



City of Havre de Grace

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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING STAFF REPORT Planning Commission – December 18, 2025

Permit No. 2026-231
Project: Preliminary Subdivision / Minor Subdivision, 5-lots
Applicant: Robert Steeves, BSLS / KJA, LLC / Clark Turner, Trademark Custom Homes
Location: 121 Saint John Street
Tax Map: 601 / PO Parcel 0987
Area: 1.49 acres with additional +/- 0.18 acres being acquired for 1.67 acres total
Zoning: RB (Residential Business)



I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION - §173-15C(3)

Site Description

The Subject Property is currently consisting of a vacant 25,000 square foot commercial building/warehouse and associated parking areas that are proposed to be demolished and devoid of forest. It is bounded to the North by lots containing condominiums along Seneca / Pointe Way and office buildings along Pennington Avenue, on the West along Saint John Street are mixed uses, to the South along Congress Avenue is open space and to the East is a lot with a private residence and the Chesapeake Bay. The Subject Property is located within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area (CBCA) and within the “Old Town” section of the City, which is predominately residential neighborhoods with a mix of residential housing types and business/office uses throughout.

II. Applicants Request

The Applicant is requesting approval of a Preliminary Subdivision / Minor Subdivision Plan in accordance with Chapter 173 of the City Code for 5-lots within the RB Zoning District per §205-26B(1) of the Zoning Code to construct approximately 65’ x 34’ single-family detached (SFD) dwellings identified as Seneca Shores with associated decks, driveways, porches and attached 2 car garages, in addition to a public sidewalk along Saint John Street.

III. Analysis

Environmental Features

With respect to environmental features, there are no known areas of significant habitat for rare, threatened or endangered species on site. However, the site does contain 100-year and 500-year floodplains to the northeast, adjacent to the Chesapeake Bay, as seen on the Firmette. The parcel is located in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area; see §173-9 CBCA section below for more information.

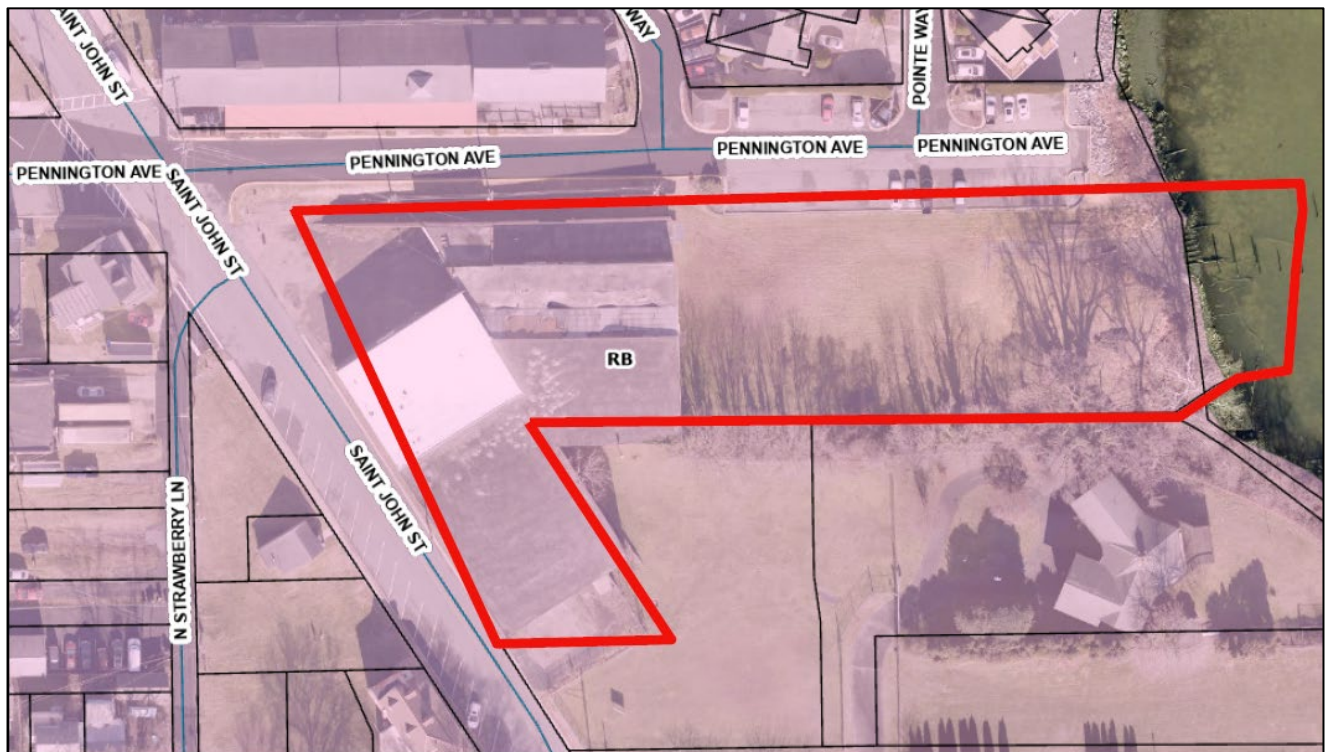


Zoning:

The Property is zoned RB/Residential Business and is comprised almost entirely of the older sections of the City. Most of it lies within the City's recognized National Historic Register District (NRHD). It is diverse in character, containing the downtown commercial area, a large residential component of single-family and multifamily dwellings, and the intensely developed area (IDA) of the City's Chesapeake Bay Critical Area waterfront, as stated in §205-26 of the Zoning Code. “Single Family Detached” uses are a permitted use per §205-27B(1) of the Zoning Code and defined under §205-13 “Definitions” of the City Code.

Land Uses Within the Neighborhood

Direction	Zoning	Land Use
North	RB	Single Family / Office
South	RB	Commercial
East	RB	Single Family / Open Space
West	RB	Mixed Use



IV. ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the City Code, the Departments of Planning and Public Works shall make a final determination on the following prior to submittal of the Preliminary Subdivision Plan and permitting issuance.

§2-7 Schools

The City’s Adequate Public Facilities (APF) ordinance, [§2-7B\(1\)](#) states, “all approvals of residential single-family subdivision plans and site plans for multifamily development shall be

*subject to findings of adequate school capacity based on the following....Preliminary subdivision plans exceeding **five lots** and site plans for multifamily residential developments exceeding five dwelling units...*” Since the proposed subdivision is 5-lots for SFD, APF for schools is exempt and does not apply.

The public schools serving this project are Havre de Grace Elementary School and Havre de Grace Middle/High School. Havre de Grace Elementary School is currently operating at 111% capacity and the Havre de Grace Middle/High School is currently operating at 90% capacity, adjacent Elementary School, Roye-Williams, is currently operating at 64% capacity, per the Harford County 2024 Public School Enrollment Capacity Report. APF, if applicable, would be met for elementary schools by utilizing adjacent elementary school capacity per §2-7B(1)(a&b) of the APFO.

§2-8 Sewerage and Water

The Department of Public Works has reviewed the plan in accordance with Chapter 2 and determined infrastructure and utilities already exist. See December 3, 2025 DPW APFO letter. Any such use would be served by existing public water, sewer, fire and police protection services.

§2-9 Roads

The Traffic Impact Study / Traffic Impact Analysis (TIS/TIA) is not required for the property, since total daily trip generation projections will be below 249 per [§2-9A\(1\)\(a\)](#). The proposal will utilize the existing road Saint John Street.

V. ASSOCIATED DEPARTMENT PLAN APPROVALS

The following plans are required to be submitted in conjunction with or concurrently to the Preliminary Subdivision Plan and be approved by the Department of Planning and/or Public Works.

Chapter 78 – Floodplain Management Regulations

The property does contain 0.810 acres of 100-year and 500-year floodplains to the northeast, as seen on the attached map and the Firmette of Zone AE. The proposed development is not occurring within this floodplain area and not subject to additional requirements nor restrictions.

Chapter 81 - Forest Conservation Plan

Pursuant to §81-5 and §173-15C(4), a Forest Stand Delineation (FSD) shall be submitted and approved by the Department of Planning followed by a Preliminary-FSD for review and preliminary approval prior to submittal of the preliminary subdivision plan. Approval of a FSD is valid for five (5) years.

The Subject Property is 1.67 acres or 72,745 square feet and within the CBCA-IDA overlay and therefore, not subject to FCA requirements per §81-3B(2) of City Code. Moreso, the Subject Property does not contain any forest per FCA definition on site, there is no proposed cutting or clearing of trees and other woody plants and no existing specimen trees.

Chapter 102 – Sustainable Landscaping Plan

Pursuant to §102-3, (Ord. 1177 - as amended) & (Ord. 1193) a preliminary landscape plan shall be submitted concurrently with the preliminary subdivision plan application and be approved by the Department of Planning.

As stated in §102-3B Scope, “To the extent possible, and consistent with this section, properties being redeveloped shall meet the landscaping requirements of this chapter, as approved by the Director of Planning.” The application is a redevelopment within the meaning of 102-3B. However, the application is not proposing any new streets or parking areas subject to §102-8 street trees. Thus, while a formal sealed landscaping plan is not required for this application, the Director of Planning will be requesting the Applicants to install street trees along Saint John Street as approved by the Director and consistent with the plant material requirements of section 102-7.

Moreso, there are no existing trees on the Subject Property subject to additional preservation requirements and/or protection nor do any specimen trees exist and confirmed by Department of Planning Staff on November 4, 2025 and stated in the approved S-FSD.

Chapter 169 – Stormwater Management Plans

In accordance with §169-5 and 169-19, stormwater management plans are approved by the Departments of Planning and Public Works.

The Department of Public Works has determined that the area of disturbance warrants SWM / ESC plan review and approvals per redevelopment standards with a greater than 50% reduction in impervious area and will need to receive all necessary department and agency approvals prior to permits being released.

VI. PRELIMINARY SUBDIVISION PLAN REVIEW CRITERIA

Chapter 122 Off-Street Parking

§122-6 requires three (3) off-street parking spaces per dwelling unit.

The project is providing four (4) parking spaces within each lot fronting Saint John Street, two (2) in a front facing garage and two (2) in each driveway, that comply with the 18-foot by 18-foot minimum dimensions requirement in §122-5, design standards.

Chapter 173 Subdivision Regulations

§173-8 General – Comprehensive Plan

While many policies in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan apply generally, the following is directly related to the Property. The Comprehensive Plan identifies this location as “Old Town” and “Waterfront”, which is described below:

The Old Town area has a wealth of historic buildings set within a traditional grid patterned street system, many of which are lined with large deciduous trees and sidewalks. Alleys or lanes provide for rear lot garage and ancillary building access, trash removal, and utility supply infrastructure. These older portions of the City are a blend of small-lot residential development interspersed with

commercial uses, places of worship, civic uses, apartments, and multi-story senior complexes. In the truest sense, the Old Town section of Havre de Grace is representative of a traditional mixed-use city.

Chapter 3-Sustainable Community: A Strategy for Revitalization, regarding the “Old Town” actions states *“Continue to support a mix of uses within the Old Town area, to include offices, residential, and limited commercial uses of a scale in keeping with the established built environment; To accomplish this, increased flexibility of design is important while at the same time ensuring that Historic Character of the NRHD is preserved.* While also promoting new businesses and expansions of existing businesses within the RB zoning district. Consideration of site design for individual projects is important to ensure compatibility between properties and neighborhoods within the “Old Town” NRHD while creating better connectivity between parcels and overall neighborhood cohesion.

Chapter 10-Historic and Cultural Resources: The Waterfront is identified as a Historic District Sub-Area for Neighborhood Conservation stating *“Much of the waterfront has been developed, however, the historic Seneca Cannery is one of the few historic, privately-owned buildings that remain on the waterfront and should be a priority for preservation. Views and access to the waterfront from the rest of the NRHD should be maintained in redevelopment projects.”* The proposed Seneca Shores 5-lot subdivision is preserving that historic viewshed by maintain the open space to the rear of the lots and from Pennington Avenue.

The proposed 5-lot Single-Family Dwellings are consistent with the “Old Town” and “Waterfront” designation of the Comprehensive Plan.

§173-9 Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Overlay District – Chapter 49

The entire property is located within the 1,000 feet Chesapeake Bay Critical Area (CBCA) IDA Overlay District; therefore, Chapter 49 does apply and will need to provide mitigation in accordance to CBCA criteria. However, since the proposed use is reducing the total amount of impervious surface area by 52.8% compared to the previous use, additional CBCA 10% mitigation is not required per §49-3C(3) since there is an overall greater than 50% reduction of impervious area. Existing impervious is 0.776ac or 46.5% and proposed impervious is 0.378 acres or 22.7% resulting in a net negative (-0.69) removal requirement of Phosphorous.

Also, the property is located within the CBCA-IDA overlay and not RCA per §49-15C(6) afforestation is not required per CBCA state law.

Furthermore, per [§49-1E\(2\)](#) of the City Code, pertaining to the “Summary of Notification Requirements to the Critical Area Commission (COMAR 27.03.01)” chart, item eight (8) states “subdivision of 4 to 10 lots” does not require notification to the CBCA Commission within the Intensely Developed Area (IDA).” Since the property is located in the (IDA), no additional notification is required and may proceed accordingly.

§173-10 – 14 Streets and Improvements

The project is utilizing existing infrastructure roads and rights-of-ways for the proposed 5-lots which are public and comply with the Harford County Road Code (HCRC) design standards specified therein. All lots will have frontage on and access to a paved road and lighting is both existing and proposed. There are no existing pedestrian sidewalks within the Subject Property and therefore, the

proposed development will need to provide them accordingly along Saint John Street connecting to Pennington & Congress Avenue. Intersection improvements may be warranted to ensure safety and meet HCRC standards. The proposed driveways will meet HCRC distance to intersections per R-14 of the manual.

§173-14.1 Open Space

Open space is not required for minor subdivisions for single family detached dwellings since they exist within the greater context of the ‘Old Town’ portion of the City and are considered a minor infill development. However, the Applicant is proposing a small 0.058 acre/2,548 square feet open space/public plaza easement at the intersection of Saint John Street and Pennington Avenue and preserving the rear open space within the 100-year floodplain, as seen on the proposed subdivision plan.

Chapter 205 - Zoning Subdivision Regulations

The property is zoned RB (Residential Business), which permits single family detached dwellings as a matter of right per §205-26B(1) of the Zoning Code. The proposed lot dimensions, lot coverage, minimum setbacks, and maximum building height must comply with the Lot Type ‘C’ requirements in Table 1 unless alternative lot types are approved by the Board of Appeals or Department.

The Applicant will provide a POAF of confirmation from the third party (adjacent property owner), Lands of Di Camillo & Elliott, Parcel 2530, Lot-1, to acquire approximately 0.178 acres of their land in order to construct two of the five lots, as seen on the proposed subdivision plan, stating the adjacent property owner is in agreement for the proposed plan.

§205-9A(1) National Register Historic District

Ordinance No. 1178, effective March 18, 2025 states *“In order to preserve the historic streetscape and context SFD located within the NRHD shall have a maximum front yard setback no greater than what currently exist on adjoining properties and a minimum no less than what exist on adjoining properties.”* Also, *“If adjoining properties have no dwellings or structures along the street frontage within the same City block, then there is no historic streetscape to preserve and the minimum setbacks for such property are those otherwise applicable pursuant to Table I of the Zoning Code.”*

Since the 121 Saint John Street lot is being subdivided to create 5-lots the Subject Property loses its historical “lot-of-record” exemption regarding setbacks. Furthermore, there are no historic front yard setbacks with existing building frontage along the same street within the block because it is a commercial warehouse building, therefore, there is no historic streetscape to preserve and the minimum front yard setback shall be 15 feet per Table I, Lot Type ‘C’ of the Zoning Code for SFD within the RB zoning district. Specifically, along Saint John Street per §205-9B(1) of the Zoning Code.

Chapter 97 - Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

The proposed 5-lot subdivision plan was submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) for review and comment on December 1, 2025 by the Department of Planning for their upcoming December 9, 2025 meeting. HPC comments will be forwarded to the Applicant when received.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Planning has examined the Applicants' request and per §173-15C(3) of the City Code, recommends **APPROVAL** for the Preliminary Subdivision Plan / Minor Subdivision Plan for 5-lots, as provided in the above analysis, located at 121 Saint John Street, as submitted.

The Department of Planning offers no additional conditions per §173-15C(3) of the City Code beyond which are already applicable to comply with any state law, ordinances or regulations of the City, or where necessary to protect adjacent properties, the general neighborhood and residents, workers and visitors therein.

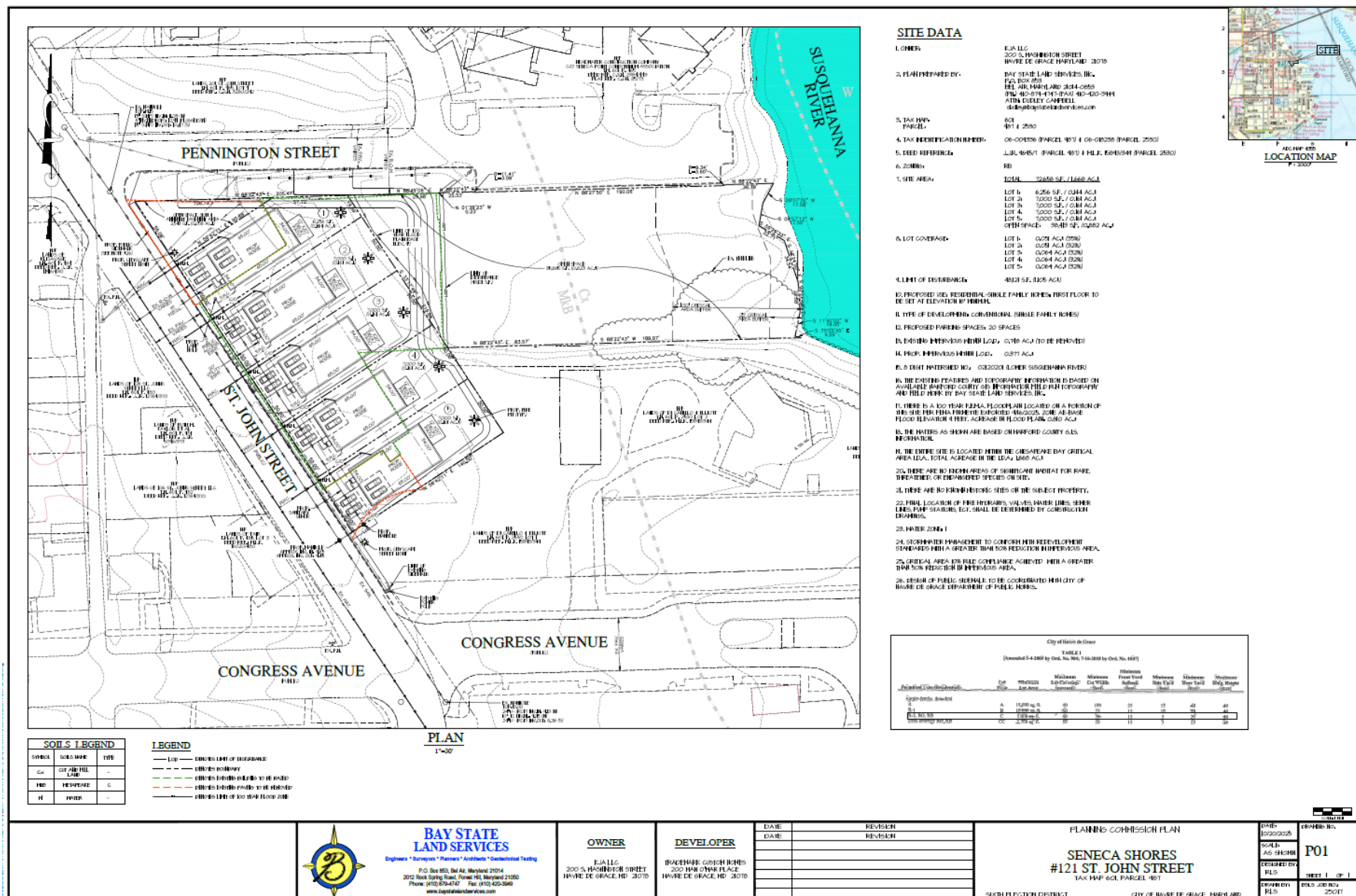
Regards,

Eric V. Lawrence, MLA & MUDP Date
City Planner / Project Manager
Department of Planning

cc: Department of Planning Staff
 Department of Public Works Staff
 Department of Administration Staff
 City Attorney

Robert Steeves, BSLS
Mitch Ensor, BSLS
Dudley Campbell, BSLS
Clark Turner, TCH Developer
KJA, LLC, Property Owner

ATTACHMENT - PRELIMINARY SUBDIVISION PLAN



ATTACHMENT – IMPERVIOUS AREA

Existing



Proposed



ATTACHMENT – TABLE I

ZONING

205 Attachment 1

City of Havre de Grace

TABLE I

[Amended 5-4-2009 by Ord. No. 904; 7-16-2018 by Ord. No. 1007]

Permitted Uses (Residential)	Lot Type	Minimum Lot Area	Maximum Lot Coverage (percent)	Minimum Lot Width (feet)	Minimum Front Yard Setback (feet)	Minimum Side Yard (feet)	Minimum Rear Yard (feet)	Maximum Bldg. Height (feet)
Single-family, detached								
R	A	15,000 sq. ft.	40	100	25	15	40	40
R-1	B	10,000 sq. ft.	40	75	15	10	40	40
R-2, RO, RB	C	5,000 sq. ft.	40	50	15	5	25	40
Lane frontage RO, RB	CC	2,700 sq. ft.	50	30	15	5	25	40
Duplexes								
Over/under R-2, RO, RB	AA	6,000 sq. ft.	50	50	15	5	25	40
Side-by-side R-2	BB	8,000 sq. ft.	40	80	15	5	25	40
Side-by-side RO, RB	AA	6,000 sq. ft.	50	50	15	5	25	40
Semidetached								
R-2	DD	4,000 sq. ft.	40	40	15	⁶	25	40
RO, RB	EE	3,000 sq. ft.	50	25	15	⁶	25	40
Townhouses								
R-2, RO, RB	GG	1,920 sq. ft.	60	24	15	none ³	25	40
Conditional uses (residential) ¹								
Single-family, detached								
R	B	10,000 sq. ft.	40	75	15	10	40	40
R-1, R-2, RO, RB	D	5,000 sq. ft.	50	25	none	none	25	60 ²
Duplexes								
Over/under R-2, RO, RB	DD	4,000 sq. ft.	40	40	15	5	25	40
Side-by-side R-2	AA	6,000 sq. ft.	50	50	15	5	25	40
Side-by-side RO, RB	HH	5,000 sq. ft.	50	50	none	none	25	60 ²
Semidetached								
R-2	EE	3,000 sq. ft.	50	25	15	⁶	25	40
RO, RB	JJ	2,500 sq. ft.	50	25	none	none	25	60 ²

ATTACHEMNT - CBCA
Critical Area Boundary Map

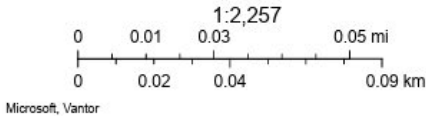


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Approved Critical Area Designations

Intensely Developed Areas (IDA)

Parcels



ATTACHMENT – SITE PHOTOS



Photos taken 11.04.25

Top Left: Facing southeast from Pennington Avenue/Saint John Street

Top Right: Facing North from Saint John Street

Bottom Right: Facing Northeast from Commerce Street/Saint John Street

ATTACHMENT – SITE PHOTOS



Photos taken 11.04.25

Left: Facing east along Pennington Avenue

Right: west along Pennington Avenue

ATTACHMENT - NRHD

