

# City Planning Department



## Memo

To: Cranston City Plan Commission  
From: Doug McLean, AICP, Principal Planner  
Date: November 1, 2021  
Re: Dimensional Variance Application for 115 Niantic Avenue

**Owner/App:** F9 Properties, LLC  
**Location:** 115 Niantic Avenue; A.P. 7 Lot 2190  
**Zone:** M-2 (General industry)  
**FLU:** Industrial

### VARIANCE REQUESTS:

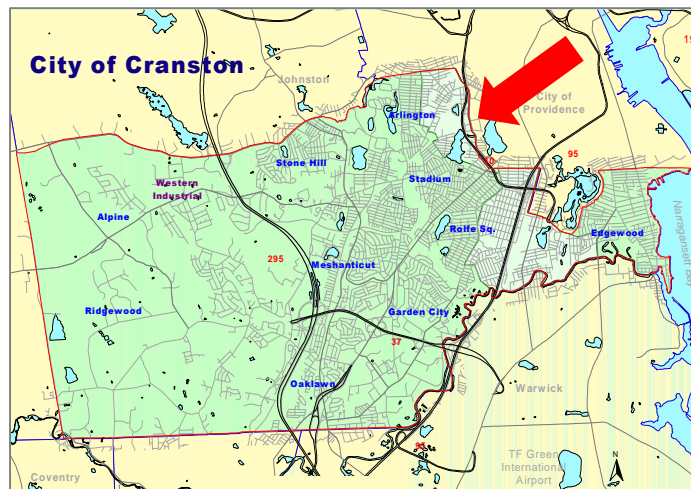
#### USE VARIANCE:

1. To allow retail sales and showroom in industrially zoned property [17.20.020 - Schedule of uses]

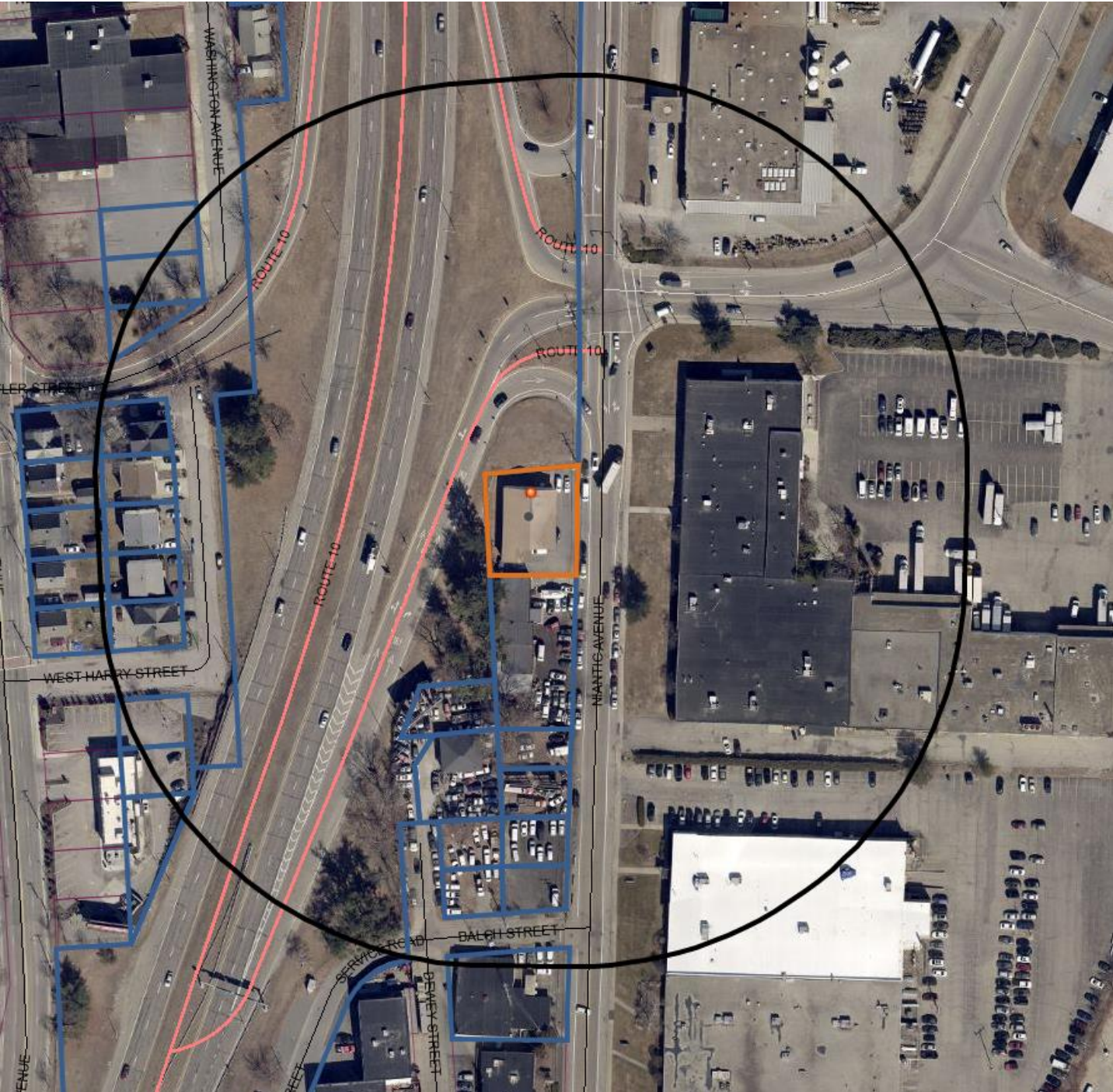
#### DIMENSIONAL VARIANCES:

2. To allow the change of use on a lot which is non-conforming by M-2 standards, such as lot size, frontage, and front/rear/side setback. [17.20.120 - Schedule of intensity regulations]
3. To allow seven (7) off street parking spaces whereas a minimum of ten (10) parking spaces area required for the proposed retail use. [17.64.010 Off Street Parking]
4. To allow 4 wall signs totaling 126 sq ft in size whereas a maximum of 45 sqft is required.

## LOCATION MAP



**NEIGHBORHOOD AERIAL**  
(subject parcel marked in orange, 400 foot radius marked in black)



# PARCEL AERIAL



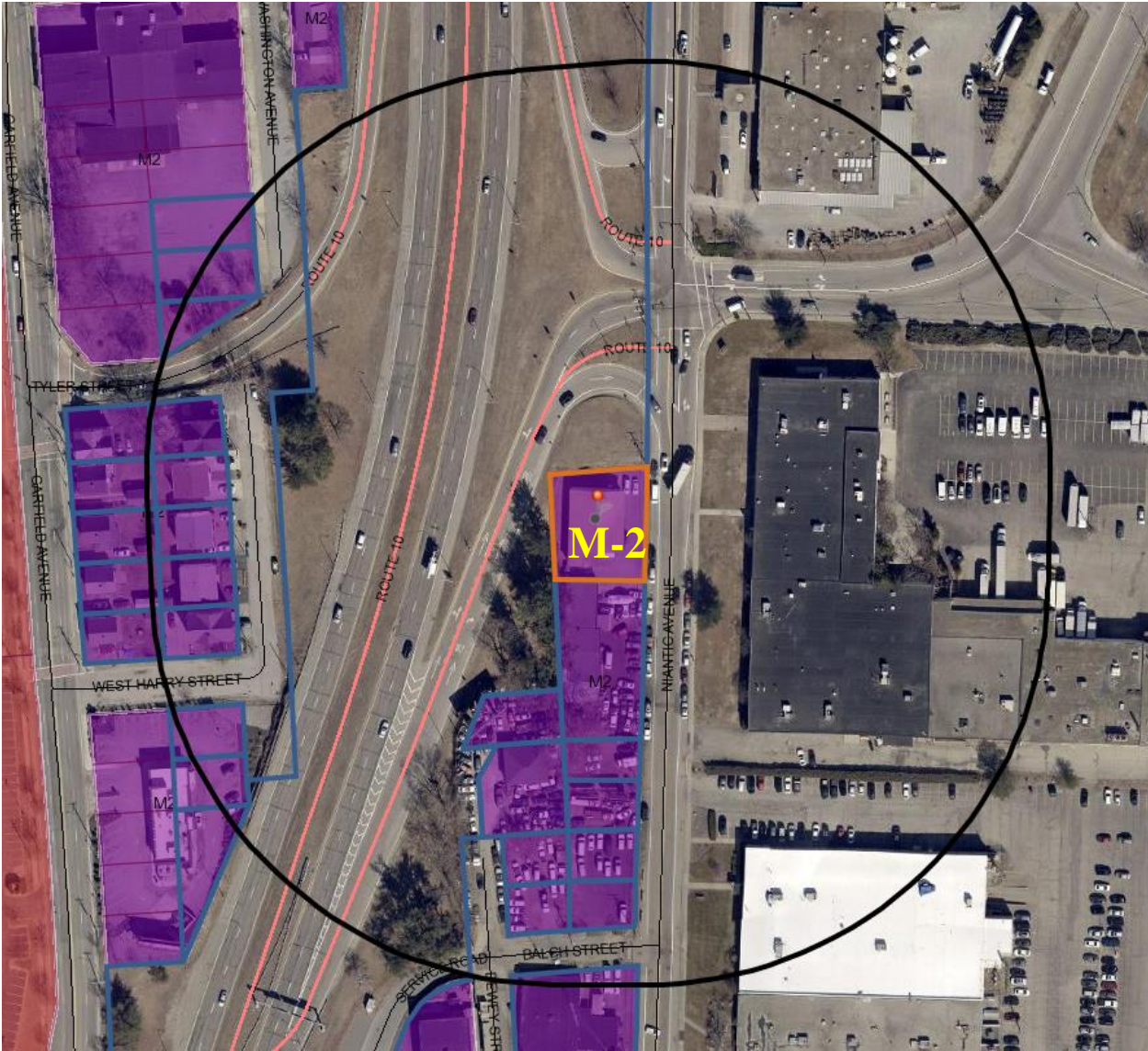
### 3-D AERIAL VIEW



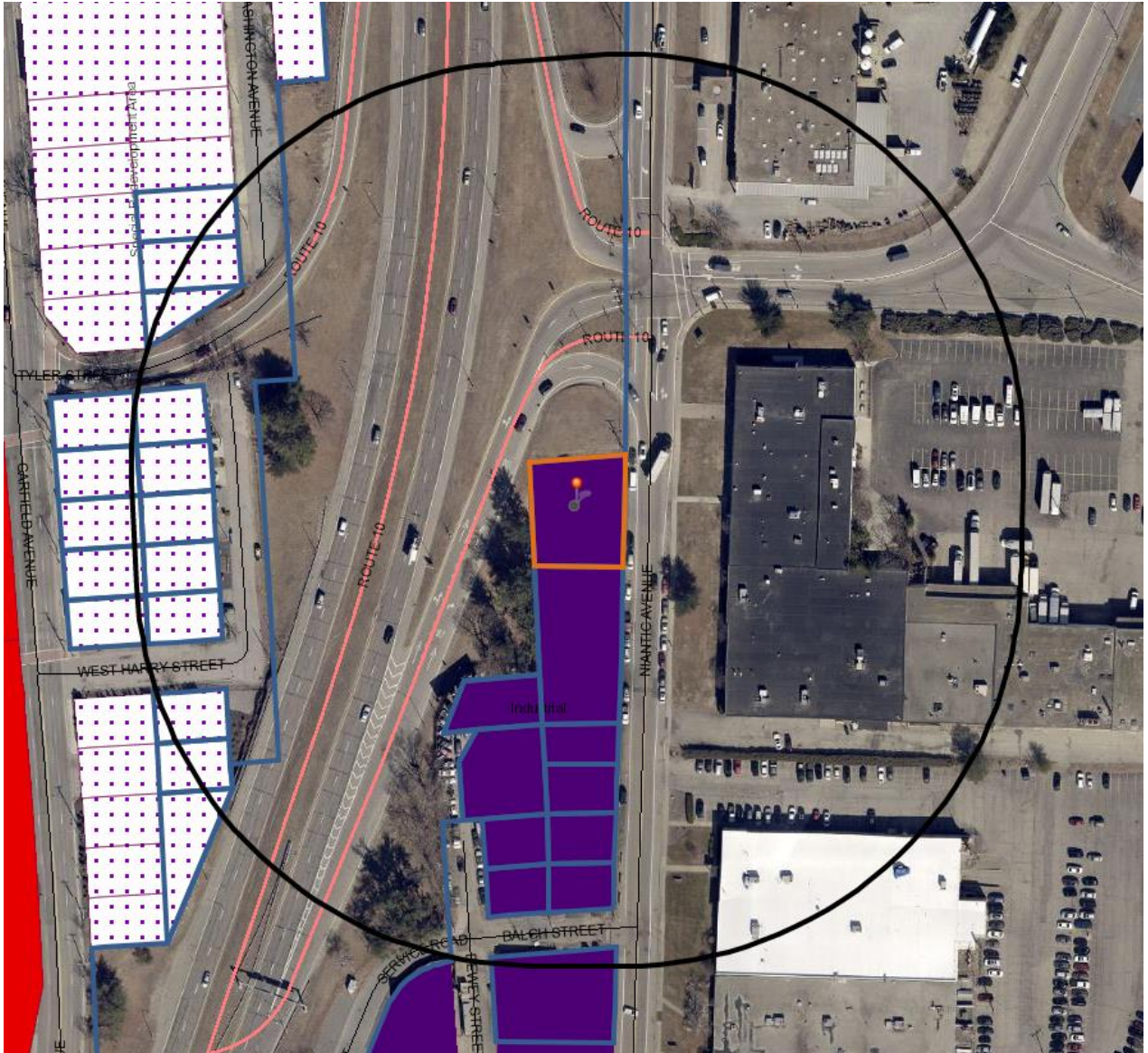
# STREET VIEW



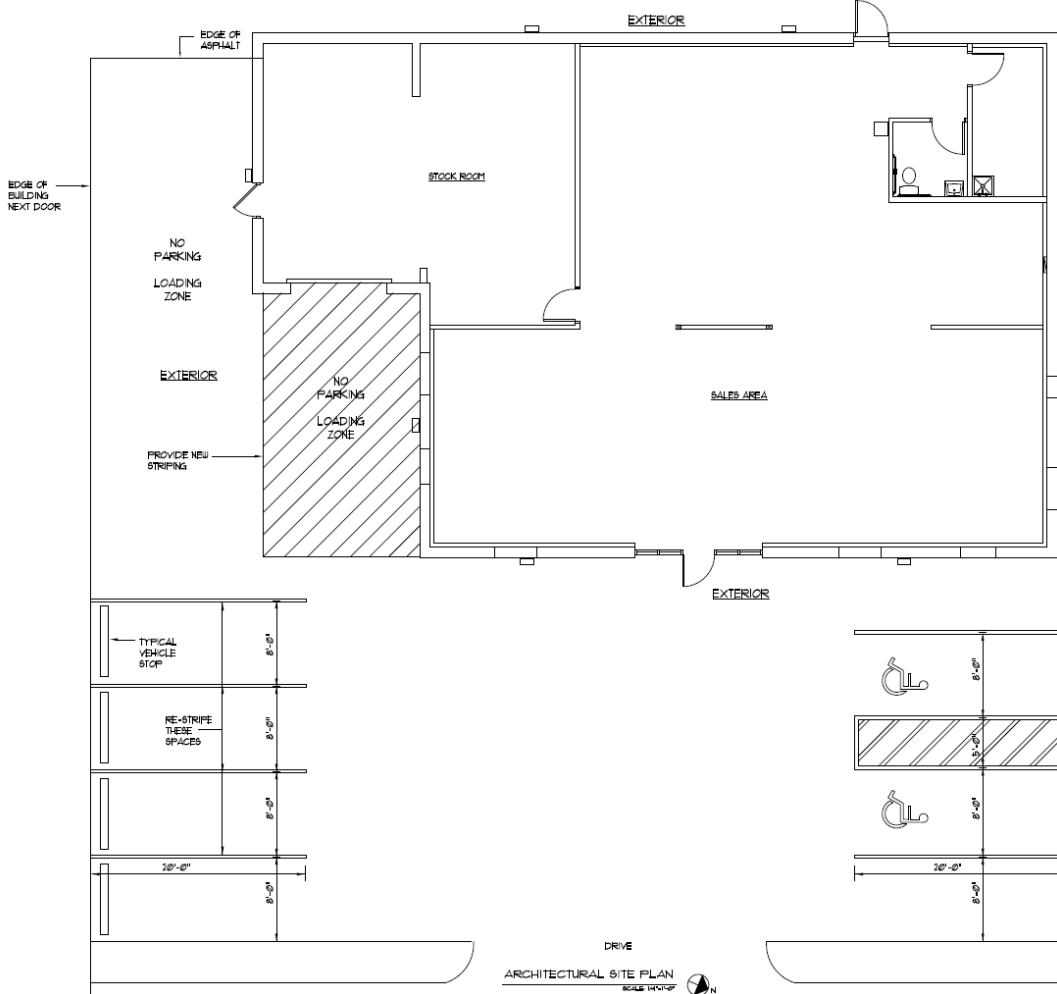
# ZONING MAP



# FUTURE LAND USE MAP



# ARCHITECT PLAN



**NEW WORK NOTES:**

- TUCK POINT AND REPAIR EXTERIOR WALLS AT BACK LEFT AND FRONT RIGHT OF THE BUILDING.
- PAINT EXTERIOR.
- ADD (2) EXTERIOR LIGHTS.
- (2) SIGN LOCATIONS.
- SEAL EXISTING PARKING LOT.
- NEW PARKING LAYOUT.
- NEW AC UNIT (TYPICAL).
- NEW 30 YEAR DIMENSIONAL SPRINKLE HEAD.
- SLAB AND TRACER SYSTEM SHALL NEED TO BE CUT OUT AND REPAIRED.

**PARKING NOTES:**

SECTION 17.64.01.0 - OFF STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS

RETAIL BUSINESS SHALL HAVE ONE PARKING SPACE FOR EACH 300 SQUARE FOOT OF GROSS AREA OF THE BUILDING

2,025 SQ. FT. / 300 = 7 SPACES REQUIRED. 7 SPACES ARE PROPOSED.

**SIGN:**

SECTION 17.72 - SIGN REQUIREMENTS

Sign Type	Area (sq ft)	Max. Height (ft)	Qty. Allowed	Min. Spacing (ft)	Min. Distance from Building (ft)	Min. Distance from Public Street (ft)
Billboard	50	2	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Billboard Structure	40	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Canopy	50	5	N/A	5	12	N/A
Construction Sign	15	5	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction Sign	40	20	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction Sign	100	10	N/A	5	14	N/A
Construction Sign	4	5	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction Sign	200	12	N/A	12	N/A	N/A
Construction Sign	15	10	2	N/A	N/A	N/A

- One freestanding sign shall be permitted per street frontage.
- The height of a sign shall be measured to the distance from the base of the sign to a normal grade to the maximum elevation of the sign.
- Freestanding signs shall be located at least 100 feet from the street.
- Signs shall be set back from the street by a minimum of 10 feet or an existing residential zoning district setback, whichever is greater, and shall be set back from the building by a minimum of 10 feet.



# SIGNAGE PLAN



REAR ELEVATION



RIGHT ELEVATION



CTG 3 x 12

CTG-3 x 12

## FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. The applicant proposes to utilize an existing building at 115 Niantic Avenue for retail sales and showroom, which a use not allowed in the M-2 zone. The building was constructed in 1975 and last was used for a headquarters for a security company.
2. The subject lot is along the Niantic Avenue business corridor and is located at the off ramp of Route 10 for Niantic Avenue. It is directly across the street from the City of Providence and the varied business uses in the area.
3. The subject lot is undersized with restricted street frontage for the M-2 zone. The industrial zone requires 60,000 square feet and the lot has 8,917 square feet. The lot is required to have 200 feet of frontage and the lot has 109 feet +/-.
4. The existing building encroaches on the setback requirements for the front, rear and on the south side yard.
5. Based on the size of the building, the proposed uses require a total of ten (10) off street parking spaces. As designed and existing, a dimensional variance is required for the proposed seven (7) spaces or the shortage of three (3) spaces.
6. Because of its location on three frontages, dimensional relief is sought for signage. Four (4) wall sign are proposed for the front, side (exit ramp) and Route 10 rear side. Three wall signs of 36 square feet are proposed and an additional wall sign of 18 square feet. Total signage proposed is 126 square feet whereas 45 sqft is the required maximum.
7. The proposal does not include any changes to the building footprint.
8. The Comprehensive Plan - Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designation for the subject parcels is "Industrial". The proposed use of retail does not fit within the uses designated by the FLUM so this proposal is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
9. Staff's view of the use variance request is that the proposed use of small-scale retail will not negatively impact the site differently than the use of allowed industrial uses. Staff has no outstanding concerns with the proposal, however, the Comprehensive Plan - Future Land Use Map designation of "Industrial" does not provide staff with a margin of interpretation in which to provide a positive recommendation on this application.
10. Staff's view of the dimensional variance requests is that all dimensional relief, if granted, will not negatively alter the character of the subject property or the surrounding area (surrounding land uses include industrial and auto repair).

## RECOMMENDATION:

Due to the finding that the proposal is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan - Future Land Use Map, staff is not in a position provide a positive recommendation on this application to the Plan Commission. However, it should be noted that staff does not have any outstanding concerns with the proposed use and staff is of the view that the use of small-scale retail at this site will not negative alter the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Therefore, staff provides **no specific recommendation** on this application.