



TOWN OF COVENTRY, RI
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

STAFF REPORT

Project Name:	Pelletier Plat
Plan Type:	Unified Development Review (Minor Subdivision w/ associated Dimensional Variances)
Plan Review Phase:	Preliminary Plan
Owner/Applicant:	Richard Pelletier
Address:	6 Acres of Pine Road
Plat / Lot / Zone:	AP 318 Lot 60 Zone RR-2 Lot Size 3.71 acres
Existing Use:	Single-family residential
Proposed Use:	Single-family residential with additional buildable lot
Description:	Applicant proposes to subdivide a 3.71-acre parcel into two lots, leaving one existing single-family dwelling on a 2.6-acre lot and creating a new 1.11-acre lot from the remainder. The applicant is seeking two zoning variances for minimum lot size and required frontage and the project will therefore be heard via Unified Development Review.

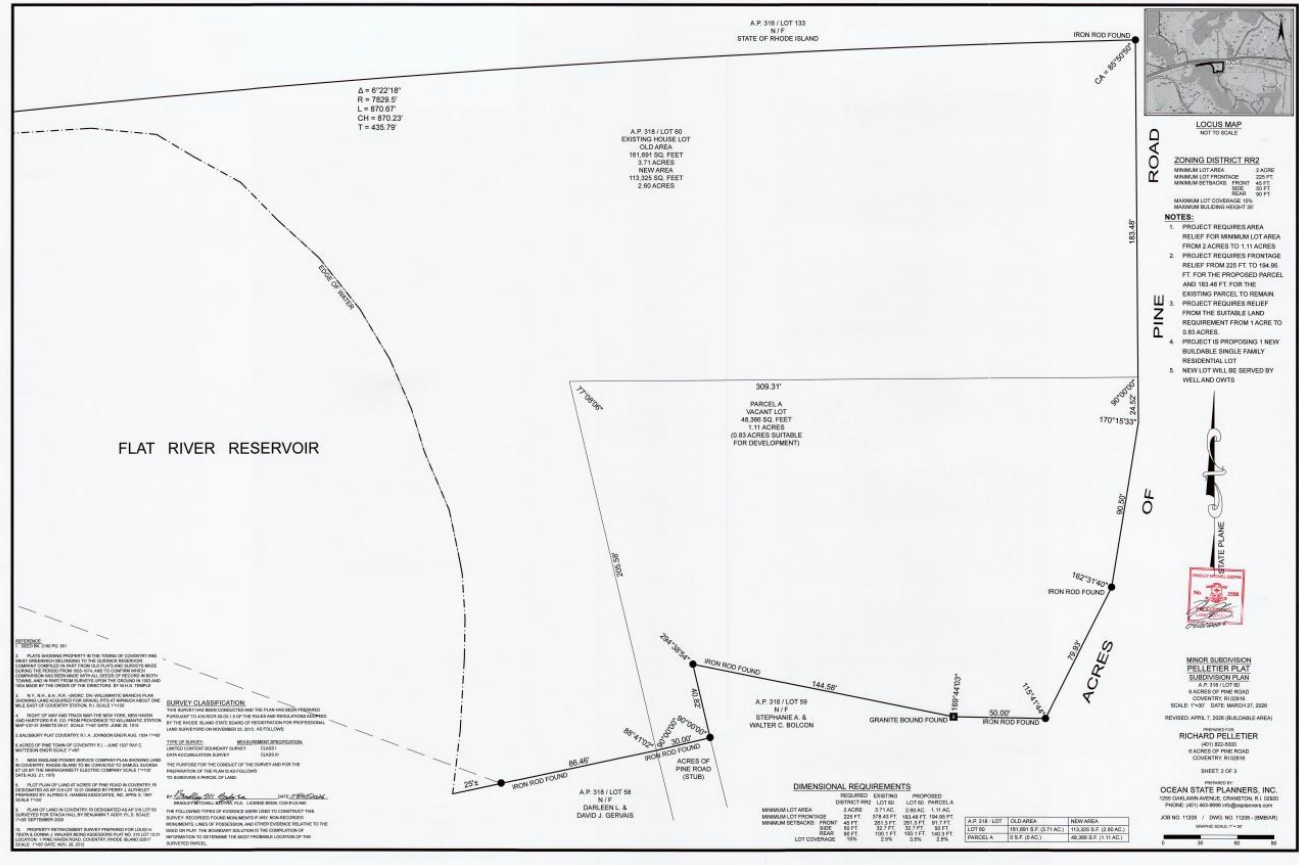
I. PROJECT INFORMATION

Background and Existing Conditions

This item will be reviewed at the Preliminary Plan stage for a Unified Development Review of a proposed Minor Subdivision. The 3.71-acre subject parcel currently consists of a mix of wooded land, empty space, and one single family home in the northwestern portion of the property. The parcel is zoned RR-2 (Rural Residential), as are the surrounding abutters. There are some wetlands on the property on the westernmost portion of the lot bordering the nearby Flat River Reservoir.

Proposed Conditions

The applicant is proposing to subdivide the aforementioned lot into two lots, leaving one existing single-family house on a 2.60-acre lot, and creating a new 1.11-acre vacant lot from the remainder, referred to as Parcel A.



Zoning

The applicant is seeking zoning relief from Table 6-6 - RR-2 Dimensional Regulations for substandard minimum lot area, as Parcel A will have 1.11 acres, where 2 acres is required. The applicant is also seeking zoning relief from Table 6-6 - RR-2 Dimensional Regulations for substandard frontage on both parcels, as the existing parcel will have 183.48' of frontage and Parcel A will have 194.95' of frontage, where 225' is required. It should be noted that there is a 30' stub on Acres of Pine Road towards the southernmost portion of the property. This stub is considered eligible frontage, but was not counted in the applicant's frontage calculations in this circumstance.

Waivers

The applicant is also requesting a waiver from the Subdivision and Land Use Regulations, specifically Article III Section C-1 as Parcel A will have 0.83 acres of land suitable for development where 1 acre is required per Subdivision Regulations. Land suitable for development is generally recognized as all land not including wetlands, land located within zone A as shown on the FEMA flood insurance maps, street

allowance, existing easements, and land containing steep slopes. The Planning Commission will decide on the approval of this waiver at the April 29, 2026 meeting.

Interdepartmental Review and Comments

Please see the attached report from the Technical Review Committee (dated April 20, 2026) for interdepartmental comments on this application.

II. DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE

Findings of Fact

The applicant provided Planning staff with the following answers to the findings of fact for the Dimensional Variance component of this application for conformance with required standards set forth in RIGL Section 45-24-41, and Staff added the following considerations:

RIGL § 45-24-41. General provisions – Variances. (d)(1) states, “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, excepting those physical disabilities addressed in § 45-24-30(a)(16)”

- Applicant provided the following answers: Applicant seeks to subdivide a lot of 3.71-acres, not for financial gain, but to provide a single-family house for his daughter and son-in-law. This parcel is oversized for the area, and is less than a third of an acre from being large enough to divide by-right. Furthermore, this project fronts on Johnson’s Pond, subjecting its area to determination of the waterline.
- Staff added the following considerations: The subject parcel is shaped rather uniquely compared to the surrounding lots, of which most have substandard lot area.

RIGL § 45-24-41. General provisions – Variances. (d)(2) states, “That the hardship is not the result of any prior action of the applicant”

- Applicant provided the following answers: The Applicant has made no prior effort to subdivide the land.
- Staff added the following considerations: The hardship is not due to any prior action of the applicant because they did not create the unique shape and size of the subject parcel.

RIGL § 45-24-41. General provisions – Variances. (d)(3) states, “That the granting of the requested variance will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the zoning ordinance or the comprehensive plan upon which the ordinance is based”

- Applicant provided the following answers: The requested variance will create two lots that better match the characteristics and dimensions of the surrounding area.

- Staff added the following considerations: This subdivision has no development component at this time. The applicant later intends to construct one single-family house for a family member. This impact will be minimal. The existing trees along Acres of Pine Road will be protected through a 50' no-cut buffer.

RIGL § 45-24-41. General provisions – Variances. (d)(4) states, “In granting a dimensional variance, that the hardship suffered by the owner of the subject property if the dimensional variance is not granted amounts to more than a mere inconvenience, meaning that relief sought is minimal to a reasonable enjoyment of the permitted use to which the property is proposed to be devoted. The fact that a use may be more profitable or that a structure may be more valuable after the relief is granted is not grounds for relief. The zoning board of review, or, [planning board] in unified development review, has the power to grant dimensional variances where the use is permitted by special-use permit.”

- Applicant provided the following answers: The relief granted is the least relief required to divide and site this parcel.
- Staff added the following considerations: The relief from the required frontage and minimum lot area is minimal to a reasonable enjoyment of the permitted use because it is impossible for the applicant to subdivide the parcel without provoking a variance for at least one lot, given the limited parameters of the existing frontage and lot size. In addition, the new lot would, at some point, host a single family dwelling which is an allowed use in the RR-2 zone.

Variance Recommendation

Staff finds this proposal consistent with the standards for required Dimensional Variance findings of fact set forth in RIGL Section 45-24-41. Staff therefore recommends that the Planning Commission adopt the documented findings of fact and **approve** the Dimensional Variance application with a condition that the applicant receive approval of its Preliminary Plan – Minor Subdivision application.

III. MINOR 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, 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 Rural Residential.

2. Significant cultural, historic, or natural features that contribute to the attractiveness of the community have not been identified on site.

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. This Preliminary Plan Minor Subdivision approval is conditioned upon obtaining Dimensional Variances for substandard frontage and substandard lot size, and must maintain compliance with such decisions.
4. Aside from the noted Dimensional Variance, the subdivision will comply with all other provisions of 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 **final** plan, with all required conditions for approval.” (emphasis added)*

5. This finding pertains specifically to the final plan; however, no significant environmental impacts are anticipated.

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.”

6. The proposed subdivision 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.
7. The applicant is seeking a waiver from Subdivision and Land Use Regulations, proposing 0.83 acres suitable for development where 1 acre is required.

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. Both proposed parcels will have adequate permanent physical access to a public right-of-way through substandard lot frontage on Acres of Pine Road. It should also be noted that there is a 30-foot street-stub of Acres of Pine Road on the South side of the subject parcel which could provide access.

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 Preliminary Plan application, subject to the conditions denoted below.

Conditions of approval

1. Preliminary Plan approval is conditioned upon strict adherence to the associated Dimensional Variance Application as presented and approved.
2. The applicant shall add a 50-foot no-cut buffer across the full length of the subject parcel's Acres of Pine frontage for the Final Plan submission. This should not be understood to prohibit the creation of a driveway to serve future development.
3. Appropriate state and local permits will be required at Final Plan stage.
4. The following items will be required upon submittal of a building permit application: (1) site plan showing the proposed structures comply with zoning code, (2) approval from the Central Coventry Fire District, and (3) proposed OWTS and wells to support the new structure.