

January 12, 2023

Caroline Skuncik, Executive Director  
I-195 Redevelopment District Commission  
225 Dyer Street, Fourth Floor,  
Providence, RI 02903

utile

**RE: 150 Richmond Final Plan Approval Recommendation**

Design Review Panel Contributors:

- Craig Barton, Design Review Panel Member
- Emily Vogler, Design Review Panel Member
- Jack Ryan, Design Review Panel Member
- Tim Love, Utile
- Zoë Mueller, Utile

Dear Caroline,

Utile, the I-195 Redevelopment District's Urban Design and Planning consultant, recommends that the Commission grant Final Plan Approval and approve the requested waivers (see below) for the Ancora and GRE proposal for 150 Richmond Street, with the conditions outlined below. Ancora and GRE and their team members have been responsive and collaborative throughout the process and have put forward a thoughtful design proposal that addresses the issues raised by the design review panel.

*Summary of the Design Review Process*

Utile and the I-195 Redevelopment District Design Review Panel met on January 5, 2023 to review the Final Plan Application materials provided by Ancora and GRE for their proposed lab development at 150 Richmond Street (also referred to as Lot 402 or as Lot 3 of former Parcel 25). The same group met on September 26, 2022 and again on October 15, 2022 to review the Concept Plan Application materials. The consolidated feedback of the Panel was provided to the developer as a memo on October 18th and November 4th of 2022 (attached).

*Waivers and Special Exception*

We recommend approving the remaining requested special exception and waiver described below, based on satisfactory further development of the site plan design:

1. Surface Parking (Section 2.4.B.6) - allow a maximum of six (6) surface parking spaces to meet demonstrated RISHL operational needs by special exception.
2. Exterior Loading Dock (Section 2.5.E.3) - allow exterior loading docks with overhead coiling door system and landscape screening to shield the loading from view.

This special exception and waiver are in addition to the waivers granted as part of the Concept Plan Approval, listed below:

3. Street Frontage (Table 2.3-1 and Figure 2.3-1) - allow less than 80% frontage along Clifford Street.
4. Massing & Facade Articulation (Section 2.5.A.1.A) - allow more than 100 feet before a change in plane in the building façade above the first floor.

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5. Fenestration (Section 2.5.A.2.B) - allow less than 70% transparency on ground floors facing Clifford Street.
6. Building Entry (Section 2.5.A.3.C) - allow more than 40 feet between entrances along the primary building frontage.
7. Marquee Signage (Section 2.5.A.5.D) - allow canopy/marquee to extend more than 5 feet beyond the width of the building entrances.
8. Mechanical Equipment Louvers (Section 2.5.A.7.A) - allow building-mounted mechanical louvers on the Clifford Street facade, provided they are set back from the main building facade and are minimized through placement as well as color and texture matching with surrounding facade materials.

The final design represents a good faith effort to comply with the spirit of the Development Plan. All of the waivers and the special exception are justified by the location and configuration of the development parcel and the unique characteristics of lab buildings, including dimensional and loading/servicing requirements. It is also worth noting that the waiver requested for Loading Curb Cut Width (Section 2.4.E.5) as part of the Concept Plan approval is no longer required. The Final Plan site design includes a narrower curb cut that meets the Development Plan requirements. In lieu of the wider curb cut, access for the largest anticipated trucks is accommodated by mountable curbs.

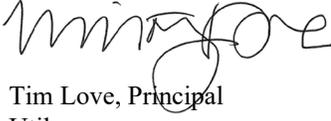
#### *Conditions for Concept Plan Approval*

The Ancora/GRE design team should resolve the design review concerns below with the District staff and Utile before the construction documents are issued.

1. Front Facade (along Elbow, Richmond, and Clifford Streets)
  - a. The eighth floor mechanical penthouse is too monolithic looking and lacks a pattern or features that break down its scale and give it more visual interest. Potential solutions include the introduction of a pattern that introduces an intermediate scale between the overall mass and the size of the individual cladding panels. This can be done through the introduction of a rhythm of panels in contrasting tones, colors, textures, and/or sizes.
  - b. As depicted in the renderings, the terracotta cladding reads as an applied wallpaper, independent from the window pattern. To better integrate the windows and cladding, align the edge of the window frames with the vertical joints between courses of terracotta panels.
  - c. Where the gray Norman brick meets the red terracotta panel facade, introduce a vertical stack bond brick pattern or other similar brick transition in the same gray brick color. This will create a better resolved transition between the brick base and the terracotta cladding above.
2. North (Mid-block-facing) Facade
  - a. As depicted in the renderings, the gray fiber cement cladding reads as an applied wallpaper, independent from the window pattern. To better integrate the facade composition, coordinate the joints between the panels and the frames of the windows.
  - b. The facade is too monolithic. In order to address this issue, use a contrasting tone, color, and/or texture to more dramatically distinguish between the continuous horizontal bands of gray fiber cement panels versus the panels used between the windows.
  - c. Remove the vertical stripe of glazing at the inside corner of the mid-block-facing facade and instead allow the horizontal pattern to continue uninterrupted around this fold in the facade.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions or would like additional information.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Love". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tim" and last name "Love" clearly distinguishable.

Tim Love, Principal  
Utile  
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