

PLANNING REPORT ON:

AMENDMENT TO CITY OF CRANSTON, RI - ZONING MAP

THE LODGES AT PHENIX GLEN:

MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

PREPARED FOR:

THE GLEN, LLC

PREPARED BY:

**JDL ENTERPRISES
JOSEPH D. LOMBARDO, AICP, PRESIDENT
January 2013**

PURPOSE OF REPORT ~

The purpose of this report is to complete a Planning Report to the City of Cranston with regard to the proposed Zoning Map Amendment by The Glen, LLC. This report includes a review of the City’s Comprehensive Community Plan, and Zoning Ordinance. In addition, this report provides a recognition and consideration of the applicable purposes of the Zoning Ordinance. It is the express purpose of this Planning Report to provide a Summary and Conclusions with respect to the consistency with the Comprehensive Community Plan and Zoning Ordinance Purpose Statements.

PROPOSED ZONING MAP AMENDMENT ~

The Glen, LLC proposes to amend the City’s Zoning Map by requesting a change regarding Assessor’s Plat 19/1 – Lot # 3 from the present zoning classification of A-12 to MPD – Mixed Use Planned Development. The land is currently is vacant and is located directly off Phenix Avenue. The parcel comprises 647,370 square feet or 14.86 acres. The proposed mixed uses would be to construct office, retail and commercial buildings combined with market-rate residential apartments on the property. Only the MPD Zoning District in Cranston permits mixed use multi-family development. Thus, the purpose for the zone change request.

DESCRIPTION OF ZONING DISTRICTS ~

The following Zoning District descriptions are appropriate to this application:

CURRENT ZONE DISTRICT ~

Residential A-12	Single-family dwellings on lots of minimum areas of twelve thousand (12,000) square feet
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PROPOSED ZONE DISTRICT ~

Planned districts	Mixed Use Planned District (MPD)
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- "Mixed use planned district (MPD)" means a development undertaken by a single owner or group of owners and planned as a single entity, within which uses shall be multiple in nature and may include uses not otherwise permitted within the same zoning district. The mix and orientation of these uses are required to be compatible within the proposed development and also in relationship to the surrounding area.

CONSISTENCY AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The following Recommendations are taken from the Comprehensive Community and are deemed applicable and germane to the proposed Zoning Map amendment by The Glen, LLC:

LAND USE ELEMENT ~

Part III. Strategies and Actions

Land Use Principles

During the comprehensive planning process, it was determined that there were common themes among many of the ideas, suggestions, and issues regarding land use that also affected the other elements. These themes support the following land use principles and provide a basis for actions proposed in this plan. (Applicable to the applicant)

Principle 1: Direct future commercial, industrial and mixed-use development with two approaches:

- Adopt smart growth principles for new development that maintain the best qualities of Cranston;
- Focus efforts on a few key redevelopment sites by encouraging smart growth to increase the value and job potential from each site and increase the mix and density of uses.

Principle 4: Protect and stabilize existing residential neighborhoods by basing land use decisions on neighborhood needs and quality of life.

Principle 6: Tailor new public and private development towards recognizing and preserving the City's heritage.

Implementation Approach

The following approaches describe ways in which these principles should be implemented.

Smart Growth

Adopt smart growth principles for new development that maintain the best qualities of Cranston

Smart Growth Districts

To promote the concept in Cranston, three district types could be proposed to accommodate smart growth development in key locations (Future MPD zones will be identified and zoned through the zoning process as defined in the City's zoning ordinance):

Mixed-use Planned Development – Low Intensity (MPD-L)

This mixed-use zone would be suited for Townhouses, with some first floor retail (up to 20%), and 35'-40' building heights. It would be suitable for transition areas and best when adjacent to public transportation. It is also appropriate to maintain open space areas as part of conservation efforts.

Illustrative Plans

Two key areas for new mixed-use development would support the increase and potential demand for services in Cranston. Each of these areas has characteristics that could support this type of development:

- They are near or along main access routes to the residential areas,
- They would help meet the expected increase in demand for services as residential development continues, and
- This development would provide substantial improvement to the local tax base.

To illustrate possible development in these areas two key areas were examined to show the relationships of the building footprints, access, and density of potential mixed-use developments. Two mixed-use illustrative options are highlighted:

- Wellington and Elmwood Avenues – Transit Oriented Development;
- Intersection of Phenix Avenue and Route 37 – Village Center.

Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map shows the proposed future land use citywide. There are several new plan components depicted on this map that were not shown on the 1992 Future Land Use Plan. These changes include:

Special Redevelopment Areas: Special Redevelopment Areas are of three types. 1.) Areas in which the City anticipates undertaking redevelopment through mixed-planned development ordinances such as the Elmwood/Wellington industrial corridor, the Cranston Printworks, and the site of the former Trolley Barn; 2.) Areas in which the City believes that the current land use is appropriate but the existing zoning is not appropriate such as the Alpine Country Club, the Cranston Country Club; and 3.) Areas in which the City has identified specific sites where the existing zoning is not appropriate and requires further study prior to an appropriate land use designation is determined. For example, one such property is the residentially zoned property directly south of the Cranston Ice Rink.

Special Redevelopment Areas

Three new districts could accommodate smart growth development. They would include the new zoning for mixed use developments that was described earlier. These districts can be used to encourage density where public services are available

Mixed-use Planned Development – Low Intensity (MPD-L)

This mixed-use zone would be suited for Townhouses, with 1st floor retail (about 20%), and 35'-40' building heights. Suitable for transition areas and improved when adjacent to public transportation.

Sites that could be appropriate as a Special Redevelopment Area (SRA) are identified below:

- Former Ciga-Geigy site
- Elmwood/ Wellington industrial corridor
- Trolley Barn industrial area
- Cranston Print Works
- Alpine Country Club
- Cranston – Johnston Regional School
- Cranston Country Club
- **Phenix Terrace (Del Bonis)**

Land Use Plan Action Program Table 2-4. Summary of the Actions and Responsibilities for this Plan

LU-18	Adopt Mixed Use/ TOD Plans:
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Explore the feasibility of mixed-use development plans for a village center project on public and private land at Phenix Avenue and Route 37 as suggested by conceptual illustration.

Economic Development Element ~

As Cranston moves forward, it still needs to address the traditional economic development goals:

- **Increase the tax base with new private investment in commercial and industrial properties;**
- **Promote emerging industries to maintain local shares of jobs and businesses;**
- **Export new goods and services to regional populations and attract outside money in support of economic development; and,**
- **Create new and better jobs**

Economic Development goals and policies as follows:

ED-14 Target large-scale, smart growth redevelopment opportunities at strategic locations to accommodate mixed-use, transit-oriented development. Focus on:	• Properties at the I-295/Rt. 37 intersection.
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Site Location Requirements

High-quality developments will seek locations that will be attractive to high-rent tenants. In Cranston, such locations will require either large tracts of undeveloped land (distinguishable from older, lower-end properties) or large-scale clearance/renovation of older properties.

Smart Growth

Applying smart growth to economic development strategies could provide multiple benefits to the community. The discussion on smart growth is expanded within the Land Use Element of the Plan, but the three components of development are again presented here.

THE SUITABILITY QUESTION ~

A central theme to the Cranston Comprehensive Plan is:

This Comprehensive Plan has been updated to guide future growth and change in Cranston. This Comprehensive Plan Update lays out the means and methods to create the best possible future for Cranston for the next five years and beyond.

The proposed MPD for The Lodges at Phenix Glen (“The Lodges”) is an upscale, mixed-use development consisting of office, retail and commercial elements combined with a market-rate residential rental community that is consistent with both surrounding land uses and the goals and policies of the Cranston Comprehensive Community Plan.

The proposed MPD includes the following land use allocations:

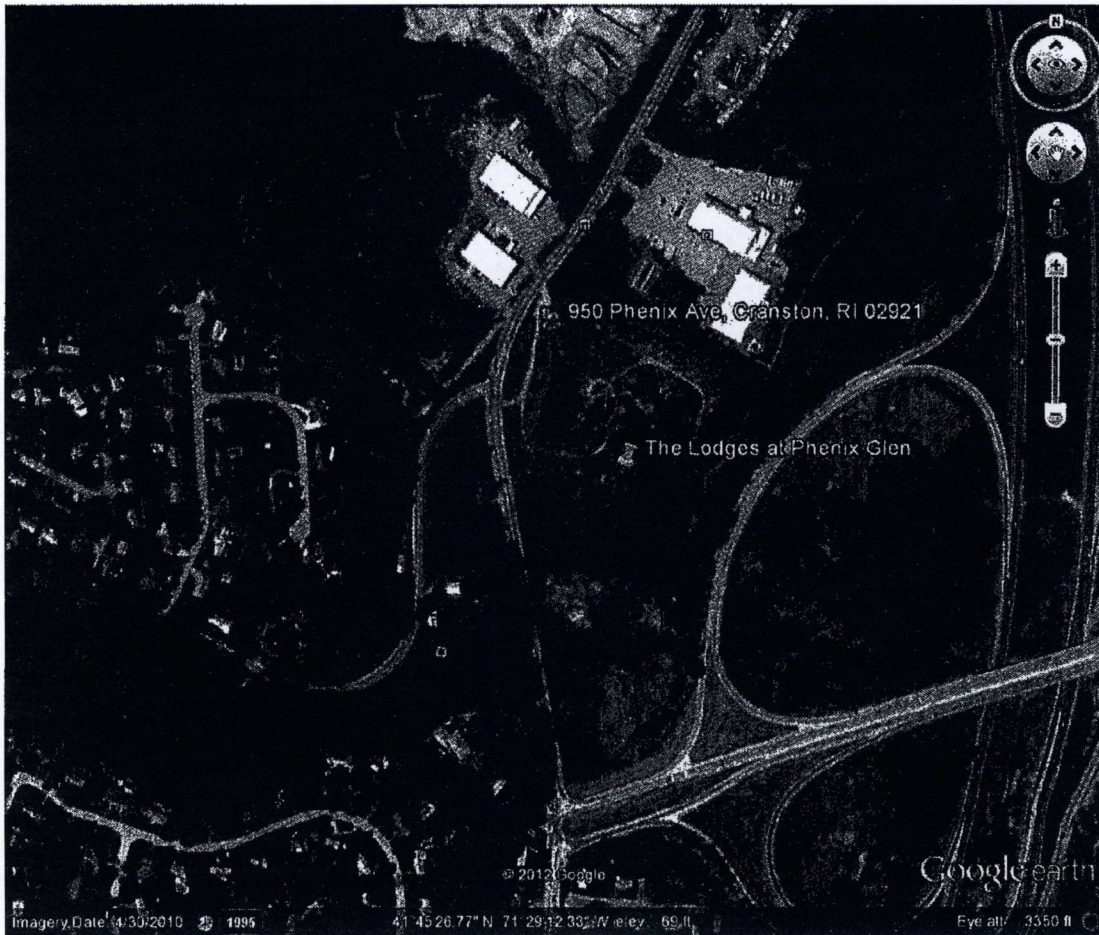
Office/Retail/Commercial Use. The Lodges will feature one (1) office/retail/commercial building along the property’s border with Phenix Avenue. Applicant intends for a mix of commercial uses including without limitation office, retail sale and other commercial uses

Residential Use. The Lodges will feature three (3) residential buildings each containing of 64 units for a total of 192 residential units.

Ancillary Residential Use. The Lodges will feature a resident-only clubhouse of approximately 5,850 square feet.

The surrounding land uses include two (2) municipal ice rinks, a municipal animal shelter, the Cranston Department of Public Works building including the new salt barn, various commercial and industrial uses, Interstate Route 295 and Rhode Island Route P-37, and the PJ Keating Sand and Gravel facility. (See aerial photo below)

The proposed zone change to permit additional mixed use multi-family residential development on this property is an extension of the existing land use pattern in this portion of the City of Cranston.



THE LODGES AT PHENIX GLEN DEVELOPMENT SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

Definition of Commercial/Retail/Service Uses

Applicant envisions “lighter” types of retail, commercial and service uses at the site. Applicant will specifically target users with minimal parking requirements. These uses may include, but not limited to; professional offices, dry cleaners, cobbler, hair/face/nail salon, day spa, convenience store, bank, coffee shop, bakery, specialty and prepared food, child care and specialty gift shops and similar type uses which will benefit from its close proximity to 192 residential units and their easy access and egress for the general neighborhood. A listing of proposed uses is included in the Applicant’s materials.

CONSISTENCY AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE ZONING ORDINANCE ~

The following purposes are taken from the Zoning Ordinance – Article I General provisions and are deemed applicable and germane to the proposed Zoning Map amendment by The Glen, LLC:

17.04.010 - General purposes.

The regulations, zones and districts herein set forth are made in accordance with a comprehensive plan prepared, adopted and as may be amended in accordance with RIGL Section 45-22.2 and shall be designed to address the following purposes.

- A. Promoting the public health, safety, morals and general welfare.
- B. Providing for a range of uses and intensities of use appropriate to the character of the city and reflecting current and expected future needs.
- C. Providing for orderly growth and development which recognizes:
 - 1. The goals and patterns of land use contained in the comprehensive plan of the city adopted pursuant to RIGL Section 45-22.2;
 - 2. The natural characteristics of the land, including its suitability for use based on soil characteristics, topography and susceptibility to surface or groundwater pollution;
 - 3. The values and dynamic nature of coastal and freshwater ponds, the shoreline and freshwater and coastal wetlands;
 - 4. The values of unique or valuable natural resources and features;
 - 5. The availability and capacity of existing and planned public and/or private services and facilities;
 - 6. The need to shape and balance urban and rural development; and
 - 7. The use of innovative development regulations and techniques.
- G. Providing for the protection of public investment in transportation, water, stormwater management systems, sewage treatment and disposal, solid waste treatment and disposal, schools, recreation, public facilities, open space and other public requirements.
- H. Promoting a balance of housing choices, for all income levels and groups, to assure the health, safety and welfare of all citizens and their rights to affordable, accessible, safe and sanitary housing.
- I. Promoting a high level of quality in design in the development of private and public facilities.
- L. Promoting implementation of the comprehensive plan of the city adopted pursuant to RIGL Section 45-22.2.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION ~

It was stated that the express purpose of this Planning Report is to provide a Summary and Conclusion with respect to the Application by The Glen, LLC for a change to the Cranston Zoning Map. This report described the nature of the request by The Glen, LLC to the City and the description of the Zoning District as it exists (A-12), and the zone being requested (MPD). The report then outlined those Recommendation Strategies of the Land Use and Economic Development Elements of the Comprehensive Plan as well as the general goals and policies that were deemed to be germane to the proposed amendment by The Glen, LLC.

Further, the Purposes of the Zoning Ordinance, which were deemed applicable to this application by The Glen, LLC, were presented in this report. These purposes of Zoning mirror those in the Zoning Enabling Act – RIGL – Chapter 45-22.2. A discussion regarding suitability was presented to highlight that the proposed mixed use multi-family development on the property would be in keeping with the current land use pattern of the area.

Finally, the description of the area and uses surrounding the proposed development support the proposed use that would be allowed by this amendment request, namely a mixed use multi-family development as a MPD.

Approval and development of this project will go towards these Objectives of the Comprehensive Community Plan to:

Explore the feasibility of mixed-use development plans for a village center project on public and private land at Phenix Avenue and Route 37

And,

Target large-scale, smart growth redevelopment opportunities at strategic locations to accommodate mixed-use, transit-oriented development.

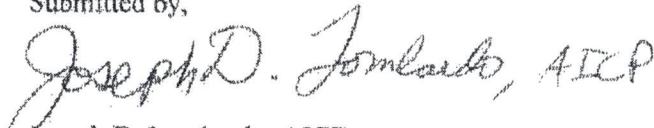
Based on all that has been presented in both the written and oral form, it is the professional opinion of Joseph D. Lombardo, AICP, President of JDL ENTERPRISES that the proposed Zoning Map Amendment by The Glen, LLC is

**CONSISTENT WITH, AND IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE
ZONING ORDINANCE**

AND,

**THE COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN OF
THE CITY OF CRANSTON.**

Submitted by,


Joseph D. Lombardo, AICP

Date: January 2013