

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
Application for Master Plan Review of Major Land Development Project
Application for Special Use Permit and Use Variance

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Owner: Greenville Realtors, LLC
Applicant: Marwan Eieadah
Property: 3 Greenville Road, North Smithfield, RI 02896
Plat 9, Lot 435
Zone: Business Neighborhood (BN)
Project: Convenience Store, Drive-Thru, & Gas Station
Engineer: Civil Design Group, LLC

Please accept this Project Narrative submitted in connection with the Application for Master Plan Review of Major Land Development Project (“LDP Application”) and Application for Special Use Permit and Use Variance (“Zoning Application”) (collectively, the “Applications”) submitted by Greenville Realtors, LLC and Marwan Eieadah (“Applicant/Owner”) concerning the property located at 3 Greenville Road, North Smithfield, RI 02896 (Plat 9, Lot 435) in the Business Neighborhood (BN) zoning district.

Applicant/Owner requests Unified Development Review of the Applications pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-24-46.4 and the Town of North Smithfield Zoning Code and Development and Subdivision Regulations.

I. Relief Requested

Unified Development Review. Applicant/Owner seeks unified development review of its Master Plan for the Major Land Development Project located at 3 Greenville Road (Plat 9, Lot 435) in the Business Neighborhood (BN) zone.

Waivers. Pursuant to Section 7-2, § 340-6.9, and R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-23-62, Applicant/Owner seeks waivers from the following design standards of the Zoning Code: § 340-4.8.1.A.1 (Dumpster Setback), § 340-6.8.C.2.b.2 (Landscape Buffer Along Streets), § 340-6.8.C.2.b.6 (Tree and Shrub Planting Spacing), § 340-6.8.C.2.b.7 (Parking Location Relative to Building), § 340-6.8.D (Landscape Design Standards), and § 340-6.8.F (Architectural Design Standards).

Special Use Permit. Applicant/Owner requests a special use permit pursuant to § 340-3.7 of the Zoning Code to allow signage that exceeds the quantity, size, and dimensional limits set forth in § 340-4.26(A), (B), (D), and (J) of the Zoning Code.

Use Variance. Drive-thru service windows are not permitted in the BN district. § 340 Attachment 2 (District Use Regulations Table). Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-24-41(c), Applicant/Owner requests a use variance to allow a drive-thru service window as an accessory to the proposed convenience store.

II. Project Overview

The Project proposes the construction of a convenience store, drive-thru, and gasoline station at 3 Greenville Road, an approximately 41,499 square foot single lot of record, identified as Assessor's Plat 9, Lot 435, and situated in the Business Neighborhood (BN) zoning district (the "Property"). As further depicted on the site plans entitled "Master Plan Set for Proposed Marketplace, Drive Thru & Gas Station" prepared by Civil Design Group, LLC and dated July 15, 2025 (the "Plans"), the Applicant/Owner proposes to develop the Property with a 3,400 square foot convenience store, a drive-thru window for food and beverage service, and a gasoline station with a canopy covering the fuel pump area (the "Project"). The Project also includes associated infrastructure, lighting, landscaping, lighting, parking, and signage.

III. Application for Master Plan Review of Major Land Development Project

A. Standard

Under § 340-6.1 of the Zoning Ordinance, the development plan review requirements are designed to assure safe, orderly and harmonious development of property in a manner that shall: (1) Promote public health, safety and general welfare; (2) Provide suitable safeguard and consideration for land use and site and architectural design that is compatible with adjacent districts and uses; (3) Permit development to an extent commensurate with the availability and capacity of public facilities and services and promote safe circulation of traffic throughout the Town; (4) Preserve and protect natural, historic and cultural resources and features and encourage consideration of environmental impacts and mitigative measures; (5) Encourage the provision of open space and public access and give due consideration to the quality and design of landscaping; (6) Encourage adequate consideration for the proper control of erosion, surface and subsurface drainage and pollution; (7) Facilitate orderly and harmonious site development including safe and convenient provision and design of egress and ingress, off-street parking, truck loading, internal circulation, emergency access, refuse disposal, outdoor storage, signing and lighting; (8) Comply with the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan, as amended.

The following required findings shall be the basis for development plan review approval: (1) the design of the proposed development will be consistent with the purposes set forth above; (2) the design of the proposed development will be consistent with the goals of the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan and complies with the Zoning Code; and (3) any conditions or restrictions that are necessary to ensure that these findings have been met have been incorporated into the vote of approval.

B. Justification for Approval

Pursuant to § 340-6.1 of the Zoning Code, the Applicant/Owner submits that the proposed Master Plan and Land Development Project satisfies the applicable standard:

1. The public convenience and welfare will be served. The Project will provide a full-service retail fueling station and convenience store at a prominent location in the Town's commercial corridor, offering increased access to essential goods and services for local residents and travelers.

2. The Project will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare. Applicant/Owner hopes to provide fuel, food and other basic services to the North Smithfield community in a convenient and affordable manner that improves the well-being of all customers to the site. Additionally, the Project has been designed in compliance with local and state development standards, including environmental protection, access management, and fire safety codes.

3. The Project will be compatible with neighboring uses and will not adversely affect the general character of the area. The BN zoning district is intended to support small-scale neighborhood commercial uses. The Project aligns with this intent and complements nearby business and mixed-use properties.

4. The Project will not create a nuisance in the neighborhood, nor hinder or endanger vehicular or pedestrian movement. The proposed site plan includes adequate circulation, curb cuts, and internal traffic controls. A professional traffic engineering evaluation will confirm that the Project does not cause undue congestion or hazard.

5. The Project will have adequate provision made for water service, sanitary sewage disposal, and fire protection. The site will be served by public water and sewer systems, and all construction will meet or exceed applicable fire protection requirements.

6. The Project will be compatible with the Comprehensive Community Plan of the Town of North Smithfield. The Project promotes development and expands commercial services along a key corridor, consistent with the Town's goals of enhancing economic opportunity and local tax revenue while preserving community character.

C. Request for Waivers

Pursuant to § 340-6.9 of the Zoning Code and Section 7-2 of Article VII of the Land Development and Subdivision Regulations, the Applicant/Owner requests waivers from certain design standards imposed by the Land Development and Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Ordinance. The Request for Waivers is set forth in detail in a memorandum attached hereto as Exhibit A.

IV. Zoning Application for Special Use Permit and Use Variance

A. Special Use Permit – Signage (§ 340-4.26)

1. Relief Requested

Pursuant to § 340-4.26 of the North Smithfield Zoning Ordinance, signage in the BN zoning district is subject to specific limitations. The Project includes signage that exceeds the strict limits of this section in several respects:

§ 340-4.26(A): Permits up to two signs per principal building, including only one freestanding sign. Applicant/Owner proposes multiple signs, including one freestanding sign, two building signs, and one awning sign on the fuel pump canopy.

§ 340-4.26(B): Allows total area of signage based on the building's frontage on a given street where a building fronts on two streets. Applicant/Owner seeks to utilize two street frontages (if applicable) to calculate total allowable signage.

§ 340-4.26(D): Permits freestanding signage up to 12 square feet and 8 feet high and permits up to 20 square feet of wall-mounted signage. Applicant/Owner's proposal includes two wall-mounted signs, one on the side of the building facing Greenville Road (10' x 2' and 20 sq. ft.) and the other on the front of the building facing Smithfield Road (8' x 1.5' and 12 sq. ft.), one freestanding sign (12' x 4' and 36 sq. ft.), and one canopy sign on the fuel pump canopy (8' x 2' and 16 sq. ft.).

§ 340-4.26(J): Permits 6 square feet of awning or canopy signs. Brand or trade name signs on a fuel pump canopy or elsewhere are not factored into the quantity of allowable signage, so long as the total area of such signs does not exceed 30 square feet. § 340-4.23(K)(4). Applicant/Owner's proposal includes an awning sign on the front of the building facing Smithfield Road (8' x 1.5' and 12 sq. ft.), and one canopy sign on the fuel pump canopy (8' x 2' and 16 sq. ft.). The freestanding sign, as proposed, is 12' x 4' and 36 sq. ft.

Applicant/Owner requests a special use permit pursuant to § 340-3.7 of the Zoning Code to allow signage that exceeds the quantity, size, and dimensional limits set forth in § 340-4.26(A), (B), (D), and (J).

2. Standard

To accomplish the general purposes of this chapter, certain of the uses requiring a special use permit under the provisions of this chapter need further consideration because they are somewhat unique, highly specialized, or often present difficult zoning administration or enforcement problems. The effects of such uses on the surrounding environment often cannot be foreseen until a specific site has been proposed. It is also characteristic that such uses often require large land areas. The following supplemental regulations and standards have been designed in order to achieve more compatibility between such uses and neighboring

development. The Board may also impose additional requirements in the public interest to cover circumstances unique to the selected site.

3. Justification for Special Use Permit

The requested signage exceeds the strict dimensional and numerical limitations of the Zoning Code but remains appropriate in the context of the proposed use and the surrounding area. The Project is situated along a major commercial corridor, where visibility and clear identification of services are critical to customer safety and business viability. Given the dual-access frontage and the multi-use nature of the Project (fueling station, convenience store, and drive-thru), multiple and slightly larger signs are reasonably necessary to inform and direct motorists safely and efficiently.

The proposed signage will be professionally designed and installed to ensure aesthetic compatibility with the architecture and character of the building and surrounding uses. It will not cause visual clutter, impair the visual environment, or obstruct visibility for pedestrians or vehicles. The signage layout has been developed in consultation with design professionals and in compliance with general principles of traffic safety, wayfinding, and scale proportionality.

Accordingly, the requested special use permit meets the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance by promoting public safety through effective traffic direction and site identification, providing signage scaled appropriately to the size and mixed-use nature of the Project, preserving aesthetic character through coordinated design; and ensuring compatibility with other nearby commercial developments in the BN zone.

B. Use Variance – Drive-Thru Window (§ 340 Attachment 2)

1. Relief Requested

Drive-thru service windows are not permitted in the BN district. § 340 Attachment 2 (Use Regulations Table). Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-24-41(c), Applicant/Owner requests a use variance to allow a drive-thru service window as an accessory to the proposed convenience store as described above.

2. Standard

In granting a variance, the Zoning Board of Review shall require that evidence to the satisfaction of the following standards be entered into the record of the proceedings: (1) That the hardship from which the applicant seeks relief is due to the unique characteristics of the subject land or structure and not to the general characteristics of the surrounding area; and is not due to a physical or economic disability of the applicant; (2) That the hardship is not the result of any prior action of the applicant and does not result primarily from the desire of the applicant to realize greater financial gain; (3) That the granting of the requested variance will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of this chapter or the Comprehensive Plan upon which this chapter is based; (4) That the relief to be

granted is the least relief necessary; (5) That granting the variance requested will not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this chapter to other lands, structures, or buildings in the same district. § 340-5.20.

3. Justification for Use Variance

The drive-thru service window proposed as part of the convenience store use is not permitted by right in the BN zoning district. A use variance, however, is necessary and justified for the following reasons:

1. Unique Characteristics of the Property. The Property is a corner lot located at an intersection. Its high visibility and accessibility make it particularly suitable for a service-oriented commercial use that incorporates a drive-thru. These characteristics are unique compared to other parcels in the BN zone and justify a use that accommodates pass-through vehicular access.

2. No Prior Action or Self-Created Hardship. The hardship is not the result of any prior subdivision or development activity by the Applicant. There has been none to date. The request for use variance stems from the need to provide a commercially viable use that aligns with the nature of the business and customer service expectations and supports the Town's goal of fostering economic activity in appropriate locations.

3. Character and Comprehensive Plan Compatibility: The use variance will not alter the general character of the area. In fact, the Project is consistent with surrounding commercial and mixed-use properties and will contribute positively to the district's vitality. The proposed use supports development and access to services, aligning with the Comprehensive Plan's economic development and land use goals.

4. Least Relief Necessary: The variance request is narrowly tailored to allow only the drive-thru component as an accessory to the convenience store. No other prohibited uses are proposed. The drive-thru layout is compact and designed to minimize traffic conflicts, noise, and visual impacts.

5. No Special Privilege: The Applicant is not seeking special treatment, but rather relief consistent with other similarly situated commercial properties that offer drive-thru service when appropriately located and designed. The relief is necessary to ensure functional and economic viability of the site and does not confer an unfair advantage.

Accordingly, the proposed drive-thru use is a reasonable and compatible use of the Property, and the requested use variance satisfies all elements of the legal standard under § 340-5.20 and R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-24-41(c).

V. Conclusion

The Applicant/Owner requests that the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Review grant the necessary relief outlined above through the Unified Development Review process. The Project is thoughtfully designed to provide tangible public benefits while complying with applicable development standards wherever feasible. The Applicant/Owner looks forward to working collaboratively with the Town throughout this process.