

City Planning Department



Memo

To: Cranston City Plan Commission
From: Alexander Berardo – Planning Technician / Administrative Officer
Date: December 2, 2022
Re: **Major Subdivision with street extension - Master Plan**
“Ridgewood Section 9 Plat”

Owner/App: Lee Beausoleil
Location: 341 Laten Knight Road, AP 29, Lot 5
Zone: A-80 (Single-family dwellings on 80,000 ft² minimum lots)
FLU: Single-Family Residential less than 1 unit per acre

I. Proposal

The applicant proposes to subdivide the existing 23.11-acre parcel into eight lots, which would create seven new single-family house lots (Proposed Lots 1-6 and 8). The existing home would be set aside on Proposed Lot 7. All proposed building lots conform to area and frontage requirements as prescribed under the Cranston Zoning Code for the A-80 zone and to the Future Land Use Map's density prescription. The lots are planned to be serviced by private wells and public sewer and to be accessed by extending the Crest Drive public right-of-way.

II. Documents which are part of the application

1. Application signed by Lee Beausoleil;
2. Narrative report;
3. Checklist;
4. Master Plan filing fee;
5. Subdivision plan entitled “Replat of Parcel 5 on ‘Ridgewood Section 9’” dated 7/21/22 prepared by Richard T. Byzdya, P.L.S., of Ocean State Planners, Inc.;
6. 200' radius map and list of abutters.

ZONING MAP



FUTURE LAND USE MAP



AERIAL VIEW



3-D AERIAL VIEW



III. Surrounding land use and context

An analysis using the City of Cranston Geographic Information System indicates that:

1. The subject parcel is located at the end of Crest Drive in Western Cranston, with frontage on Laten Knight Road to the south.
2. The surrounding single-family residential neighborhood (400-foot radius) is comprised entirely of A-80 zoned parcels.
3. All but one of the parcels within a 400-foot radius of the subject parcel have a Future Land Use designation of Single-Family Residential less than 1 unit per acre. (The sole exception is a 45-acre, privately-owned farm parcel designated Open Space.)
4. The subject parcel is located in FEMA Flood Zone X; there are small bands of wetlands along its eastern and western sides.
5. The 2021 Natural Heritage Map does not show any known rare species located on or near the site.

IV. Interests of Others

Staff received a phone call on or around November 28th from the owners of 50 Crest Drive, who expressed concern that the subdivision could increase traffic and/or reduce privacy for themselves and other nearby property owners.

V. Staff / Agency Comments

Pursuant to RIGL 45-23-41 A3, these plans were distributed for comment to the Public Works Department / Engineering Division, the Traffic & Safety Bureau, the Building and Inspections Department, and the Fire Department. Planning Staff met with representatives of these departments on Monday, November 14th to gather feedback and comments, which are as follows:

- DPW – Sewer: Environmental Engineer and Veolia Water liaison Ed Tally advised that sewers are presently located on Laten Knight Road, not Crest Drive, so under the current subdivision design, the applicant will need an easement between two of the proposed lots to make the sewer connection to Laten Knight Road.
- DPW – Engineering: Chief Engineer Justin Mateus stated that he has no concerns with the current subdivision proposal.
- DPW – Traffic Safety: Traffic Safety Manager Stephen Mulcahy said he has no concerns with the slight jog in the proposed extension of Crest Drive and believes it will have a traffic calming effect. Further, in an email to Planning Staff dated 11/30/22, Mr. Mulcahy offered the following statement: “Upon review of the proposed Crest Drive extension, given that the project is limited to the addition of six single-family residences, and the roadway shall terminate in a cul-de-sac, it is the opinion of this office that traffic generation associated with this project shall not result in any negative impacts to this roadway and/or the surrounding roadway network.”

- DPW: DPW Director Richard Bernardo stated that the applicant will need to seek waivers for the width of the cul-de-sac extension, as the roadway's currently-proposed dimensions are narrower than what the Subdivision Regulations allow. Under the subdivision's current configuration, the applicant would also need a waiver from the sidewalk requirement. He said DPW agreed that Crest Drive should remain a cul-de-sac and not connect to Laten Knight Road, but he strongly advised that the applicant replace the planted/curbed island proposed for the bulb of the cul-de-sac extension with striped pavement to facilitate snow removal. Regarding the transition between the existing end of Crest Drive and the beginning of the extension, Mr. Bernardo asked for a Condition of Approval stating that the applicant will be responsible for removing those sections of the existing cul-de-sac bulb that are on private land by replacing the pavement with loaming/planting. He added that the City's expectation will be that streetlights are included in the extension of Crest Drive. Staff notes that underground utilities are required for subdivision extensions.
- Fire – Fire Marshal Jim Woyciechowski said his Department will need to confirm that the paved width of the Crest Drive extension is sufficient for the maneuvering of fire trucks and other emergency vehicles. He observed that the current plans seem to show varying right-of-way widths along the parcel's northern boundary, where the extension of Crest Drive would begin, and said that the paved width of the roadway must remain constant between the existing section of Crest Drive and the extension. Finally, he said that the applicant will need to show a cistern on the property in its Preliminary Plan submission.

VI. Planning Analysis

This proposal is a by-right, eight-lot subdivision. All lots conform to the dimensional standards of the A-80 zone, and the proposal is consistent with the Future Land Use Map designation for the parcel. The lots will be accessible via an extension of Crest Drive, a public roadway. The lots would be serviced by private wells, with a sewer connection available at Laten Knight Road.

Staff has no concerns with the application and the resulting density on the site, which would be approximately 0.35 units/acre. This application provides an opportunity to create new housing in Western Cranston in a manner that fits with the surrounding neighborhood, which is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Land Use and Housing policies. Staff would note that the applicant has not yet shown the proposed location of a stormwater retention basin and that this feature will be required as part of the Preliminary Plan as part of a full RIDEM wetlands permit. This detention basin may change the geometry of the proposed lots, but Staff feels there is sufficient space to accommodate the basin.

VII. Waivers

This application will require a waiver from the provision of sidewalks and for the width of the cul-de-sac extension. Staff feels granting these waivers is appropriate, as there are no existing sidewalks to which new sidewalks could connect and that the reduced width is consistent with the recommendation of DPW and prudent planning practices (limited access residential streets do not require more than 24 feet of paving width).

VIII. Findings of Fact

An orderly, thorough and expeditious technical review of this Master Plan has been conducted. Property owners within a 100' radius have been notified by first class mail prior to the public meeting, and the meeting agenda has been properly posted.

Staff has reviewed this Master Plan application for conformance with required standards set forth in RIGL Section 45-23-60, as well as the City of Cranston's Subdivision and Land Development Regulations and finds as follows:

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(1) states, “The proposed development is consistent with the comprehensive community plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies.”

1. The proposal is consistent with all dimensional standards of the A-80 zone as well as with the uses allowed under the parcel's Future Land Use (Single-Family Residential less than 1 unit per acre).
2. This application provides an opportunity for housing development in Western Cranston in a manner that fits with the surrounding neighborhood, which is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan land use and housing policies.
3. The subdivision will not impact significant cultural, historic, or natural features that contribute to the attractiveness of the community.

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(2) states, “The proposed development is in compliance with the standards and provisions of the municipality's zoning ordinance.”

4. The proposal will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the Cranston Zoning Code.

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(3) states, “There will be no significant negative environmental impacts from the proposed development as shown on the final plan, with all required conditions for approval.”

5. This finding pertains specifically to the final plan. This being said, no negative environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed subdivision.
6. The subject parcel includes small bands of wetlands along its eastern and western edges, so the project will be subject to all state and local regulations pertaining to environmental impacts and wetlands.
7. The Rhode Island November 2021 Natural Heritage map shows that there are no known rare species located on the site.

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(4) states, “The subdivision, as proposed, will not result in the creation of individual lots with any physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable. (See definition of Buildable lot). Lots with physical constraints to development may be created only if identified as permanent open space or permanently reserved for a public purpose on the approved, recorded plans.”

8. The proposed subdivision will not result in the creation of individual lots with such physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable.
9. The design and location of building lots, utilities, drainage, and other improvements will conform to local regulations for mitigation of flooding and soil erosion, details of which will be reviewed during the Preliminary Plan phase of the application.

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(5) states, “All proposed land developments and all subdivision lots have adequate and permanent physical access to a public street. Lot frontage on a public street without physical access shall not be considered in compliance with this requirement.”

10. All eight proposed lots will have adequate permanent physical access to a public roadway within the City of Cranston. Proposed Lots 1-4 and 6-8 will have adequate permanent physical access on Crest Drive, while Proposed Lot 5 will have frontage on Laten Knight Road.

IX. Recommendation

Staff finds this proposal consistent with the standards for required findings of fact set forth in RIGL Section 45-23-60 as well as with the City of Cranston’s Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. Staff therefore recommends that the City Plan Commission adopt the documented findings of fact and **approve** the Master Plan application, subject to the conditions denoted below:

X. Conditions of approval

1. The applicant shall submit a sewer availability letter with its Preliminary Plan application.
2. The applicant shall submit a Municipal Lien Certificate with its Preliminary Plan application.
3. The applicant will be responsible for removing those sections of the existing cul-de-sac bulb that are on private land by replacing the pavement with loaming/planting.
4. The Preliminary Plan shall denote the proposed locations for underground utility connections and new streetlights on the Crest Drive extension.
5. Payment of outstanding Pre-Application fees of \$260.00 (\$100.00 + \$20.00 per unit) as well as Preliminary Plan Application fees at the time of Preliminary Plan submission.