, with the remainder being wetlands. Yet the proposal places **12 units** on that limited upland area. This density is inconsistent with the A-80 zoning district and the established rural character of Western Cranston. Under state law, the City not only has the authority, but also the obligation, to reject low-income and multifamily housing proposals when the proposed density, scale, location, and site constraints make them incompatible with city surrounding neighborhoods and contrary to sound suburban and rural planning principles.

2. Wetlands & Hydrology Risks

The plans state that “**run-off from the site primarily flows towards the wetlands low point**” and that a “**large wetlands**” occupies the eastern half of the parcel. This raises concerns about stormwater impacts, flooding, and wetland disturbance.

Question: Has the Commission received a full independent stormwater management plan demonstrating how runoff will be prevented from entering Furnace Hill Brook wetlands as well the abutting neighbors? We'd like to see that independent study in writing.

3. Traffic & Safety at Hope / Wilbur / Phenix - Statement

Hope Road is described as a “**major collector corridor**” already experiencing congestion during athletic events at Chafee Park and daily backups at the Hope/Wilbur/Phenix intersection. Adding 12 households—up to 24 vehicles daily—would worsen an already poor traffic condition where there are many pedestrians from local schools. It may require the city to build a rotary, add traffic lights, walkways and sidewalks, curbs which don't exist on both sides of Hope Rd. **I respectfully request that a comprehensive traffic and fiscal impact analysis be completed.**

4. Setback Waivers

The plan requests waivers for both the **Hope Road setback** and the **rear yard setback**.

Question: Why is a project already exceeding natural density also requesting setback relief? Shouldn't a project seeking density bonuses at least meet basic dimensional requirements? Why is the side yard setback against 435 Hope Road only 20 feet when the majority of the backyards of these houses face the side yard? It needs to be at least 100 feet setback on all sides, with green-scape barriers, since the side is effectively the rear of the new property.

5. Fire Access & Road Width

The internal road is only **20 feet wide**, while the fire truck turning radius listed is **33.92 feet**.

Question: Has the Fire Marshal reviewed turning movements for all driveways and parking areas given the narrow road width and tight cul-de-sac geometry? A ladder truck likely cannot get into this space. I would ask you to provide that in writing.

6. School Impact Underestimated

The developer uses a citywide average of **0.32 school-aged children per unit**, but Western Cranston has higher family density. The projected **4 children** is unrealistically low for 12 new homes. The cost to the school system can be closer of \$480,000 a year with 2 kids per home at 20k per student.

7. Environmental Fragmentation

The wooded areas and brush provide habitat for local wildlife. This development fragments one of the few remaining wooded corridors between Furnace Hill Brook and Pippin Orchard.

8. Comprehensive Permit Bonus Calculation

The developer claims **14 bonus units** based on 25% LMI density calculations.

Question: Has the Planning Department verified the bonus-unit calculation? It appears to assume maximum density without considering environmental constraints.

Addendum

2025 Positions from the Commission's Own Planning President that Contradict Approval

- President Frias has stated that comprehensive permits are a “blunt instrument” and should be used only in rare circumstances. This project is not a rare circumstance—it is an attempt to force dense development into a rural A-80 neighborhood.
 - President Frias has warned that Western Cranston schools are at maximum capacity and that one large housing project could cost taxpayers millions. This proposal directly contradicts that warning.
 - Given President Frias's position that Cranston meets the 15% affordable rental threshold and should not be forced to accept density overrides, how does this project align with the Planning Commission's own stated policy?
 - President Frias has emphasized that local officials—not developers—should determine appropriate density. Approving this project would contradict that principle.
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For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Planning Commission require additional fiscal impact review, including traffic, stormwater, environmental, fire access, school impact, and neighborhood compatibility analyses, before allowing this proposal to proceed. The record should reflect whether this level of density is appropriate for this constrained rural site and whether the requested waivers are justified.

Best Regards,

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