



TOWN OF COVENTRY, RI
 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

STAFF REPORT

Project Name:	Dante Real Estate II – Tiogue Ave.
Plan Type:	Unified Development Review (Major Land Development w/ associated Dimensional Variances)
Plan Review Phase:	Master Plan with a request to combine with Preliminary Plan stage
Owner:	Dante Real Estates
Applicant:	Mike Saccoccia
Address:	0 Tiogue Ave.
Plat / Lot / Zone:	AP 28 Lot 49 Zone GB Lot Size 3.83 acres
Existing Use:	Vacant
Proposed Use:	Commercial Equipment Storage Facility for Contractor Use
Description:	Applicant proposes to construct a 10,000 SF commercial equipment storage facility for contractor use building with associated landscaping and parking. In addition, the applicant is seeking Dimensional Variances for having less than the required 50' vegetative buffer on the eastern side of the property, for having access too close to another driveway, and for the building design elements proposed for this site which is located within the Special Planning Overlay District. This project will be reviewed under Unified Development Review in which both the Major Land Development and the Dimensional Variances will be decided by the Planning Commission. The applicant is requesting to combine the Master and Preliminary stages.

I. PROJECT INFORMATION

Overview

This matter comes before the Planning Commission as a Unified Development Review, Master Plan stage application. The applicant is requesting to combine the Master and Preliminary stages of development review. The application was before the Technical Review Committee on December 8, 2025 and January 20, 2026.

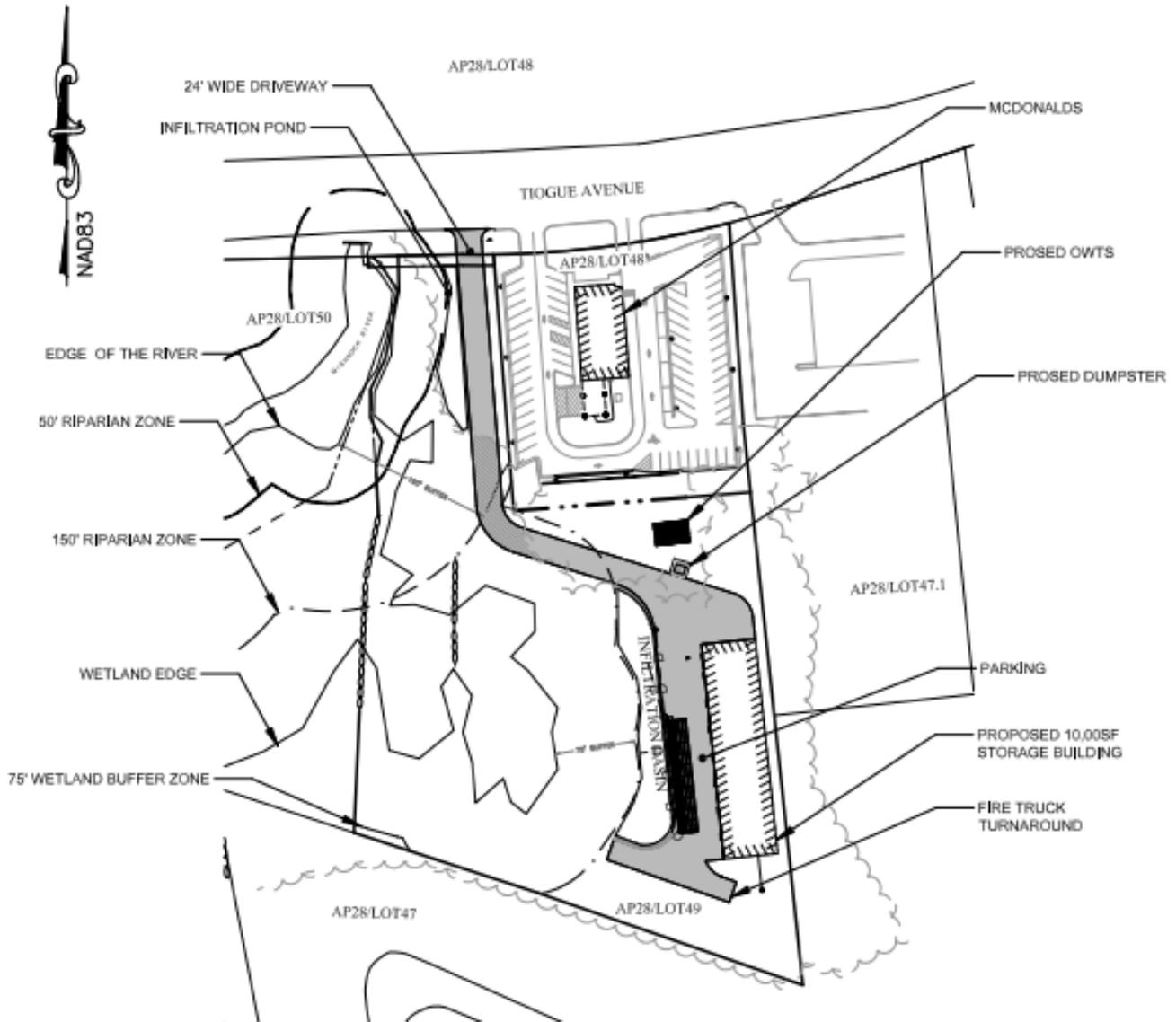
Existing Conditions



The subject parcel is located on the southern side of Tiogue Ave., behind the McDonald's at 1100 Tiogue Ave. (Lot 48), in the GB zone. To the west are wetlands, to the south is a Mobile Home community, and the parcels to the north and east are business uses. It is worth noting here that the above map is slightly out of date as there has been an administrative subdivision that has adjusted the southern lot line of Lot 48 north so that there is no longer a jog, i.e. the current southern lot line of Lot 48 runs straight across. This is shown on the proposed conditions plans.

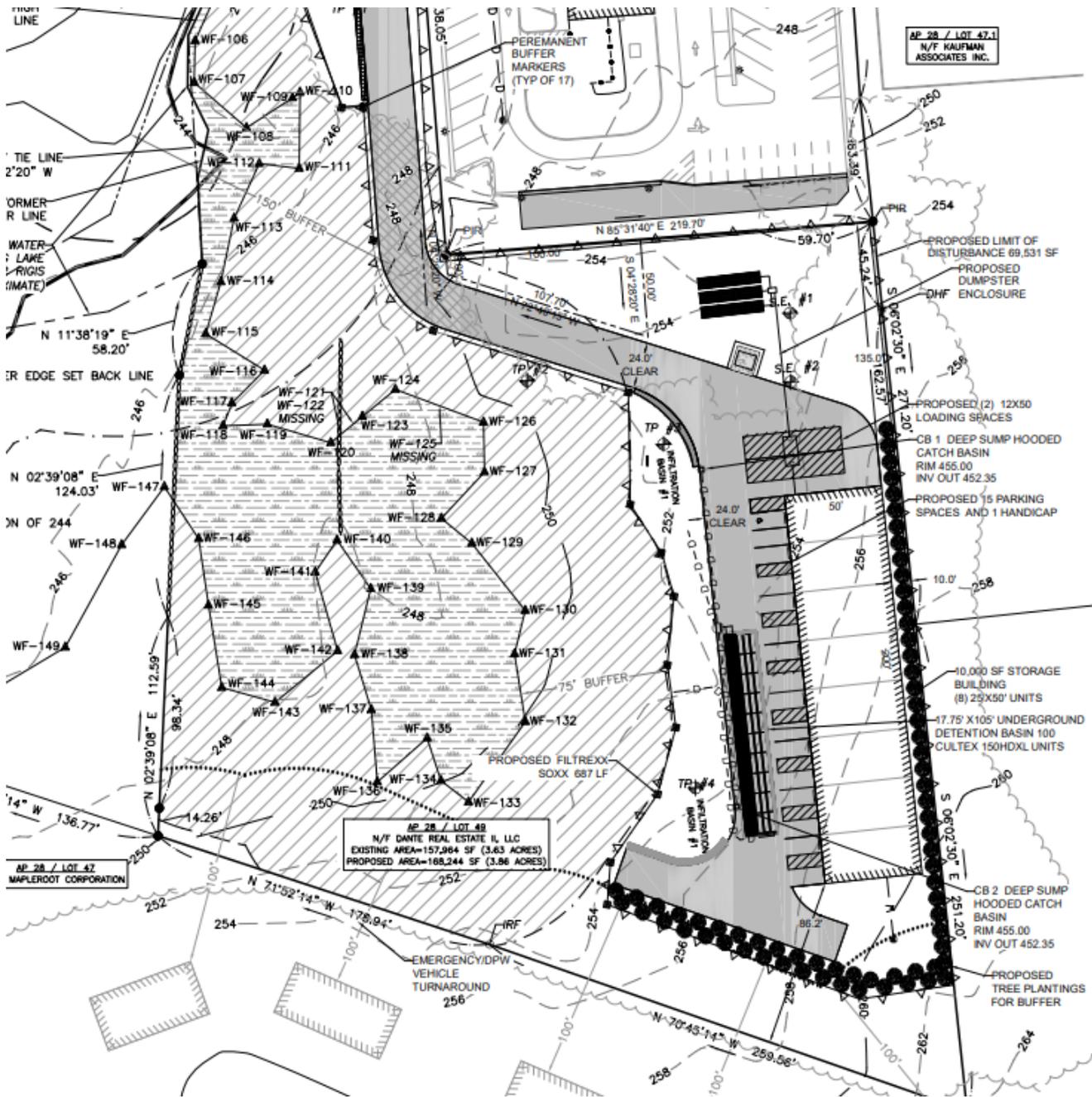
There are wetlands located along the western side and the southwestern third of the parcel. These wetlands necessitated the administrative subdivision to allow for the driveway to the rear of the property. In addition, the parcel lies within Zone "X" of the National Flood Insurance Maps for the Town of Coventry. The subject parcel is not located within a Groundwater Protection Zone, Local Historic District, or a Natural Heritage Area.

Proposed Conditions



The applicant proposes to construct a 10,000 square foot structure used as equipment storage facilities for contractor use behind the McDonald’s at 1100 Tiogue Ave, including a driveway and related parking, landscaping, and stormwater facilities. The building would be served by public water and an OWTS. This is shown on the plan set titled “Dante Real Estate II LLC Tiogue Ave” dated December 10, 2025 by Coventry Survey Design Group.

The current use is allowed in our current zoning under the “Equipment garage for the commercial storage of construction vehicles and heavy equipment over 4-ton carrying capacity” as stated in Table 6-1 C 07.



Variances

The applicant is seeking a Dimensional Variance from § 255-1730A, having less than the required 50' vegetative buffer on the east side of the property, from § 255-1230E, having a driveway less than the required 150' from an existing driveway, and from § 255-530E, the building design elements proposed for this site which is located within the Special Planning Overlay District.

Due to the presence of wetlands on the western side of the property, the applicant's design of the site pushes the building and parking to the east. This easterly shift means that the 50' required buffer (§ 255-1730A) is not realistic, with only 10' from the proposed building to the property line. The applicant has proposed a row of new planted trees as a buffer mitigation on the easterly side. Staff recommend Arborvitae or similar screening. Please note that while the trees on the eastern side of the proposed building are only shown on the Site Plan (page 4 of the plan set), we have confirmation that the applicant will add them to the full Final Plan plan set.

The flag shape of the lot requires that the design locate the proposed driveway 18 feet from the existing driveway of the McDonald's just to the east. § 255-1230E requires 150 feet between access points of a commercial or industrial use on an arterial street. It is the opinion of Planning staff that the proposed driveway can't be moved any further west due to the wetlands. In addition, the proposed use will create minimal traffic further reducing any potential conflicts. Both the Central Coventry Fire Department and the Coventry PD were consulted on this driveway location and both had no comment.

§ 255-530E states that certain design criteria must be met as the parcel is located within the Special Planning Overlay District. The currently proposed structure would need relief from § 255-530E(2)(c), which states "Traditional building materials such as shingles, wood clapboards, stucco, brick and stone should be used for the exterior sheathing of additions and new construction." The building is proposed to be metal sided. They would also need relief from § 255-530E(2)(e)[1], which states "There shall be no blank, windowless uninterrupted façade in excess of 60 feet in length. Lengthy facades shall be interrupted by recesses, projections, windows, awnings or similar measures." The rear of the proposed structure is to be a 200' blank wall. These District criteria may not need a heavy-handed approach in this case. The proposed structure is approx. 400' back from the roadway and behind another business. The building will not be visible from Tiogue Ave., and the applicant has proposed screening from both the eastern and southern properties. Due to the mitigation provided, staff does not have any concerns with this variance request.

Interdepartmental Review and Comments

Please see the attached reports from the Technical Review Committee (compiled from the December 8, 2025 and January 20, 2026 TRC meetings) for interdepartmental comments on this application.

Waivers

The applicant has not requested any waivers.

II. DIMENSIONAL VARIANCES

Findings of Fact

Staff have conducted a review of the Dimensional Variance component of this application for conformance with required standards set forth in RIGL Section 45-24-41. Staff's findings are as follows:

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)"

1. The applicant stated "The hardship is due to the shape of the lot. The lot is a typical flagpole shape with a skinny section connecting to the road. Also there is a large amount of wetland located on the property, limiting the area that can be developed. These hardships prevent the building from being moved away from the property edge."
2. Planning Staff opines that the proposed structure is located approximately 400' from Tiogue Avenue itself and will be hidden from the roadway. The material of the structure would not be seen unless the viewer drives down the driveway. In addition, the screening along the eastern side of the structure will block the view from the drive into the Mapleroot Community and the adjacent parcel. There is a double row of screening plantings on the southern edge of the building. The visual impact on the surrounding properties from the proposed structure will be negligible.

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

3. The applicant is not responsible for the subject parcel's unique existing conditions which have resulted in the immediate application, and therefore the hardship is not the prior action of this applicant.

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"

4. The subject parcel's existing zoning designation is GB (General Business), and its Future Land Use designation is also Commercial. The proposed use of equipment garage and contractor storage is consistent not only with the intent of both Zoning and Future Land Use, but also with the mix of business uses currently found in close proximity along Tiogue Ave and therefore it is not anticipated that this proposal will alter the character of the surrounding area given the proposed screening.
5. The applicant has shown on the plans that they will be planting a row of arborvitae (or similar) on the eastern edge of the property and a double row of arborvitae (or similar) to provide additional screening to the residents to the south.

RIGL § 45-24-41. General provisions – Variances. (e)(2) 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.”

6. The applicant has stated that “Moving the building away from the [eastern] property line will cause encroachment on the wetland area and degrade the water associated with the Mishnock River.”
7. Planning Staff opines that moving the building and pavement to the west may also compromise the design of the stormwater infiltration basin causing additional damage to the wetlands.
8. As stated by the applicant, the material of the building will be metal to provide the durability needed given the location of the building to the wetlands. The building will be painted in dark tones to better blend into the surroundings and the trees screening the building. The eastern façade will be blank and not have windows or other architectural features. The applicant stated that the eastern façade will be mostly screened by trees and will not be seen easily by abutters or vehicles travelling along abutting properties.

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 applications with a condition that the applicant receive approval of its Final Plan – Major Land Development application.

III. MAJOR LAND DEVELOPMENT

Findings of Fact

Staff has conducted an orderly, thorough, and expeditious technical review of this Preliminary Plan 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 Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use designation for the subject parcel is Commercial. The equipment storage for contractor use proposed for this parcel is consistent with the Commercial designation.

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.”

2. The proposed use for the subject parcel is a by-right use within the GB zone.
3. Preliminary Plan approval is conditioned upon obtaining relief in the form of Dimensional Variances.
4. The proposal will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the Coventry Zoning Code as consistent with the findings for the Dimensional Variance components of this project.

*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 based on the Preliminary Plan level of detail required at this stage.

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.”

6. The subject parcel currently enjoys adequate permanent physical access to a public right-of-way (Tiogue Ave).
7. The proposed building will be accessed via a proposed driveway, which will provide for safe and adequate circulation for vehicular traffic as well as having a turnaround for emergency vehicles.

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 waivers, and **approve** the combined Master and 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. Applicant shall submit a draft record plan with the Final Plan application.
3. The applicant shall submit the following items with its Final Plan application: a revised site plan with its Final Plan application containing the following edits:
 - a. Approval letter from the Central Coventry Fire District.
 - b. Approval letter from RIDEM.
 - c. Approval letter from RIDOT.

- d. Lighting plan with confirmation that no wall-packs will be located on the southern side of the building.
4. Upon project completion, a Certificate of Conformance (COC) from the Engineer of Record (EOR) shall be required. The COC shall certify that the constructed project meets all required standards, regulations and specifications in the permitting and construction documents. The COC shall be focused on site civil related work. Work includes, but is not limited to; all drainage system components, earth grading, roadway subbase, pavement and curbing, concrete flatwork, underground utilities (sewer, electric, water, etc.), survey markers and monuments, fire cisterns, signage, fencing and landscaping. EOR shall partner with a qualified sub-consultant to perform necessary inspection related duties if EOR does not perform these duties in-house. All coordination between EOR and inspection sub-consultant shall be finalized before construction commences. A certificate of occupancy will not be issued until COC is received and accepted by the town.



TOWN OF COVENTRY
Department of Planning & Development
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TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: December 8, 2025
PROJECT NAME: "Dante Real Estate II – Tiogue Ave"
PROPERTIES: AP 28, Lot 49
ADDRESS: Tiogue Avenue
ZONE: GB (General Business)
OWNER: Dante Real Estate
APPLICANT: Mike Saccoccia

This matter came before the Coventry Technical Review Committee at its December 8, 2025 meeting as a Combined Master & Preliminary Plan for a Major Land Development project with associated Dimensional Variance in accordance with Article V, § D.4. of the Coventry Subdivision & Land Development Regulations.

An application and plan were initially submitted for review on November 20, 2025. The applicant proposes to construct a 10,000 SF commercial condo building with associated landscaping and parking. In addition, the applicant is seeking a Dimensional Variance for having less than the required 50' vegetative buffer on the east side of the property, and for the building design elements proposed for this site which is located within the Special Planning Overlay District. This project will be reviewed under Unified Development Review in which both the Major Land Development and the Dimensional Variance will be decided by the Planning Commission. The applicant is requesting to combine the Master and Preliminary Plan stages. The members of the Technical Review Committee reviewed the following documents related to this application when preparing the comments below:

Dante Real Estate II - Combined Master & Preliminary Plan Set.pdf
Dante Real Estate II - O&M Plan.pdf
Dante Real Estate II - Stormwater Calculations.pdf

TOWN ENGINEER

- A) It is my understanding that there will be a future TRC meeting for this project. Engineering will provide comments at that future meeting.

PRINCIPAL PLANNER DESIGNEE

- Planning Staff notes that this Major Land Development application is being heard under Unified Development Review as Dimensional Variances are requested.

- The applicant is requesting to combine the Master and Preliminary stages of review.
- The applicant is seeking Dimensional Variances for having less than the required 50' vegetative buffer on the east side of the property, and for the building design elements proposed for this site which conflict with the Special Planning Overlay District code.
- Staff strongly recommend as much of a planted vegetative buffer along the back of the building as possible. While a 50' buffer is not feasible, the rear of the building should be adequately screened from the abutting residential property.
- The required 50' vegetative buffer must be maintained along the southern edge of the property to shield the residents along that line. Applicant should provide more information on the current buffer and what mitigation steps the applicant is taking.
- Is there going to be lighting along the southern side of the building near the proposed dumpster location? Staff recommend relocating the dumpster to the north side of the building to allow for more screening and to avoid the need for a light (if one is planned).
- The applicant is not required to provide state and local permits at this stage of review but will be required to submit them at Final Plan. Per recently adopted state law § 45-23-39, state and local permits for major land developments and major subdivisions will now be required at the Final Plan stage of review, as opposed to Preliminary Plan.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

- No comments at this time.

FIRE REPRESENTATIVE

- No comments at this time.

POLICE CHIEF

- No comments at this time.

PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR

The Planning Commission Chair recused as this item will be heard before the Planning Commission.



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TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: January 20, 2026
PROJECT NAME: "Dante Real Estate II – Tiogue Ave"
PROPERTIES: AP 28, Lot 49
ADDRESS: Tiogue Avenue
ZONE: GB (General Business)
OWNER: Dante Real Estate
APPLICANT: Mike Saccoccia

This matter came before the Coventry Technical Review Committee at its January 20, 2026 meeting as a Combined Master & Preliminary Plan for a Major Land Development project with associated Dimensional Variance in accordance with Article V, § D.4. of the Coventry Subdivision & Land Development Regulations.

An application and plan were initially submitted for review on November 20, 2025. The applicant proposes to construct a 10,000 SF commercial condo building with associated landscaping and parking. In addition, the applicant is seeking a Dimensional Variance for having less than the required 50' vegetative buffer on the east side of the property, and for the building design elements proposed for this site which is located within the Special Planning Overlay District. This project will be reviewed under Unified Development Review in which both the Major Land Development and the Dimensional Variance will be decided by the Planning Commission. The applicant is requesting to combine the Master and Preliminary Plan stages.

The members of the Technical Review Committee reviewed the following documents related to this application when preparing the comments below:

Dante Real Estate II - Tiogue Ave Narrative.pdf
Dante Real Estate II - Tiogue Ave Planset.pdf
Dante Real Estate II - Tiogue Stormwater Calcs.pdf

TOWN ENGINEER

Plans

- A) RIDEM Wetlands Permit required
- B) RIDEM OWTS Permit required
- C) Sheet 7 of 14 (PAP Plan) – Variance required for driveway access spacing with McDonalds parking lot

- D) Sheet 8 of 14 (Erosion Control Plan) – Town of Coventry Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Permit required
- E) Sheet 10 of 14 (Infiltration Basin #1 Details) – Minimum of 10” compacted gravel required under pavement
- F) Sheet 11 of 14 (Infiltration #2 Basin Details) – Detail 4 is incorrectly labeled as Infiltration Basin #1
- G) Sheet 12 of 14 (Drainage Details) – Detail 6 is incorrectly labelled as Catch Basin 1
- H) Sheet 14 of 14 (Proposed PAP Details) – Chain link fence must have slats for screening
- I) Sheet 14 of 14 (Proposed PAP Details) – Please identify the location Detail 3 (Roadway Detail) is referencing
- J) Sheet 14 of 14 (Proposed PAP Details) – Please renumber and retitle details on this sheet

PRINCIPAL PLANNER DESIGNER

- Planning Staff notes that this Major Land Development application is being heard under Unified Development Review as Dimensional Variances are requested.
- The applicant is requesting to combine the Master and Preliminary stages of review. The Commission has the discretion to vote on this combined submission as proposed.
- The applicant is seeking Dimensional Variances for having less than the required 50’ vegetative buffer on the east side of the property, and for the building design elements proposed for this site which conflict with the Special Planning Overlay District code.
- Staff strongly recommend adding additional tree plantings along the back (easterly side) of the proposed structure. While a 50’ buffer is not feasible, the rear of the building should be adequately screened from the abutting residential property.
- The required 50’ vegetative buffer must be maintained along the southern edge of the property to shield the residents along that line. We note that the applicant has provided information on the current buffer and a proposed double row of trees.
- The dumpster has been relocated to the northern side of the building to address prior staff comments.
- The applicant is not required to provide state and local permits at this stage of review but will be required to submit them at Final Plan. Per recently adopted state law § 45-23-39, state and local permits for major land developments and major subdivisions will now be required at the Final Plan stage of review, as opposed to Preliminary Plan.
- The applicant shall submit the proposed color of the building prior to the Planning Commission Hearing to confirm code compliance.
- The applicant shall submit additional information on the proposed lighting of the building/site. The applicant shall reduce lighting and glare towards the southern edge of the property.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

- No comments at this time.

FIRE REPRESENTATIVE

- No comments at this time.

POLICE CHIEF

- No comments at this time.

PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR

The Planning Commission Chair recused as this item will be heard before the Planning Commission.