

Kenneth J. Hopkins  
Mayor

Jason M. Pezzullo, AICP  
Committee Chairman  
Director of Planning



James Woyciechowski  
Fire Department

Stanley Pikul  
Building Official

Justin Mateus P.E.  
Engineering Division

Stephen Mulcahy  
Traffic Safety Division

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Cranston City Hall  
869 Park Avenue, Cranston, Rhode Island 02910

### MINUTES CRANSTON CITY HALL – 3RD FLOOR COUNCIL CHAMBER 9:30 AM, WEDNESDAY, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023

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#### 1. Call to Order

Chairman Jason Pezzullo called the Development Plan Review Committee meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. in the City Council chamber.

The following members were in attendance for the meeting: Stanley Pikul -- Building Official, Justin Mateus – DPW Director, Stephen Mulcahy –Traffic Safety Manager, Franklin Paulino -- Director of Economic Development, and Jason Pezzullo – Planning Director. James Woyciechowski – Fire Department was absent.

The following Planning Department staff members were in attendance: Gregory Guertin, Senior Planner and Amelia Lavallee, Planning Technician.

#### 2. Approval of Minutes

(vote taken)

- 7/19/23 Regular DPRC Meeting

Upon motion made by Mr. Mulcahy and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the Development Plan Review Committee unanimously voted (4-0) to approve the minutes of the 7/19/23 meeting.

#### 3. KFC

##### Pre-Application

(vote taken)

*Location:* 822 Reservoir Avenue, Cranston, RI 02920  
AP 9, Lot 599  
*Zoning District:* C-1 (Office Business)  
*Owner /Applicant:* DE Foods, LLC, 101 Accord Park Drive, Norwell MA.  
*Proposal:* Demolition of the existing KFC restaurant to be replaced with a new KFC. Site will be enlarged and re-graded to accommodate a new drive-thru component for the restaurant requiring a Special Use Permit from the ZBR.

Chairman Pezzullo invited the applicant's development team to present the application. Atty. Robert Murray of Taft & McSally representing the applicant provided an overview of the application as well as the site plan. Atty. Murray provided an update of the application, first introducing Dan Whitney, VP of Operations for DE Foods LLC and Nicole Duquette, project engineer from Greenman-Pederson, Inc.

Mr. Murray referenced an informal community meeting held on 7/31/23 between the applicant's team and members of the community. Mr. Murray clarified that the application will not receive formal approval at this meeting, nor be voted on at the Pre-Application stage.

Mr. Murray dispelled claims that the proposal will include a 24-hour KFC. Mr. Murray shared a recent update that DE Foods LLC has acquired two abutting properties on Auburn Street. Mr. Murray noted that the zoning code allows for a 200-foot parking and circulation area used for commercial business in a residential zone.

Mr. Murray then invited project engineer, Nicole Duquette to update the committee on the application. Ms. Duquette noted physical roadway changes to mitigate on-site conflicts, additional parking and greenspace. Ms. Duquette noted that DOT requires a queue of 10 on-site spaces from the menu board, in which the updated plan allows for. Ms. Duquette noted that the proposed infiltration system to be installed will mitigate run-off issues. Ms. Duquette also mentioned a proposed seven (7) foot retaining wall along Auburn Street, as well as a landscaped fence to prevent headlight glare into the abutting residential area.

Chairman Pezzullo asked Ms. Duquette about the proposed distance between the order board to the closest residential line. Ms. Duquette responded, stating that the distance between the order board and the closest property line is 89.9 feet. Ms. Duquette also noted proposed replacement of sidewalks on Hazelwood Street and Reservoir Avenue.

Mr. Murray stated that full landscaping plans will be included with the application at the next stage of the process, along with a traffic and noise study.

Mr. Whitney from DE Foods LLC briefed the committee on the application. Mr. Whitney stated that the existing restaurant does not meet existing physical, or operational standards held by KFC, which has prompted the applicant to consider a renovation and drive-thru expansion of the existing business.

Mr. Paulino inquired about store hours. Mr. Whitney stated that the store is open from 11:00-10:00pm. Mr. Mulcahy asked Mr. Whitney if any regional KFC restaurants are open past 10:00pm. Mr. Whitney responded that there are other KFC restaurants open later than 10:00pm, but that the applicant for this proposal has no intention on closing later than 10:00pm.

Chairman Pezzullo invited the public to comment on the proposal at the Pre-Application stage of review.

- Renee Desaulniers, 33 Hazelwood Street voiced concerns regarding pollution, infiltration issues, alleged lack of transparency regarding the purchasing of the two abutting residential homes, potential noise, lighting, and trees potentially being cut down.
- Kristin Oloughlan, 45 Hazelwood Street voiced concerns regarding visual impacts and the extensive dimensional relief required for approval.
- Kim Howe, 36 Hazelwood Street voiced concerns regarding the purchasing of the two abutting residential homes despite a housing shortage in the City, and visual impacts.
- Karen (unidentified), 425 Auburn Street voiced concerns regarding rodent control, drainage, and hours of operation.

Mr. Murray re-approached the Committee to respond to the aforementioned concerns. Mr. Murray stated that the comments made by the public are well considered and appreciated. Mr. Murray stated that the applicant will comply with the City ordinance on lighting requirements and that photometric plans will be provided and reviewed by the City at the next stage of review. Mr. Murray stated that he believed that the proposed fencing, screening walls, and landscaping plans will mitigate concerns.

Mr. Murray continued, stating relevant positive aspects of the proposal. Mr. Murray stated that the applicant proposes to eliminate traffic access on Auburn Street to mitigate existing traffic concerns, which currently exists as a one-way street. Mr. Murray also stated that the applicant will be mindful of the existence of existing, mature trees. Further, Mr. Murray stated that the Department of Public Works and the Building Department would require satisfactory rodent abatement and Stormwater drainage plans.

Chairman Pezzullo invited comments from the Committee.

Mr. Mulcahy noted that the proposed ADA accessible parking space is inaccessible with the queue on the existing, proposed plan. Mr. Mulcahy suggested moving the access aisle to the right. Mr. Mulcahy noted various circulation improvements to the site including blocking the access to Auburn Street. Mr. Mulcahy inquired about snow storage.

Mr. Pikul acknowledged the neighbor's concerns and stated that the Committee's function is only to advise the applicant on technical issues or concerns. Mr. Pikul also noted improvements to the site, as stated by Mr. Mulcahy. Mr. Pikul stated that he would like to further review lighting plans and site topography at the next stage of the process. Mr. Pikul inquired about the proposed retaining wall. Further, Mr. Pikul would like to review proposed trash receptacles on-site and any proposed signage.

Ms. Duquette stated that at the next stage of review the applicant will provide lighting and landscaping plans. Ms. Duquette also noted that the retaining wall conforms to the topography on the site. The entranceway is striped due to the need for circulation of delivery trucks.

Mr. Pezzullo re-iterated that the size of the lot and the relief required to allow for the drive-thru are overseen and permitted by the Zoning Board of Review, as opposed to the DPRC.

Mr. Mateus inquired about the sidewalk material proposed on Hazelwood Street. Mr. Mateus suggested the addition of wheelchair ramps along curb cuts, under the guidance of DOT. Mr. Mateus noted that the proposed drainage plan (disconnection from Hazelwood Street to Auburn Street) will be beneficial to the site.

Mr. Guertin looked to Mr. Mateus for guidance regarding the sidewalk on Auburn Street. Mr. Mateus responded, stating that there are sites in existence throughout the State with obstacles that prevent ADA accommodations. Mr. Mateus noted that the addition of a sidewalk on Auburn Street would improve connectivity.

Chairman Pezzullo stated that he expects to review a landscaping plan through the City's typical peer review process for appropriate species and density. Mr. Pezzullo inquired if the proposed drive-thru were denied by the Zoning Board of Review, would the proposal move forward without the drive-thru?

Mr. Murray stated that hypothetically the applicant would not move forward under that condition. Mr. Murray reiterated that the DPRC provides only technical comments and guidance that would be subject to the Zoning Board of Review at later phases of review.

Chairman Pezzullo asked for further comment from the public.

- Morteza Behrouz, Hazelwood Street, voiced concerns about the encroachment of the restaurant onto a residential neighborhood and the alleged lack of transparency regarding the purchasing of homes by the applicant.
- Sui Lui, 40 Hazelwood Street voiced concerns regarding noise and pollution in the neighborhood.
- Kristin Oloughlan, 45 Hazelwood Street re-approached the Committee to consider neighboring fast-food business in the area that are also surrounded by residential neighborhoods.
- Sherrie Carlomusto, 48 Shirley Boulevard voiced concerns about rodent abatement and future maintenance of the site.

Mr. Murray referenced the aforementioned concerns, stating that the applicant has solicited concerns from the neighborhood to be addressed at future stages of the process, including preferred landscaping.

Seeing no further comment by the public or the Committee, Chairman Pezzullo stated that as this is a pre-application discussion, no vote would be taken on the matter.

#### **4. "1727 Pontiac Self-Storage" Pre-Application / Jurisdictional Review (vote taken)**

<i>Location:</i>	1727 Pontiac Avenue, Cranston AP 9, Lot 599
<i>Zoning District:</i>	M-1 (Restricted Industry)
<i>Owner:</i>	1727 Pontiac Drive, LLC. 30 Extrusion Drive, Stonington, CT 06379
<i>Applicant:</i>	PDS Eng. & Construction, Inc. 107 Old Windsor Road, Bloomfield, CT
<i>Proposal:</i>	Convert an existing warehouse into a self-storage use. No modifications to the footprint or site layout are proposed.

The applicant was not present for the meeting. Chairman Pezzullo provided a brief overview of the application. Mr. Pezzullo noted that the site had been previously reviewed by the Committee, and that the proposed use was allowed per the zoning code.

Mr. Pikul stated that the application did not require the Committee to take jurisdiction on the matter.

Chairman Pezzullo accepted a motion. Upon motion made by Mr. Pikul, seconded by Mr. Mulcahy, the Development Plan Review Committee voted unanimously (4-0) not to take jurisdiction on the matter.

**5. Adjournment** (next meeting date TBD)

**(vote taken)**

Upon motion made by Mr. Mateus, and seconded by Mr. Mulcahy, the Development Plan Review Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 a.m.