

November 4, 2022

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

utile

**RE: 150 Richmond Concept 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 Concept 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 September 26, 2022 and again on October 15, 2022 to review the architectural drawings, renderings and building program information presented 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 consolidated feedback of the Panel was provided to the developer as a memo on October 18th of 2022. The memo is attached as an appendix.

*Waivers*

We recommend approving the requested waivers below:

1. Street Frontage (Table 2.3-1 and Figure 2.3-1) - allow less than 80% frontage along Clifford Street.
2. 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.
3. Fenestration (Section 2.5.A.2.B) - allow less than 70% transparency on ground floors facing Clifford Street.
4. Building Entry (Section 2.5.A.3.C) - allow more than 40 feet between entrances along the primary building frontage.
5. Marquee Signage (Section 2.5.A.5.D) - allow canopy/marquee to extend more than 5 feet beyond the width of the building entrances.
6. 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.

These waivers are justified by unique lab-related programmatic needs and constraints, the challenging site configuration and dimensions, and the demonstration of a good faith effort to comply with the spirit of the Development Plan.

Architecture  
& Planning

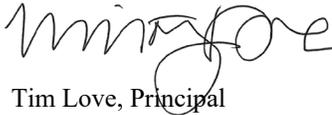
115 Kingston St.  
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*Conditions for Concept Plan Approval*

1. Design Issues
  - a. The rear site plan needs additional revisions in order to provide a more safe, comfortable, and engaging pedestrian experience, especially from the 225 Dyer mid-block pedestrian path to Clifford Street.
  - b. The rear facade needs further refinement to make it less utilitarian-looking by introducing scale and texture.
  
2. Requested Waivers that need to be studied further, based on further development of the site plan design (see no. 1 above)
  - a. Surface Parking (Section 2.4.B.6) - determine an agreed upon maximum number and configuration of surface parking spaces to meet RISHL needs.
  - b. Loading Curb Cut Width (Section 2.4.E.5) - determine if partnerships with the City and abutters yield better alternative solutions to the truck turning radius problem without requiring a curb cut that exceeds the maximum of 24 feet.
  - c. Exterior Loading Dock (Section 2.5.E.3) - determine if improved screening is possible through landscape and site plan improvements.

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

Regards,



Tim Love, Principal  
Utile  
115 Kingston Street  
Boston, MA 02111

October 18, 2022

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

utile

**RE: 150 Richmond Concept Plan Design Review Panel Comments**

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 and the I-195 Redevelopment District Design Review Panel met on September 26, 2022 and again on October 15, 2022 to review the architectural drawings, renderings and building program information presented 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). We have provided detailed comments below. These comments are meant to inform potential revisions to the design prior to Concept Plan Approval.

*Parking, Loading and Site Plan Recommendations*

1. The proposed parking and loading solution negatively impacts the continuity of the Clifford Street and midblock pedestrian experience. As a result, the design team should look for ways to reduce the width of the Clifford Street curb cut, reduce the amount of asphalt in the loading and parking area, improve pedestrian connections that respond to existing and future desire lines, and mitigate the lack of a built edge along Clifford Street. As a first step towards creating a better site plan, the design team should:
  - a. Justify the need for five onsite parking spaces, given the proximity of the Garrahy Garage.
  - b. Create diagrams that show the turning radii of trucks that will access the loading docks to justify the dimension of the curb cut and use of the majority of the rear of the building for a paved vehicular circulation area.
2. Pedestrian circulation and experience is not adequately prioritized in the site plan, especially in the rear of the building. The current configuration, planting and screening strategy results in a large void along Clifford Street and from the 225 Dyer Plaza pedestrian walkway with a near-unobstructed view to parking and loading. We recommend that the design team generates four new drawings to inform revisions to the current site plan:
  - a. Circulation Diagram: a multi-modal circulation diagram with at least one full block of urban context in all directions, showing bike and pedestrian connections between key area destinations (225 Dyer Plaza, Garrahy Garage, and City Walk/Elbow Street) and from those area destinations to key parts of the 150 Richmond development (including the lobby and retail space, on-site bike parking, and lab sample receiving areas).

- b. Site Plan in Context: an illustrative site plan showing design solutions to support the circulation priorities identified in the circulation diagram. This site plan should detail pedestrian crossing infrastructure, dimensions of pathways, plantings, and amenities.
- c. Clifford Street Perspective View: a rendered perspective view studying the site plan and building expression from Clifford Street to explore solutions to create a better view and experience from Clifford Street.
- d. 225 Dyer Plaza Pedestrian Walkway View: a rendered perspective view studying the site plan and building expression from the 225 Dyer Plaza pedestrian walkway to explore solutions to create a better view and experience from that approach.

#### *Ground Floor Program and Public Realm Activation Recommendations*

1. Primary entryway to lobby and shared retail/amenity space at the corner of Richmond and Elbow Streets has a strong logic, but the entry sequence itself seems unresolved. We suggest inclusion of a diagram illustrating the entry sequence for the three different use cases - RIDOH employees and visitors, other lab tenant employees and visitors, and users of the shared retail/amenity space facing Elbow Street.
  - a. We suggest the design team continue exploring the possibility of completely separate entry sequences for RIDOH and/or the retail/amenity space, in order to more fully activate the public realm, especially along Richmond Street.
  - b. Would like clarity on the intended entry for lab sample receiving.
  - c. Would like clarification on the intended program for shared retail/amenity space.
2. The use of the majority of the Elbow Street frontage for back of house programs is not ideal. Suggest incorporating indoor bicycle parking in this portion of the floor plan to introduce a second active entry and visual interest from the sidewalk.
3. Interior finishes of the corridor and meeting rooms along Richmond Street need to be high-quality and visually engaging to enhance the public streetscape experience.

#### *Building Expression and Facade Design Recommendations*

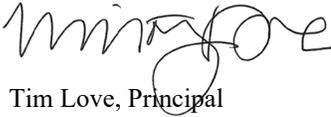
1. The design review panel supports the recent changes to the facade at the Richmond Street/Elbow Street corner. Lifting of the bottom of the terracotta cladding and breaking the corner away from the rest of the building mass helps signify the building entrance and creates more visual variety along the street.
2. We would like to see how the proposed terracotta panel facade compares to the cladding on the Garrahy Garage and Point 225 elevations, in order to better understand its scale, coloring, and pattern in context.
3. Articulated angular sun shades on openings in terracotta facade create visual interest, but the corner windows currently do not show any solar shading element despite sharing a similar design vocabulary as the adjacent windows. We would like to see the solar shading element incorporated everywhere where it makes sense, including the corner windows.
4. While the Richmond and Elbow Street facades will be the priority over the long-term, the rear building facade will, in many ways, be more visually prominent until nearby parcels are developed. We would like to see more attention to this facade to create visual interest and variety from key viewpoints like the 225 Dyer plaza and upper stories as well as Clifford Street and the

Garrahy Garage. We also need to see a photographic sample of the intended UHPC panel material to be used on this facade.

Finally, the number of waivers requested (12 in total at the time of submission) is higher than past District projects. While we recognize the unique design challenges of a large floorplate lab building, we nonetheless recommend that the development team prioritize only those waivers that are essential for feasibility and provide more robust justification for the waivers that are necessary. We will provide a more detailed review of remaining waiver requests as part of our Concept Plan Approval recommendation memo.

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  
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115 Kingston Street  
Boston, MA 02111