

CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT



Memorandum: Preliminary Plan – Minor Subdivision

To: City Plan Commission
From: Beth Ashman, AICP | Assistant Planning Director
Date: December 26, 2024
RE: R & T Estates situated at 300 Laten Knight Road
Application for Minor Subdivision Preliminary Plan | File #1144

Owner / Applicant: Lawrence D & Elizabeth L. Moses / Moses Ryan Ltd.
Location: 300 Laten Knight Road
Parcels: Assessors Plat 29, Lot 2
Zoning: A-80 – Residential single-family (80,000 sq. ft.)
FLUM Designation: Single Family Residential Less Than 1 Unit Per Acre

I. Applicant | Property | Proposal

The subject property is in Western Cranston on Laten Knight Road. It is identified as Assessors Plat 29, Lot 2. The property contains a single-family house built in 1920 and associated yard about two (2) acres in size with the remainder of the property undeveloped and wooded. An electric utility easement runs across the property east to west. Most of the land south of the utility easement has been forested since 1951.

The Proposal is to subdivide a single 29-acre lot into a total of five (5) conforming house lots with access through a new private road, stemming from Laten Knight Road. The new road, named "Robin's Way" on the plan is proposed to be a 20' wide private road, 815' feet in length. The project will be served by private wells and public sewer.

II. Documents Submitted for This Application

1. Minor Preliminary Plan Submission Application and Checklist prepared and signed by Moses Ryan Ltd and dated 11/19/24.
2. Owner authorization letter signed by Lawrence & Elizabeth Moses on December 9, 2024, designating Moses Ryan, Ltd as the owner's representative.
3. Preliminary Narrative dated November 15, 2024, prepared by Garofalo & Associates Inc.
4. Class 1 Boundary Survey and Subdivision Plan entitled "Preliminary Plan Record Plan for R & T Estates I." prepared by Garofalo & Associates Inc, signed by Samuel S Hemenway, Registered Professional Engineer: dated November 15, 2024.
 - a. Sheet 1 of 10: Preliminary Plan – Cover Sheet and Site Location
 - b. Sheet 2 of 10: Preliminary Plan – Existing Conditions Survey
 - c. Sheet 3 of 10: Preliminary Plan – Record Plan (Proposed Lots)
 - d. C-1 General Notes and Legend
 - e. C-2 Overall Plan
 - f. C-3 Grading and Drainage Plan
 - g. C-4 Road Profile Plan
 - h. C-5 Soil & Erosion Sediment Control Plan
 - i. C-6 Construction Details – 1

j. C-7 Construction Details – 2

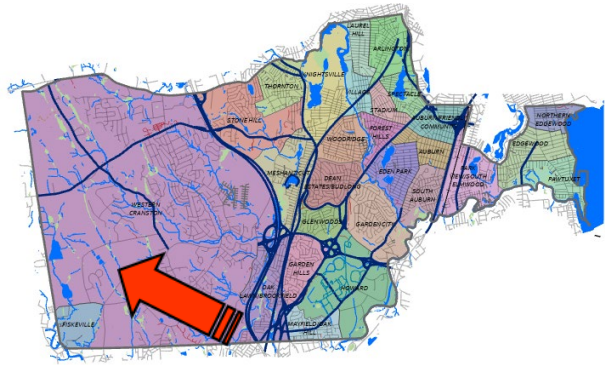
5. Minor Subdivision Application Fee of \$475.00 for pre-application and preliminary plan; both dated November 4, 2024
6. Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan for R & T Estates prepared by Garofalo and Associates, Inc. dated May 20, 2024.
7. Stormwater Management System Operation and Maintenance Plan for R & T Estates Residential Subdivision prepared by Garofalo & Associates, Inc. Revised August 24, 2024.
8. Municipal Lien certificate issued May 16, 2024.
9. RIDEM Freshwater Wetlands Permit issued October 31, 2024. Wetlands Application No, 24-0135 and RIPDES N. RIR102666. Signed by Nancy Freeman, Environmental Scientist III.
10. 380 Laten Knight Road Wetland Narrative prepared by DiPrete Engineering 07-24-2023.
11. Abutter Documentation
 - a. 100' Abutters List dated 12/12/2024.
 - b. 100' Abutters Map dated 12/12/2024
 - c. Affidavit that 100' abutter notices were sent 12/23/2024 by certified mail with return receipt requested signed by Rachel Hamilton and notarized.
12. Availability of Sewer Service Letter, signed by John C Arruda Jr, Civil Engineer –Underground Asset Manager, of Veolia Water; dated November 14, 2024.

III. Surrounding Land Use & Context

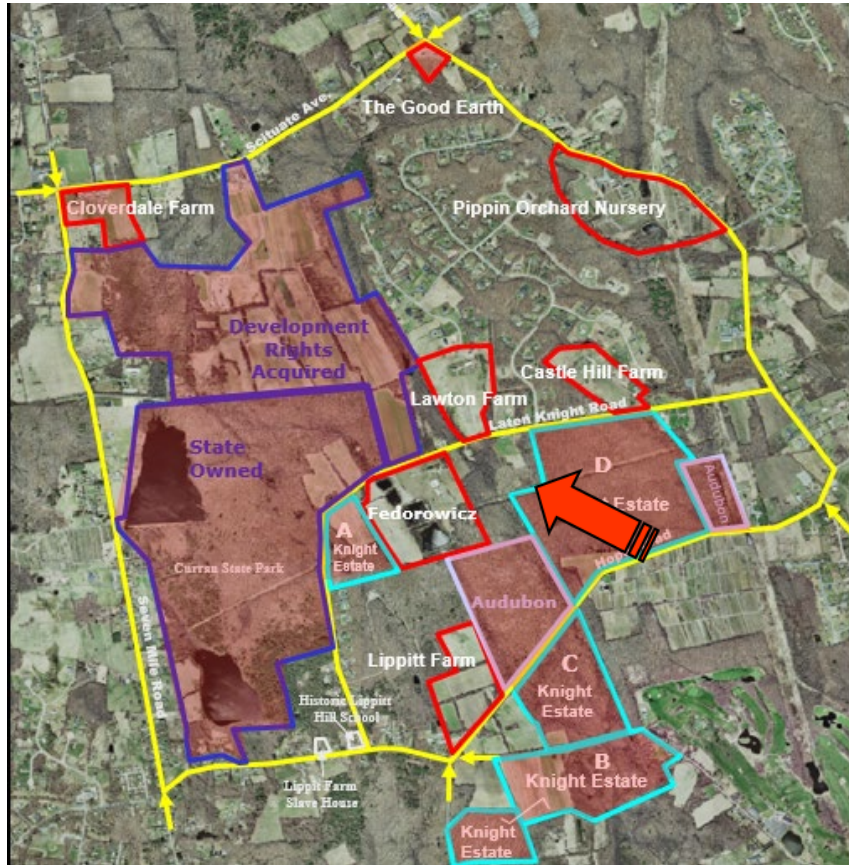
Analysis using the Cranston Geographic Information System and the FEMA Flood Map Service Center indicates that:

1. The subject property is located on the southerly side of Laten Knight Road.
2. The surrounding area in Western Cranston is zoned A-80.
3. In the Future Land Use Map, the subject property is designated for single-family residential less than 1 unit per acre. It is adjacent to City and RI Audubon Society conservation lands that are designated as S1 Open Space in the Future Land Use Map.
4. The subject property is outside of any identified historic / cultural districts under jurisdiction of the Local Historic District Commission, State Historical Preservation Commission, State, or National Registers of Historic Places.
5. The subject property is on the Cranston Historic Farm Route but is not listed as a farm or protected open space.
6. A tributary to Lippitt Brook and associated wetlands run through the site. DiPrete Engineering has delineated the wetlands located on-site. (DiPrete 2023)
7. The subject property is identified as “Zone X – Area of Minimal Flood Hazard” on and outside of any regulated floodplain or flood hazard districts.
8. Mapping available from RIDEM indicates that the site is not located within a Natural Heritage Area (DiPrete 2023 p4).
9. The lot has existed in this configuration since one lot was subdivided in 2009.
10. Electric utility easement crosses the property east to west. Easement to Narragansett Electric Company recorded 6/18/2018.

LOCATION MAP

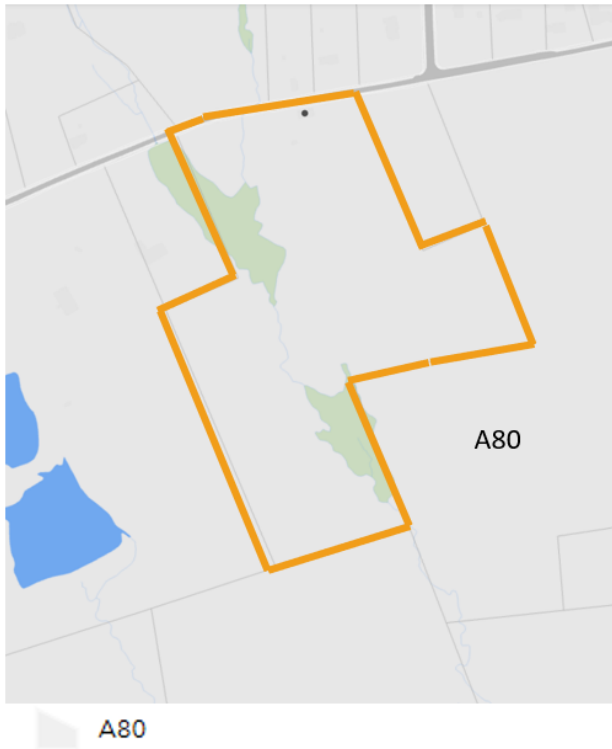


NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT - CRANSON HISTORIC FARM LOOP



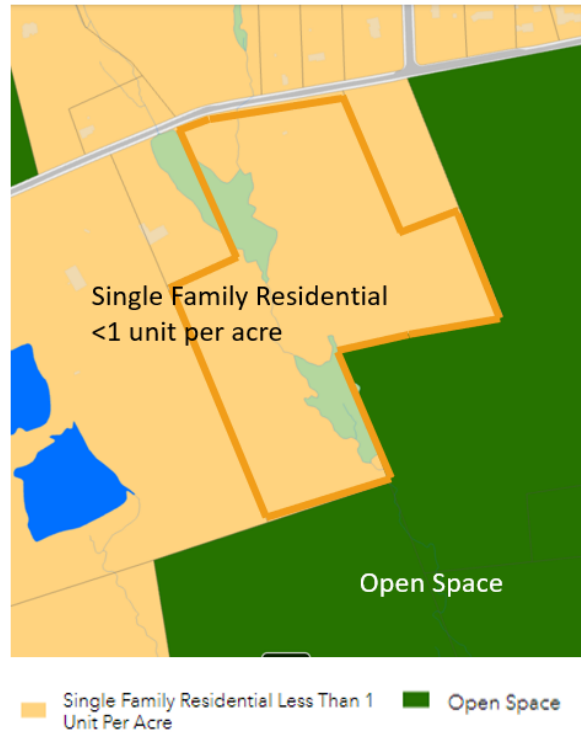
Source: Cranston City Planning Department. Map dated 2010. Parcels that are protected open space are shaded in red. Named farms are outlined in red. The loop is depicted in yellow.

ZONING MAP



A-80 – Residential single-family (80,000 sq. ft.)

FUTURE LAND USE MAP



Single Family Residential Less Than 1 Unit Per Acre

AERIAL PHOTO with mapped wetlands



STREET VIEW (from east and westbound on Laten Knight Road)



IV. Municipal Review

Pursuant to RIGL §45-23-37, these Plans and submitted documents were distributed for comment to the following agencies including a site plan dated November 15, 2024. The project was also presented and discussed by the Technical Review Committee on December 18, 2024. Comments are as follows:

1. Department of Public Works

- a. Engineering Division: Engineering needs a sewer design and approval. The development needs a HOA agreement for maintenance of the sewer, private drive, and draining infrastructure. The city does not want to own the sewer beyond where it connects at Laten Knight Rd. There is a need to check with the postmaster about locating the mailboxes and consider whether any space is needed for cars to stop in front of the mailbox.
- b. Traffic Safety Division: The name Robin's Way is not sufficiently unique. Subdivision Regs Sec X. B 10. requires the names of proposed streets to be substantially different from any existing street name in the City.

- c. Veolia Water: Availability of sewer letter issued. no comments.
- 2. Department of Building Inspection & Zoning Enforcement
 - a. Mr. Stan Pikul, Alt. Building Official, no comments
- 3. Fire Department: Mr. James Woyciechowski, asked about the location of the nearest hydrant.

V. Planning Analysis

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

- The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the subject property as Single Family Residential Less than 1 Unit Per Acre
 - The existing development falls below this density limit.
 - Staff finds that the Application is directly consistent with the Future Land Use Map designation.
- The Comprehensive Plan outlines goals, policies, and action items pertaining to residential development which Staff find support the approval of this Application, specifically:

Goal NR-5: Require improved environmental design standards in new development

Goal H-1: Ensure that future residential development in western Cranston is consistent with the capacity of the area's natural resources and infrastructure, and preserves community character.

Goal H-5: Conserve resources in new subdivisions.

Goal LU-1: Preserve the rural quality and critical resources of Western Cranston through appropriate land use controls.

Action LU-12 Implement a Scenic Road Overlay Zone to protect scenic aspects of the Historic Farm Loop.

Staff has reviewed this Application in consideration of the compatibility with the character of the surrounding area and the request does not impose undue nuisances and is not out of character beyond any other uses on this site or within the surrounding area.

- The five proposed lots conform to zoning and subdivision regulations and are designed around the wetland features on the site.
- The surrounding area in Western Cranston consists of the Historic Farm Loop with farms, forested open space, and low-density single-family homes. With 5 lots on 29 acres, this development maintains significant forested-land adjacent to conservation land on the large lots.
- The three waivers requested for this development are appropriate minimizing environmental impacts of creating a small private road in a rural area with high ground water. Subdivision Regs 10 B.18 (4) says that "sidewalks may be waived in the A-80 zoning districts, on short cul-de-sacs serving ten or fewer lots," which is the case for this proposal. Reducing the pavement from the customary 24' to 20' and forgoing sidewalks reduces the stormwater runoff to be handled by drainage infrastructure. A dead-end private road with five houses will have minimal traffic allowing cars and pedestrians to share the road. The road length allows the placement of all houses on the upland portion of the lot and away from the wetlands.
- The development will connect to sewer, which is protective of local water resources.
- General landscaping needs to be addressed as part of the site plan per SubRegs X. C. Landscaping Design Standards. The primary considerations are preservation of the wetlands, the water absorbing function of the land and compatibility with the Historic Farm Loop. It would be ideal to limit the creation of manicured suburban lawns in this area to preserve the water absorbing function of the land and the Historic Farm Loop character.

VI. Interests of Others

None to report.

VII. Additional Matters

None to report.

VIII. Waivers

Subdivision Regs: Section 10 B.3 (b) "Widths": 20' of pavement where 24' are required.

Subdivision Regs: Section 10 B.7 (a) "Dead-end Streets & Cul-de-sacs": new 815' private road

Subdivision Regs: Section 10 B.18 (4) "Sidewalks." Rural road design with no sidewalks.

IX. Findings of Fact:

An orderly, thorough, and expeditious staff review of this Preliminary Plan has been conducted. Property owners within a 100' radius have been notified via certified mail and the meeting agenda has been properly posted.

A. Subdivision & Land Development Review

Staff has reviewed this Preliminary Plan application for conformance and consistency with the required Findings of Fact in accordance with RIGL § 45-23-60 as well as the Subdivision & 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 plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies."

- The Proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The proposed resulting density of approximately 0.17 units per acre is consistent with the FLUM's designation of the subject property as Single Family Residential Less than 1 Unit Per Acre.
- The Proposal protects the extensive wetlands on the site and leaves substantial forested land abutting neighboring conservation properties outside the "limit of work."
- The waivers in the Proposal allow the minimization of new impervious surfaces through the rural street cross-section with only 20' of pavement and locate the development at an appropriate distance from the wetland areas. The Proposal follows best practices for rural stormwater management.

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."

- Staff notes that this Proposal entirely conforms to the Zoning ordinance.

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 preliminary plan, with all required conditions for approval."

- RIDEM issued a Freshwater Wetlands Permit on October 31, 2024 and RIPDES approval.
- The Proposal will be subject to all state and local regulations pertaining to environmental impacts and wetlands.
- RIDEM's 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.”

- The Proposal 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.

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.”

- All proposed lots have adequate permanent physical access to an improved public city street through the proposed private road.
- The Proposal provides for safe and adequate local circulation for vehicular traffic.

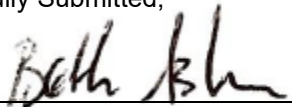
X. Recommendation – Land Development Project

Staff finds this Proposal generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, and the standards for required Findings of Fact set forth in RIGL § 45-23-60 and Section III(L) of the Subdivision & Land Development Regulations. Staff therefore recommends that the City Plan Commission adopt the Findings of Fact documented above and **APPROVE** Minor Subdivision Preliminary Plan with the waivers specified.

XI. Recommended Conditions of Approval

- Demonstration that Lot 5 has sufficient size after netting out the undevelopable land created by the drainage infrastructure / easement.
- Sewer design and approval by Engineering.
- HOA agreement for maintenance of the sewer, private drive, and drainage infrastructure.
- Street name that is substantially different from any existing street name in Cranston.
- Show location of mailboxes and space to access mailboxes.
- The landscaping plan will preserve the water absorbing function of the land and the Historic Farm Loop character.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beth Ashman, AICP
Assistant Planning Director / Administrative Officer

Cc: City Planning Director
File