

May 12, 2023

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

utile

RE: Parcels 14 & 15 Proposal 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 April 4th of 2023 to review the CV Properties proposal for Parcels 14 and 15. Utile recommends designating CV Properties as the developer for Parcels 14 and 15 based on the strength of their initial proposal. This Master Plan concept unlocks greater development potential at the block scale than would be possible when the parcels are considered individually, which is very much in-line with the District mission.

Below are comments on both the current strengths and the areas for improvement that can be addressed during the Design Review process.

Park & Public Realm

1. Because this is a phased development, the first phase of which is on District land, it will be critical to ensure that the interim condition at the completion of each phase creates logical public realm relationships and transitions at the ground level.
2. The layout and phasing of the below-grade parking has important implications for the public realm transitions - finessing the below-grade parking may enable more successful and gradual transitions from the sidewalk grade to the podium grade.
3. The finish elevation of the podium is required to meet a 9.3' Design Flood Elevation (DFE-1) to protect the development from coastal flooding, which is part of what is driving this unified podium strategy. However, with some modifications to the underground parking it may be possible to create a more gradual transition with intermediate levels to create more continuity between the podium and sidewalk at key locations. To support this critical refinement to the public realm strategy, we suggest the inclusion of a grading plan showing spot elevations for the public sidewalks surrounding the building and detailed drawings of the grade transitions from the sidewalk to the podium. This drawing should give special attention to the natural pedestrian desire lines from nearby assets such as the Park, Riverwalk, and downtown. This drawing should also identify accessible routes from sidewalk grade to podium grade, how stramp edges will be treated to create safe and accessible routes, and where guard rails will be needed at the edge of the podium.
4. The function, design, and programmatic activation of the podium plaza must be balanced with the importance of the Dorrance Street frontage for continuity

with Downtown, and with the importance of reinforcing the Park as the primary gathering place for the District.

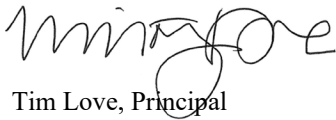
5. In addition to the programmatic activation, the design of the four key pedestrian entry points to the development must be given extra consideration to create a successful, mutually beneficial relationship with the Park, Riverwalk and public realm along Peck Street, Dorrance Street, and Dyer Street.
6. The extent of the “Woonerf” shared street treatment of Peck Street should be studied further to confirm alignment with where the greatest pedestrian use will be concentrated.

Building Expression and Facade Design

1. The scale of the building proposed is consistent with the Development Plan and RFP, which require a minimum of 3 stories and a maximum height of 130’ (which translates roughly to 11 stories, which matches this proposal)
2. The variety of architectural styles shown for the Master Plan is effective at creating a more engaging urban development that aligns with the rhythm of built forms in the surrounding context.
3. The Phase 1 residential building’s unified sculptural move to pull into the park is strong. The comparatively simple, unified materiality makes the sculptural massing move more effective.
4. Differentiation of the top floor would help to provide a more varied and engaging facade from the river, and would help break down the otherwise relatively monolithic approach to the river-facing facade.
5. Because the massing has complex geometries, it will be important to ensure that the development program is aligned with the cost of this massing and cladding approach.

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

Regards,



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