

TO: The Cranston Planning Commission Members

11/5/24

FR: Concerned Neighbors of the "Sagamore Gardens" Proposed Subdivision

CC: jmateus@cranstonri.org, tzidelis@cranstonri.org, hopenkate@gmail.com, lisamancini615@cox.net, robertjcoupe@gmail.com, exter53@yahoo.com, mcsmith56@aol.com, stevefrias2001@yahoo.com, barbieri.tom@gmail.com,

We the Residents of Sagamore Rd., Meredith Dr., Bretton Woods Dr., Franconia Dr., Kearsarge Dr. & Woodstock Lane Strongly Oppose the Proposed Subdivision entitled "Sagamore Gardens" for some of the following Reasons:

1. Adversely changing the Character of the Neighborhood by putting a small house on a small lot.
2. The Drastic Relief requested from the minimum lot size of 8,000sqft to 6,290sqft. (even though the average lot size in this area is 10,000sqft.). The Applicant is also requesting Relief from the 20 Foot setback to 14.5 Foot setback which is Drastic.
3. The possibility that this will affect area property values in a negative way, since almost all of the lots average about 10,000sqft and the homes architectural styles are Colonial and it is not disclosed what size & style a Builder will put there.
4. Unfair to the people who have purchased and invested upgrades in this neighborhood because they really liked the street layouts, Colonial home styles and generous lot sizes.
5. Potential increased traffic issues because Sagamore Rd is a shortcut through from Budlong Rd to Oaklawn Ave. and people are already speeding through.
6. There is already a high water table in this area which may affect water issues in basements of neighboring properties.
7. Potential Safety Issues with where cars will park on the proposed small lot and pulling out with all the tall vegetation on both sides of the lot. In addition, will there be a garage, since the existing homes required an attached garage when they were built.
8. Since the proposed Subdivision would need to tie into the City Sewer and Water piping and possibly natural gas, will there be construction issues that overwhelm any of these systems due to Old Pipes.
9. If the Applicant is doing this for financial benefit, we as neighbors should not suffer the consequences with the bad results.
10. We pay hefty Property Taxes in this area and should have a say as to what happens in our neighborhood.
11. Would the Property Deed Restrictions even allow this proposed subdivision?
12. We are asking the Planning Commission to consider the secondary goal in the Community Comprehensive Plan for Land Use that states the need to "preserve the unique qualities of each neighborhood." We feel this sub-division will harm the aesthetic & character of this historic neighborhood and is therefore not the appropriate place for development within our city.

Replat: 40 Meredith Drive – Assessors Plat 11-5, Lot 2934
Application for Dimensional Variance

**PROPERTY OWNERS' OBJECTION TO MINOR SUBDIVISION PRELIMINARY PLAN
APPLICATION OF SAGAMORE GARDENS MINOR SUBDIVISION**

The undersigned affected homeowners object to the Minor Subdivision Preliminary Plan Application of Mark D. Capuano, project name, Sagamore Gardens Minor Subdivision. (Applicant) As grounds we submit the following in support.

Facts

This section of Dean Estates was developed in the late 1930's and early 1940's. Colonial Homes Development advertised this area as "An Established Residential Park of Fine Homes" on over 167 Acres with $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ Acre Homesites. It goes on to say "Drive in ...roam about...behold the quality homes...enjoy the beautiful surroundings and picture your home soon to be built on the homesite of your choice" This proposed subdivision does not fit the original intent of the developer and certainly not of the surrounding current property owners.

Applicable law

1. The plan would adversely change the Character of the Neighborhood by putting a house on a small lot in violation of R.I. Gen. Law 45-24-41(d) and (e). and Cranston Code of Ordinance 17.92.010B and C for the following reasons:

Applicant seeks relief from the general characteristics of the neighborhood.

- a. The Applicant clearly seeks relief from the general characteristics of the surrounding area and not from the uniqueness of the subject land. No other lot in Dean Estates is less than 8,000 square feet. Nearly every lot in the subject area is over 10,000 square feet. The Applicant seeks relief from this requirement by requesting a variance that would allow him to build a house on a 6,290 square foot lot.
- b. The Unified Development Review states that the resulting new lot would be 79% of the 8,000 square foot requirement. This is patently misleading because the resulting new lot would be only 62% of the actual size of the existing 10,000 square foot home lots in the entire area. The subject lot would be nearly half the size of the lots in the surrounding area.

- c. The Unified Development Review is also misleading because it states that the minimum lot size in the adjacent Woodridge neighborhood is 6000 square feet. The subject area is completely separated from the Woodridge neighborhood by the Providence Water Supply pipeline. There are no connecting streets or rights of way. The subject area is completely landlocked from the Woodridge area. Woodridge would be as relevant to comparing the subject area to Edgewood.

The Applicant seeks relief to profit from the resulting lot

- a. Both the statute and ordinance state that the fact a use may be more valuable after the relief shall not be grounds for relief. Conversely, this means that the Applicant must show some other reason the relief should be granted. The Applicant's only reason for seeking relief is to gain a profit at the expense of the surrounding property owners. There are no other reasons.

Proposed subdivision violates existing deed restrictions

2. The proposed subdivision would be in violation of the deed restrictions on the Applicant's property. See City of Cranston Land Records Book 184 Page 646-648, restriction number 4 "*No lot shall be subdivided.*" Restrictions imposed on land owned by Dean Estates, Inc. dated April 11, 1939. These restrictions were placed on the properties at the time that the houses in the area were built in order to protect the unique characteristics of the development. We all signed notices when we purchased our homes in the area stipulating to these restrictions. We recognized the value of the restrictions on our property. We should not have that value taken from us.

Proposed subdivision could increase existing flooding problems

3. There is already a high-water table in this area and the proposal may affect water issues in basements of neighboring properties. Several property owners near the Applicant's property have made substantial investments in French drains to control basement flooding and surface water runoff. Building on the resulting small sized lot would increase surface water runoff in the area and affect the investment other property owners have spent to address this issue.

The city's investment interest in Colonial Homes Development

4. The City of Cranston has a substantial interest in an investment it has made in the area. The city had purchased the park at the intersection of Sagamore Road and Meridith Drive in the 1980's. Prior to the city owning the park, it was privately owned. The city recognized the importance of preserving the attractiveness of the area and its uniqueness and purchased the park to ensure that no

development would ever take place on it. It is not in the interest of the city to compromise its own substantial investment and interest in the neighborhood.

Negative effects of the proposal on the surrounding area

5. The setback from every house in the area measures about 45 feet from the curb. Every house on Sagamore Road and Meredith Drive have a uniform setback. Every house in the entire neighborhood does. After subtracting the depth of the proposed house from the depth of the proposed lot, 45 feet are left for the front and rear setbacks. There is not enough area to have a uniform setback in the front like all existing houses in the area. Any deviation from the existing uniform setbacks will greatly diminish the attractiveness of the neighborhood. The proposed lot would be a dramatic deviation from the existing area.
6. Most houses in the surrounding area have a four-car driveway. If they do not, they have ample room for one. All the houses in the neighborhood have a large front lawn. Neither of these would be possible with the resulting lot. Again, this would greatly diminish the overall attractiveness of the area.
7. The requirement for the house to have a garage would greatly limit the type of house that can be built. It would probably require the garage to be integral to the house, for example a raised ranch with a built-in garage. This would be drastically different from the surrounding colonial style houses.
8. There is a strong possibility that the proposed resulting lot will affect area property values in a negative way, since almost all the lots in the area average about 10,000 square feet and the existing homes' architectural styles are Colonial.
9. The proposed resulting lot sits right in the middle of the Colonial Homes Development, of which there are about thirty original structures. The existing houses are sometimes referred to as "Storybook Capes." It is more than unlikely that any new structure would match the style of the existing Colonial Homes Development.
10. Homeowners have purchased and invested in upgrades in this neighborhood because they really liked the street layouts, Colonial home styles, and generous lot sizes. The proposal is unfair to homeowners who have invested their money to improve the area.
11. The new proposed structure would intensify traffic issues because Sagamore Road is a shortcut through from Budlong Rd to Oaklawn Ave. and people are already speeding through this section.
12. There are potential safety issues with the cars that will park on the proposed small lot, pulling out with all the tall vegetation on both sides of the lot.

13. Since the proposed Subdivision would need to tie into the City Sewer and Water piping and possibly natural gas, will there be construction issues that overwhelm any of these systems due to Old Pipes?
14. If the Applicant is doing this for financial benefit, we as neighbors should not suffer with the bad results.
15. Property owners in the area pay hefty Property Taxes in this area and should have a say as to what happens in our neighborhood.

SUMMARY

The proposed dimensional relief sought is drastic, and unreasonable in nature because of its negative effects on the characteristics of the surrounding area. It is proposed only for the profit of the Applicant at the expense of the surrounding homeowners and must be denied.

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KEVIN O LEARY kdol24@aol.com

Received via email 9/27/2024

Good afternoon,

I am writing this email in regards to the zoning issues for 40 Meredith. I will be out of state at the time of this meeting. I am against the proposed changes set forth in the letter that I had received. I feel that these changes would have negative impact on neighboring property and their values, this area was zoned residential A8 single family dwelling on lots of 8 thousand square feet at a minimum. Our neighborhood is highly desirable and sought after. This change I feel maybe a foothold to have others add large dwellings added to their property changing our neighborhood for the worse. As you review these plans please consider the impact on the entire neighborhood and all of its residents. I ask you to vote no on this request.

Thank you for your time

Kevin O'Leary

56 Bretton Woods Dr

Cranston RI 02920

Sent from my iPhone