

RECOMMENDATION TO THE ZONING BOARD OF REVIEW

JUNE 10, 2020

Application Type

Dimensional Variance

Neighborhood

Elmwood

Applicant

Narragansett Electric Company

Parcel

AP 60 Lot 194

Address

280 Melrose Street

Parcel Size

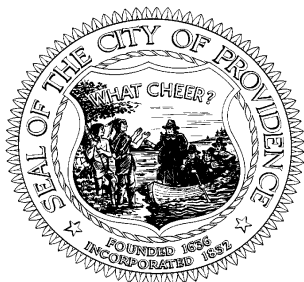
± 683,691 SF

Zoning District

M-1; Historic District Overlay

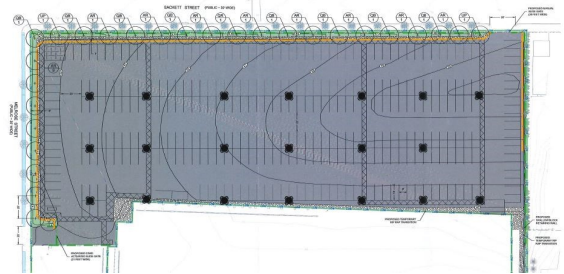
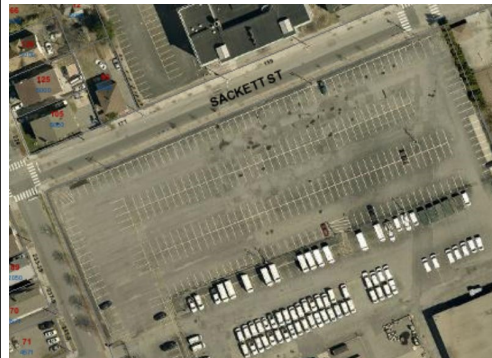
Variance Requested

1. Interior parking lot landscaping
2. Barbed wire fence
3. Nonconforming fence lines



Updated: June 1, 2020

280 MELROSE STREET



Location Map

Proposed development plan

SUMMARY

Project Description

The applicant is seeking dimensional variances in the redevelopment of the employee parking area at the north end of the lot. Relief is sought from the interior parking lot island requirements of Section 1505, and from Sections 1302.I.3. and 2004.C.5. to reconstruct existing perimeter fencing with 3 strands of barbed wire where zero are permitted.

Discussion

The subject property is occupied by a utility company that uses the site for commercial space, vehicle storage, and an operations center. The request for relief applies to 108,400 SF of the lot, which is used for employee parking. The applicant is proposing to resurface this area, which will provide approximately 320 parking spaces.

The applicant is seeking relief from the internal parking lot landscaping requirement which requires that internal landscape islands and additional internal landscaping be provided for parking lots over 20,000 SF. Plans show that the lot will be resurfaced with no internal landscaping. In addition, the applicant seeks to maintain a non-conforming fence with barbed wire as it currently exists.

Based on submitted plans and a discussion with the applicant, the request for relief appears to arise due to the nature of the property. The parking lot has been observed to frequently be at capacity during normal business hours. Per the

applicant, this is due to the number of employees and site activity. Provision of interior landscaping could result in the loss of numerous spaces, which would require vehicles to park offsite and in turn have a negative effect on the surrounding area.

Section 1505 allows for modification to the interior parking requirements under the supervision of the City Forester. The landscaping plans show that the applicant will be making plantings equivalent to the internal parking requirement in the perimeter landscaping strip, exceeding the requirement of one tree per 25 feet.

The applicant seeks to maintain the existing fence with barbed wire. According to the applicant, it is necessary to deter theft of equipment, which has previously occurred. The DPD would not object to maintaining the fence as proposed as the applicant is not proposing to expand its size, and it would be similar to what currently exists.

Recommendation

Based on the foregoing discussion, the DPD recommends that the requested relief be granted.