**MINUTES**

**Joint Site Visit for *1500 Oaklawn Avenue* – Comprehensive Plan / Zone Change Application**

**Saturday, February 22, 2020 – 9:00 AM – 10:15**

**1500 Oaklawn Avenue**

Attendance:

**NAME AFFILIATION**

Michael J. Farina (President) City Council

Michael W. Favicchio (Vice President) City Council

Steven A. Stycos City Council

Paul J. McAuley City Council

John P. Donegan City Council

Christopher G. Paplauskas City Council

Michael Smith Plan Commission (Chair/President)

Fred Vincent Plan Commission (Vice Chair)

Ann Marie Maccarone Plan Commission

Kathleen Lanphear Plan Commission

Rob DiStefano Plan Commission

Ken Mason Plan Commission

Robert Coupe Plan Commission

Jason M. Pezzullo City Planning Director

Douglas McLean Principal Planner

Robert Murray Attorney for Applicant

Eric Preve Civil Engineer for Applicant

APPLICANT Property owner / developer

All property owners within the 400’ notification radius were given direct notice and the meeting was advertised in the Cranston Herald.

**9:00 AM**

There is a quorum of both the City Council and the City Plan Commission. Council President Michael Farina calls the City Council to order. City Plan Commission Vice President Fred Vincent calls the City Plan Commission to order. Attorney Robert Murray gave a brief presentation about the applicants overall site plan, and the reasons why they are requesting a Comprehensive Plan amendment and zone change.

The members in attendance who spoke did not raise objections to the proposed demolition of the site or the currently proposed branch bank and liquor store/commercial space. The discussion turned to the open question as to what will become of Catherine Street (30’ R.O.W. owned by the City abutting the residential property to the east).

Neighborhood residents raised concerns about the existing fence on the eastern property line which is in a state of disrepair. There were also questions about the light fixtures that were installed within the city’s ROW. Ultimately the treatment of the eastern portion of the site with the off-site Catherine street, were the majority of concern for the neighborhood and abutting residents.

Questions were raised about the potential disturbance to neighbors during demolition and possible damage to their homes. Attorney Murray stated that there would be no blasting as part of the demolition, or construction and that all the proper permits from the City and State would mitigate these possible issues. He further stated that the neighbors would be notified during all the phases of development. Councilman McAuley stated that the applicant’s existing liquor store on Reservoir Avenue in his district has always been kept in good condition and has never had a complaint from residents. Eric Preve of Diprete Engineering stated that the applicant is required to comply with the state standards for soil erosion and sedimentation control through their RIPDES permit issued through the RIDEM.

The discussion came back to what should be done with Catherine St. Suggestions ranged from blocking it off, abandon it, to rip up the concrete. The neighbors were concerned that if it is blocked off, it will become a “no man’s land” for dumping and trash. Ken Mason, the public works director stated that the old pavement should be removed and the ROW seeded and loamed, and landscaped. He stated that the problem with abandoning the ROW is that the abutting residential land has the right to develop and access this land for a potential future subdivision.

Abutting neighbors also raised the concern about the lack of a crosswalk in the front of this property and that crossing Oaklawn Avenue is extremely dangerous. Attorney Murray stated that the DiPrete Engineering will look at this issue with the RIDOT and determine what their plans are for the addition of a pedestrian intersection at this location.

Attorney Murray stated that it was time to bring the group outside to walk the rear of the property to better understand where the new building will be located in relation to the property line. When gathered in the rear (east) of the property, he illustrated where the existing zoning / comprehensive plan line is currently located, and where they are proposing to move it. They also marked the ground to delineate the footprint of the proposed structure. Outside, the neighborhood residents continued the discussion about the fencing, and the ROW.

The presentation was concluded by Attorney Murray at 10:15 at which time City Council President Farina entertained a motion to adjourn from Councilman \_\_\_, seconded by Councilman \_\_\_ with a unanimous vote to adjourn. City Plan Commission President Michael Smith entertained a motion to adjourn from Commissioner Lanphear, seconded by Commissioner DiStephano, with a unanimous vote to adjourn.