

**SIDEWALK WAIVER REQUEST
STAFF REPORT**

Date: March 16, 2023

NAME

Pratt Thomas

LOCATION

2323 Hillcrest Road
(East side of Hillcrest Road, 103'± North of Cottage Hill Road).

PRESENT ZONING

B-2, Neighborhood Business District

ENGINEERING

COMMENTS

It appears that there is sufficient room within the ROW, or within the property, for the construction of a sidewalk that could be approved through the ROW Permit process.

TRAFFIC ENGINEERING

COMMENTS

No comments.

URBAN FORESTRY

COMMENTS

Property to be developed in compliance with state and local laws that pertain to tree preservation and protection on both city and private properties [Act 929 of the 1961 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature (Acts 1961, p. 1487), as amended, and City Code Chapters 57 and 65]. Private removal of trees in the right-of-way will require approval of the Mobile Tree Commission. Removal of heritage trees from undeveloped residential sites, developed residential sites in historic districts, and all commercial sites will require a tree removal permit.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

COMMENTS

All projects within the City Limits of Mobile shall comply with the requirements of the City of Mobile Fire Code Ordinance (2021 International Fire Code). Fire apparatus access is required to be within 150' of all commercial and residential buildings. A fire hydrant is required to be within 400' of non-sprinkled commercial buildings and 600' of sprinkled commercial buildings.

REMARKS

The applicant is requesting a waiver for the construction of a sidewalk along Hillcrest Road.

The site has been given a Neighborhood Center – Suburban (NC) land use designation, per the recently adopted Future Land Use Plan and Map. The Future Land Use Plan and Map complements and provides additional detail to the Development Framework Maps in the Map for Mobile, adopted by the Planning Commission at its November 5, 2015 meeting.

This land use designation applies to smaller hubs of mixed commercial, community, and recreational activity that cater to adjacent residential areas. Many of these centers exist today in

some form. Therefore, the following common principles apply not just to the future development of new centers, but also to the redevelopment (wholesale or incremental) of existing centers.

The following are General Principles for Neighborhood Centers (NC): NC should support a limited amount of commercial employment. NC should incorporate some residential use, which may vary in type from detached single family, townhouse, accessory and live-work units in mixed use and low-rise multifamily structures. The residential density in NC designations –ranging from 4 to 10 du/ac— must be compatible in character with that of surrounding residential development, providing appropriate transitions in height, massing and other buffering from one land use district to the next. The retail and housing uses should merge around vibrant, compact, accessible nodes, located at key neighborhood intersections or along short road segments. The NC nodes should be connected to the surrounding neighborhood and nearby public uses (e.g., schools, parks, etc.) via well-designed sidewalks and complete streets.

While the above-listed principles are common to all NC districts, the design attributes of neighborhood centers generally vary depending on whether a center is in a more “traditional” or more “suburban” context.

Additional Attributes of Neighborhood Centers:

NC in traditional contexts: These tend to be in those areas east of the Beltline and correspond to MxDR neighborhoods. In these NCs, buildings should orient to the street, with on-site parking typically pushed to the back of the site. The design qualities of the public realm are emphasized, including the provision of continuous sidewalks, tree canopy, pedestrian amenities, on-street parking and bicycle facilities where appropriate.

NC in suburban contexts: These generally are located among the LDR land use designations in the areas west of the Beltline. Where they exist, these centers currently have a more pronounced vehicular orientation. Therefore, the emphasis is on retrofitting to improve internal walkability (e.g., through the addition of sidewalks, tree canopy, protection from the elements) and external connectivity to the surrounding areas (via sidewalks, paths and trails, street crossings, transit stops, etc.) and to increase the mix and density of uses (e.g., infill of outparcels, addition of housing, etc.).

It should be noted that the Future Land Use Plan and Map components of the Map for Mobile Plan are meant to serve as a general guide, not a detailed lot and district plan. In many cases the designation on the new Future Land Use Map may match the existing use of land, but in others the designated land use may differ from what is on the ground today. As such, the Future Land Use Plan and Map allows the Planning Commission and City Council to consider individual cases based on additional information such as the classification request, the surrounding development, the timing of the request, and the appropriateness and compatibility of the proposed use and, where applicable, the zoning classification.

The applicant has submitted an Administrative Planned Unit Development application for development of the subject site. The site plan submitted did not include the required sidewalk along the Hillcrest Road street frontage; hence, this application for relief from constructing the required sidewalk.

The applicant states the following concerning the sidewalk waiver request:

We are requesting a sidewalk waiver along Hillcrest Rd. There is a large 46” live oak tree that would be compromised and additionally there are no sidewalks on the adjoining properties.

It should be pointed out that the Mobile City Council adopted a “complete streets” policy on May 31, 2011. The purpose of the complete streets policy is to support the design and construction of streets to enable safe access to all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, commercial and emergency vehicles, and for people of all ages and abilities.

While sidewalks are typically encouraged, even in industrial developments, the appropriateness of sidewalks should also take into account the existing infrastructure in the area, i.e., does the construction of the existing roadway safely allow for a sidewalk to be utilized. Per the Engineering comments, it appears that there is sufficient room within the ROW, or within the property, for the construction of a sidewalk that could be approved through the ROW Permit process.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the preceding, this application for waiver of a sidewalk along Hillcrest Road is recommended for Denial.

LOCATOR MAP

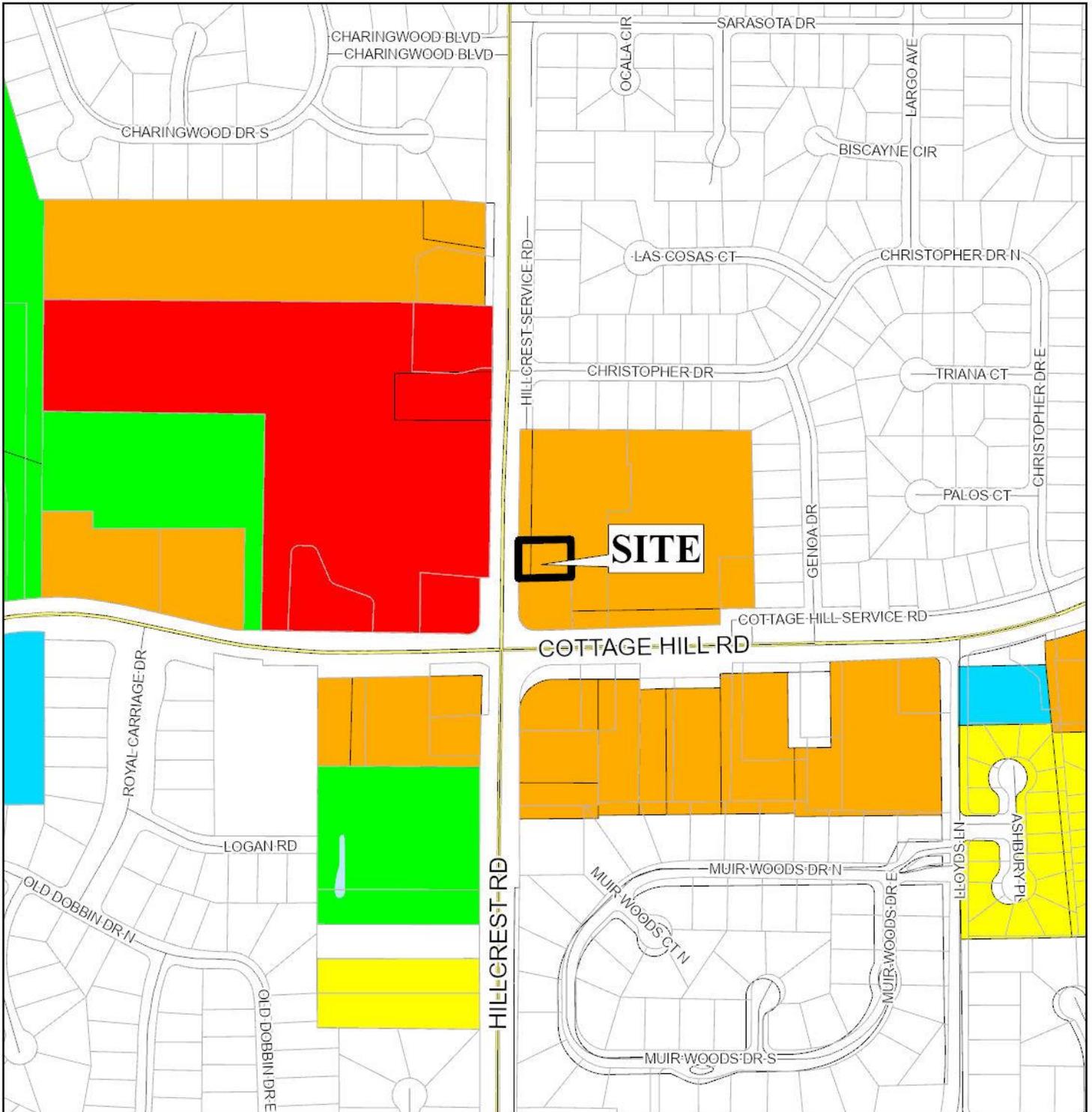


APPLICATION NUMBER	5	DATE	March 16, 2023
APPLICANT	Pratt Thomas		
REQUEST	Sidewalk Waiver		

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LOCATOR ZONING MAP



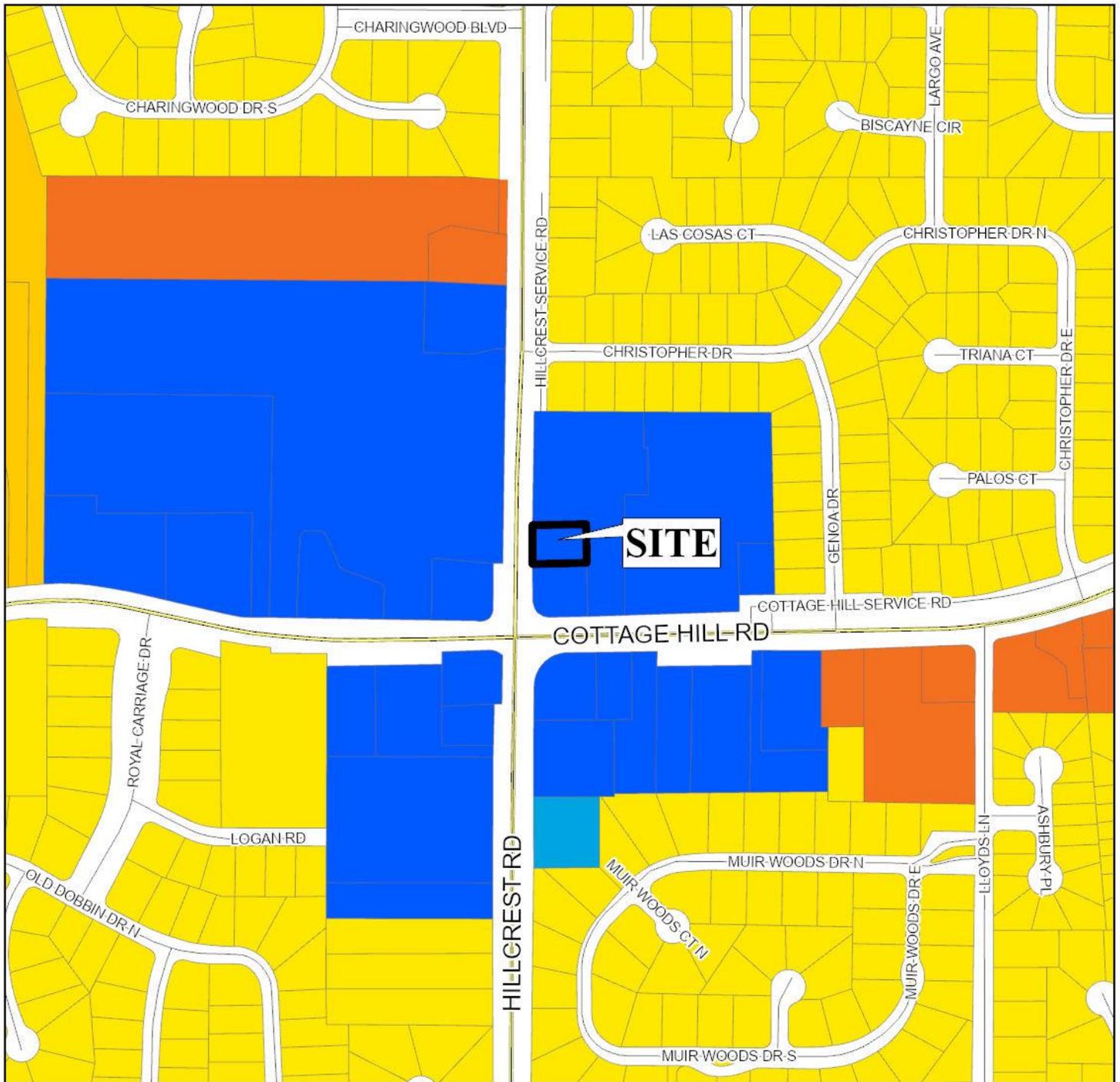
APPLICATION NUMBER 5 DATE March 16, 2023

APPLICANT Pratt Thomas

REQUEST Sidewalk Waiver



FLUM LOCATOR MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER 5 DATE March 16, 2023

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REQUEST Sidewalk Waiver

Layer2

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Low Density Residential | District Center | Traditional Corridor | Heavy Industry |
| Mixed Density Residential | Neighborhood Center - Traditional | Downtown Waterfront | Institutional |
| Neighborhood Center - Suburban | Light Industry | Parks & Open Space | Water Dependent |



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ENVIRONMENTAL LOCATOR MAP



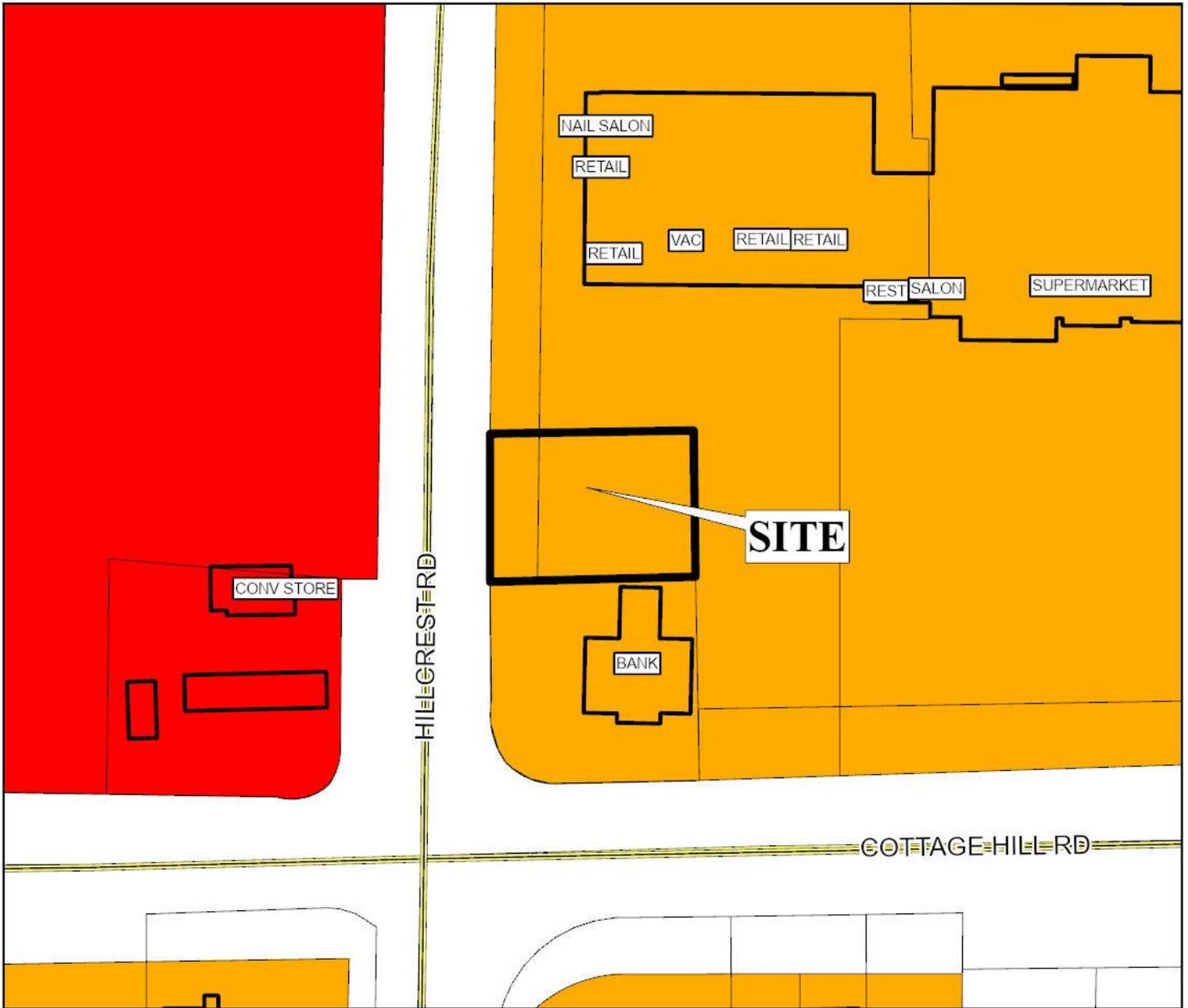
APPLICATION NUMBER 5 DATE March 16, 2023

APPLICANT Pratt Thomas

REQUEST Sidewalk Waiver



PLANNING COMMISSION VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING



The site is surrounded by commercial units.

APPLICATION NUMBER 5 DATE March 16, 2023
 APPLICANT Pratt Thomas
 REQUEST Sidewalk Waiver

 R-A	 R-3	 T-B	 B-2	 B-5	 MUN	 SD-WH	 T5.1
 R-1	 R-B	 B-1	 B-3	 I-1	 OPEN	 T3	 T5.2
 R-2	 H-B	 LB-2	 B-4	 I-2	 SD	 T4	 T6



PLANNING COMMISSION VICINITY MAP - EXISTING AERIAL



The site is surrounded by commercial units.

APPLICATION NUMBER 5 DATE March 16, 2023

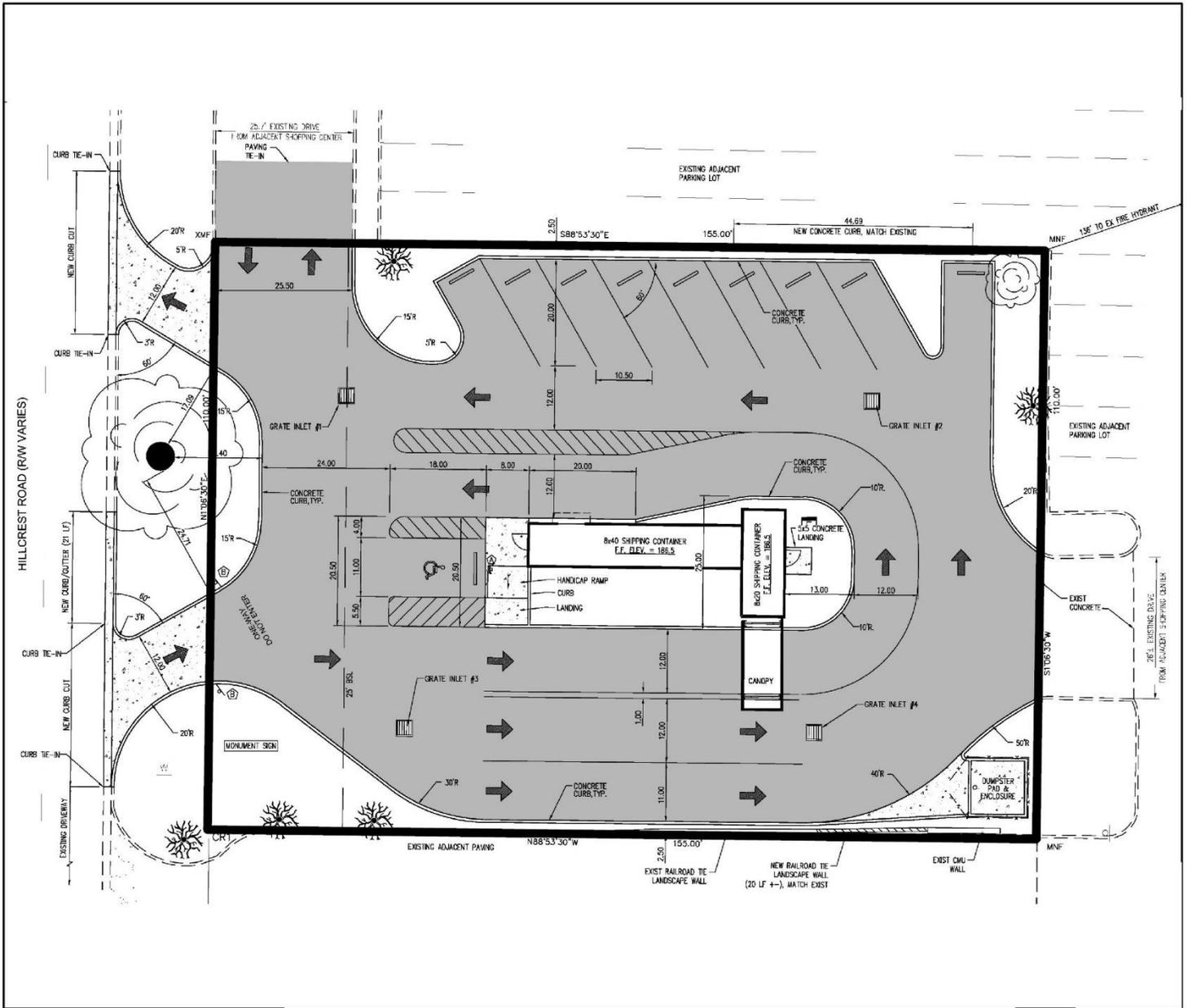
APPLICANT Pratt Thomas

REQUEST Sidewalk Waiver



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SITE PLAN



The site plan illustrates the shipping containers, canopy, setback, and existing trees.

APPLICATION NUMBER	5	DATE	March 16, 2023
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REQUEST	Sidewalk Waiver		

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DETAIL SITE PLAN



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