



**TOWN OF COVENTRY, RI  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

## STAFF REPORT

<b>Project Name:</b>	<b>Bucks Horn Meadow</b>
<b>Plan Type:</b>	Major Subdivision / Residential Cluster Development
<b>Plan Review Phase:</b>	Final Plan
<b>Owner/Applicant:</b>	Padula Builders, Inc.
<b>Address:</b>	Flat River Road
<b>Plat / Lot / Zone:</b>	<b>AP 315 Lots 80 &amp; 95</b> <b>Zone RR-5 Lot Size 53.2 acres</b>
<b>Existing Use:</b>	Vacant Land
<b>Proposed Use:</b>	7-Lot Residential Subdivision
<b>Description:</b>	The applicant proposes to construct a 7-lot cluster subdivision on a 53.2-acre site and dedicate 37.8 acres as open space.

### I. PROJECT BACKGROUND

This matter comes before the Planning Commission as a Final Plan Application and Bond Resetting for a proposed 7-Lot Cluster Subdivision with street creation on the 53.2-acre project site. The proposed lots range from 1.62 to 2.31 acres in size. 37.8 acres of the site will be dedicated as open space, per the open space calculations provided on the proposed conditions plans (see sheet 3). The subdivision will have access to Flat River Road via a new roadway ending in a cul-de-sac. Recall that the Planning Commission granted Preliminary Plan and Bond Setting approval for this project at the April 24, 2024 hearing, with decision signed and recorded by the Chair on May 13, 2024.

#### Preliminary Plan Conditions of Approval

This Final Plan application requires Planning Commission review and approval to amend a condition of approval and reset the bond for drainage improvements that have not yet been completed. The Preliminary Plan decision included eight (8) Conditions of Approval, seven of which have been addressed or will be addressed prior to Final Plan endorsement and recording:

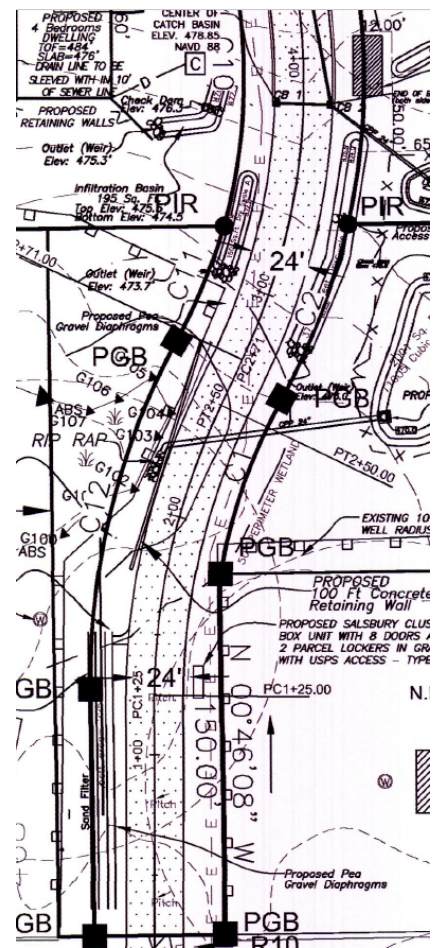
- Condition #1 – The concrete fire cistern is shown on the Final Plan (sheet 4) adjacent to Proposed Lot 7. The applicant has received approval from the Fire Marshal for the Western Coventry Fire District for the fire cistern, via letter dated January 11, 2026.
- Condition #2 – The applicant’s Soil Erosion and Sediment Control (SESC) Application and Plan were approved by the Town Engineer on January 30, 2026. The applicant paid the associated fee on February 5, 2026.

- Condition #3 – The applicant submitted the Stormwater Operation and Maintenance Management Plan, dated April 30, 2024.
- Condition #4 – The applicant has submitted drafts of all legal documentation, including the Homeowner’s Association (HOA) By-Laws and draft Restrictive and Protective Covenants, which will be subject to further review by the Administrative Officer and Town Solicitor prior to Final Plan endorsement and recording.
- Condition #5 – The applicant proposes to install a cluster mailbox unit at the entrance to the proposed subdivision, adjacent to AP 315, Lot 81.
- Condition #6 – The applicant paid the 2% inspection fee of \$7,542.44 based on the initial bond amount of #377,122.00, with check dated January 5, 2026.
- Condition #7 – The applicant has submitted an Administrative Subdivision Plan that will be approved and recorded prior to the Final Plan endorsement and recording.

**Required Improvements**

Condition #8 states that “Per Article VII(B)(1) of the Coventry Subdivision Regulations, the applicant has stated their intent to complete the required improvements prior to the Planning Commission’s endorsement of the final plan. *All work shall be completed prior to any endorsement or recording.* All construction shall be inspected and approved under the direction of the Town Engineer. Inspections shall be made at the required stages of construction as specified in Article XIII. All inspection fees shall be paid prior to any construction. Upon completion of all required improvements, the Administrative Officer shall certify in writing of such completion, and a copy shall be provided to the applicant upon request. The final plat shall be endorsed by the Planning Commission and recorded as provided in Article VI, at which time the lots within the subdivision may be transferred or sold.” [emphasis added].

While most of the public and private improvements, including the new roadway, retaining walls, and drainage improvements, have already been constructed, there are roadside drainage features that have not yet been completed (see cropped site plan). The applicant now intends to complete the construction of the remaining roadside drainage features after Final Plan recording and endorsement, inconsistent with condition #8 above. As a result, the Final Plan decision will require an amended condition of approval for the adjusted bond, subject to Planning Commission review and approval (rather than proceed administratively). The draft conditions are provided following the findings of fact and staff recommendation



below. The applicant submitted a Certificate of Conformance for the completed infrastructure work on April 7, 2026, which has been reviewed and approved by the Town Engineer.

### **Bond Resetting**

The Town Engineer has reviewed the original bond estimate and provided an adjusted bond estimate for the remaining drainage improvements, inclusive of a 20% maintenance guarantee, at \$152,784.40. This amount will be retained as part of the Bond Resetting process. The bond is further discussed in the Town Engineer’s memo, dated April 22, 2026. Staff therefore recommends that the Planning Commission reset the bond at \$152,784.40. The inspection fee of \$7,542.44 for the infrastructure work completed prior to Final Plan submittal was paid in January 2026, and no further inspection fees will be required.

## **II. MAJOR SUBDIVISION**

### **Findings of Fact**

Staff has conducted an orderly, thorough, and expeditious technical review of this Preliminary Plan Minor Subdivision application for conformance with required standards set forth in RIGL Section 45-23-60 (this project is vested under old state law), as well as in the Town of Coventry’s Subdivision and 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 community plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies.”*

1. The proposed subdivision is consistent with the Town of Coventry’s Land Use Plan designation of Very Low Density Residential.
2. The Comprehensive Plan identified the Residential Cluster Development tool as a means to preserve open space (D.4-5 and D.7-9) and to protect habitat (D.6-18).

*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.”*

3. The proposed development meets the dimensional requirements of the Residential Cluster Development tool given the underlying RR-5 Zone. The proposal is therefore in conformity with the Zoning Ordinance and no variances are needed.
4. The proposal will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the Coventry Zoning Code.

*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 **final** plan, with all required conditions for approval.” (emphasis added)*

5. No significant environmental impacts are anticipated.
6. The Rhode Island Natural Heritage Areas map shows the subject parcel does not fall within a Natural Heritage Area overlay.

*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.”*

7. The proposed development 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.”*

8. The subject parcel will have adequate permanent physical access to a public right-of-way (Flat River Road).
9. The proposed development provides for safe and adequate local circulation for vehicular traffic.

### **Subdivision Recommendation**

Staff finds this proposal consistent with the standards for required findings of fact set forth in RIGL Section 45-23-60 as well as with the Town of Coventry’s Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. Staff therefore recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the documented findings of fact and **approve** the Final Plan application, subject to the conditions denoted below.

### **Conditions of Approval**

1. The applicant shall follow the Town of Coventry Inspection Procedures Document dated November 10, 2025 during the construction process.
2. The bond for the remaining improvements shall be set at \$152,784.40. The inspection fee of \$7,542.44 for the infrastructure work completed prior to Final Plan submittal was paid in January 2026, and no further inspection fees will be required.

3. The applicant shall complete the construction of all required drainage improvements, including the incomplete roadside drainage features, and submit an associated Certificate of Conformance for those improvements prior to receiving the first building permit Certificate of Occupancy for this project.