

I-195 REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

RESOLUTION REGARDING APPROVAL OF GROUND FLOOR FAÇADE TRANSPARENCY WAIVER FOR PARCEL 9

December 16, 2020

WHEREAS: Pursuant to the Rhode Island Special Economic Development District Enabling Act (the “SEDD Act”), the Commission is charged with approving all plans for development within the I-195 Redevelopment District; and

WHEREAS: Pursuant to the SEDD Act, the Commission has adopted a Development Plan applicable to construction with the I-195 Redevelopment District; and

WHEREAS The Commission has received a design review application from Pennrose, LLC (“Pennrose”), the proposed purchaser of Parcel 9, in which Pennrose requests a waiver from the provisions of *Section 2.5 A. 2. b* of the Development Plan with respect to ground floor façade transparency for a non-residential use (the “Waiver”); and

WHEREAS: Utile, Inc., the District’s design consultant (“Utile”), has determined that the Waiver is appropriate and has recommended that the District grant the Waiver by letter dated December 15, 2020, a copy of which letter is attached hereto as Exhibit A and is incorporated herein by reference (the “Utile Letter”); and

WHEREAS: At a public hearing held this date, the Commission heard a presentation by Utile with respect to the Waiver [and heard comments from the public].

NOW, THEREFORE, acting by and through its Commissioners, the District hereby resolves as follows:

RESOLVED: That the District hereby (a) finds that, given the geography of Parcel 9, enforcement of the ground floor façade transparency regulations for a non-residential use contained in the Development Plan would preclude the full enjoyment by the owner of a permitted use and amount to more than a mere inconvenience, (b) adopts the recommendations contained in the Utile letter with respect to the Waiver and (c) grants the Waiver.

EXHIBIT A

December 15, 2020

Caroline Skuncik
Executive Director
I-195 Redevelopment District
315 Iron Horse Way, Suite 101
Providence, RI 02908

utile

Dear Caroline,

Utile recommends approval of the waiver requested for the transparent wall area requirement on Parcel 9. The waiver requested by Pennrose via their architect, TAT, in the attached memo applies for relief from Section 2.5 2b. Fenestration: Non-Residential Ground Floor Uses in the Development Plan Regulations that requires areas of transparency to equal 70% of the wall area between the height of one and 12 feet from the ground. **In recognition of site-specific considerations, this waiver would allow Building One, as a whole, to meet a reduced minimum of 50% transparency in aggregate for all non-residential facades.**

The proposed level of non-residential ground-floor transparency is appropriate for the following reasons:

1. First, and most important, the 70% non-residential transparency requirement is aimed at creating an engaging, commercial-feeling public realm which is appropriate for most of the District, but is much less important for Parcel 9 given its predominantly residential context. Currently there are no surrounding commercial uses and commercial development is expected to be very limited in this area in the future, so a more residential level of transparency is contextually appropriate.
2. Second, the building's unique siting relative to the larger urban context means that it effectively has four public-facing facades (rather than the more typical one or two public-facing facades) which makes it difficult to accommodate resident parking, service and back-of-house uses while meeting the ground-floor transparency requirement.
3. Third, the site has a significant frontage on CityWalk which does not require the same commercial activation that a public street needs - intensive planting, murals and other placemaking elements are sufficient to provide a lively and welcoming frontage on CityWalk in lieu of more transparency.

We are confident that this targeted waiver preserves the intent of the ground-floor transparency requirement, which is to support flexibility and viability of ground-floor commercial uses facing the public realm, while providing the relief this development needs to pursue a creative design strategy.

Regards,



Tim Love FAIA
Principal



memorandum

TO: Caroline Skuncik-195 District

FROM: Michael D. Binette-TAT

DATE: December 9, 2020

CC: Amber Ilcisko-195 District
Tim Love-Utile
Charlie Adams-Pennrose
Karmen Cheung-Pennrose
Ryan Kiracofe-Pennrose
Andrew Stebbins-TAT
Glenn Mutz-TAT

REGARDING: Parcel 9-Building One
Concept Plan – Application Waiver

Careful consideration was taken during the design process to ensure that Building One conforms to the design standards as outlined in the I-195 Development District Development Plan document. Upon review of our submission against the I-195 Development document, our current design does not provide 70% of the transparent wall area as outlined in section 2.5 2b. Building One provides 51% of the ground-floor façade that is transparent. Due to programmatic restraints, there is a portion of wall space that provides no transparency as it abuts resident parking. As shown in previous renderings, this area is planned to be adorned with a green wall, art murals, and/or other active façade treatments. At this time, we would be seeking a waiver from the I-195 District for not providing a 70% transparent wall area as outlined in section 2.5 2b.

We look forward to continuing to work with the I-195 Development Committee, Utile, and the community to create a design that not only responds to the I-195 Development District Development Plan requirements, but a design that enhances the neighborhood context.

December 15, 2020

Caroline Skuncik
Executive Director
I-195 Redevelopment District
315 Iron Horse Way, Suite 101
Providence, RI 02908

utile

Dear Caroline,

Utile recommends approval of the waiver requested for the transparent wall area requirement on Parcel 9. The waiver requested by Pennrose via their architect, TAT, in the attached memo applies for relief from Section 2.5 2b. Fenestration: Non-Residential Ground Floor Uses in the Development Plan Regulations that requires areas of transparency to equal 70% of the wall area between the height of one and 12 feet from the ground. **In recognition of site-specific considerations, this waiver would allow Building Two, as a whole, to meet a reduced minimum of 40% transparency in aggregate for all non-residential facades.**

The proposed level of non-residential ground-floor transparency is appropriate for the following reasons:

1. First, and most important, the 70% non-residential transparency requirement is aimed at creating an engaging, commercial-feeling public realm which is appropriate for most of the District, but is much less important for Parcel 9 given its predominantly residential context. Currently there are no surrounding commercial uses and commercial development is expected to be very limited in this area in the future, so a more residential level of transparency is contextually appropriate.
2. Second, the building's unique siting relative to the larger urban context means that it effectively has four public-facing facades (rather than the more typical one or two public-facing facades) which makes it difficult to accommodate resident parking, service and back-of-house uses while meeting the ground-floor transparency requirement.
3. Third, the site has a significant frontage on CityWalk which does not require the same commercial activation that a public street needs - intensive planting, murals and other placemaking elements are sufficient to provide a lively and welcoming frontage on CityWalk in lieu of more transparency.

We are confident that this targeted waiver preserves the intent of the ground-floor transparency requirement, which is to support flexibility and viability of ground-floor commercial uses facing the public realm, while providing the relief this development needs to pursue a creative design strategy.

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Ryan Kiracofe-Pennrose
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Glenn Mutz-TAT

REGARDING: Parcel 9-Building Two
Concept Plan – Application Waiver

Careful consideration was taken during the design process to ensure that Building Two conforms to the design standards as outlined in the I-195 Development District Development Plan document. Upon review of our submission against the I-195 Development document, our current design does not provide 70% of the transparent wall area as outlined in section 2.5 2b. Building Two provides 40% of the ground-floor façade that is transparent. Due to programmatic restraints, there is a portion of wall space that provides no transparency as it abuts resident parking. As shown in previous renderings, this area is planned to be adorned with a green wall, art murals, and/or other active façade treatments. At this time, we would be seeking a waiver from the I-195 District for not providing a 70% transparent wall area as outlined in section 2.5 2b.

We look forward to continuing to work with the I-195 Development Committee, Utile, and the community to create a design that not only responds to the I-195 Development District Development Plan requirements, but a design that enhances the neighborhood context.