



July 11, 2024

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

RE: Parcels 14 & 15 Concept Plan Approval Recommendation

Design Review Panel Contributors:

- Emily Vogler, Design Review Panel
- Jack Ryan, Design Review Panel
- Tim Love, Utile
- Kevin Chong, Utile

Dear Caroline,

A meeting was convened on July 11, 2024 that included Emily Vogler and Jack Ryan from the Design Review Panel, and Kevin Chong from Utile. Craig Barton from the Design Review Panel has recused himself from reviewing this project due to his affiliation with Brown University (a portion of the project is on a site owned by Brown that will be ground-leased by the developer). The goal of the meeting was to review the updated concept plan design proposal for Parcels 14 and 15 and provide our recommendation for the upcoming Commission vote. The design submission was prepared by SGA, an architecture firm, and Copley Wolff, a landscape architecture firm, on behalf of CV Properties, the developer.

Utile and the Design Review Panel unanimously agreed to recommend that the Commission approve the Concept Design proposal with the conditions outlined below.

Recommended Conditions for Approval

While several recent targeted design revisions have improved the overall quality of the project, the Design Review Panel recommends that the following issues be addressed during the development of the design and before final design approval.

1. The addition of intermediate mullions to the windows has improved the overall scale and texture of the building and give it a more residential character.
 - a. Despite this welcome change, we strongly encourage the team to use operable windows in all living spaces and bedrooms. This will improve the quality of life of the occupants and will help further animate the facade.

2. The addition of balconies on the short end of the building, facing the park, are welcome additions because they add more depth and texture to the building and leverage the views from apartments, even if it's only a small percentage of the units.
 - a. Since the balconies are a relatively recent addition to the design, their precise placement lacks refinement. They need to be better-integrated into the facade behind.
3. While the switch from metal panel to brick for the building base (the first two floors of the building) is welcome, the resulting facade lacks depth and detail. As a result, these adjustments should be made:
 - a. Use full dimensional brick to allow for additional brick details that can add texture and shadow. These might include a corbelled or dog tooth pattern in lieu of a flush stacked bond in the band between the first and second floor windows.
 - b. Push back the full-height transom window above the lobby entrance vestibules on both sides of the building by at least 30 inches so brick can be returned the full depth of the step back. This will make the entrance more legible, reinforce the through-building connection to the future mid-block plaza, and make the brick base look more substantial.
4. In order to better harmonize the color palette of the building, adjust the metal panel color of the penthouse floors so it is a warmer and creamier color that is more similar to the color of the brick base.
5. In order to make the retail space attractive to a restaurant tenant, add several features to the core and shell scope:
 - a. An entrance vestibule at the top of the ramp from Peck Street that partly extends into the plaza and partly pushes into the interior space and clearly signals that it is the front door of a restaurant.
 - b. French doors, accordion doors, or other shopfront treatment that allows for an indoor/outdoor dining experience when the weather is nice. At a minimum, this treatment should be added to the shop front module facing the park that is closest to the river.
6. Redesign the landscape and hardscape between the Peck Street sidewalk and the street-facing entrance to the residential lobby so it is more direct and appropriately scaled. Adjustments include:
 - a. Add a wide flight of stairs that are on axis with the front doors so there is a direct connection between the lobby and the logical pick-up/drop-off location.
 - b. Add an accessible route from the same curbside locations.
 - c. Make other ramps and slopes that lead to the entrance wider and more intuitive relative to pedestrian desire lines.
7. In addition to the comments about the landscape above, the following comments need to be addressed during the next phase of design:
 - a. Select plantings between the restaurant terrace that are low enough to allow for unobstructed views from a seated height to the park. The

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plantings shown in the renderings do not acknowledge this important factor.

- b. Add a slope or ramp that leads directly from the through-block path to the enclosed bike parking area.
- c. Clarify the interim mid-block condition since the current site plan shows an undifferentiated landscape area and no interim parking behind 200 Dyer Street. The revised site plan should show how the scope of site work will meet any parking that will be located behind the remaining building.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions or would like additional information on any of these comments.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Love". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Tim Love, Principal
Utile
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Boston, MA 02111