



February 11, 2025

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 January 7, 2025 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. A more recent set of design application materials were received on January 28, 2025, and any conditions no longer relevant to the latest materials have been removed from the list.

Recommended Conditions for Approval

While several recent targeted design revisions have improved the overall quality of the project, the Design Review Panel recommends addressing the following issues during the design development process and prior to final design approval.

1. Massing
 - a. The interlocking massing logic provides an opportunity for occupiable outdoor amenity spaces for residents. Further studies should explore design options to maximize this potential.

- b. The interlocking massing feels overly symmetrical, with almost equal heights for the top and bottom halves at both ends of the building. Calibrating the number of stories in each section could improve the visual hierarchy of the massing. For example, providing a base up to three stories on one end of the building that graduates into a six- to seven-story massing could introduce opportunities to incorporate larger windows in the upper massing facing the District Park on one side, and a six- to seven-story lower massing on the other side to reference the scale of the historic buildings.
- 2. Facade Design and Materiality
 - a. The Design Review Panel appreciates the brick detailing and staggered windows in the upper massing, which add visual appeal and help break down the building's scale. However, the lowest row of windows on the overhanging massing appears too close to the soffit. Further refinements should reconsider this proportion.
 - b. Incorporating operable windows in all living spaces and bedrooms is strongly encouraged as it would improve the quality of life of the occupants and further animate the facade.
 - 3. Ground Plane
 - a. The east-facing residential entry conditions are clearly defined by the recessed lobby entrance and access paths. The Park-facing entry to the commercial space should be better emphasized as a community anchor through more significant design gestures.
 - b. The patio facing the District Park should be enlarged to create a more generous space for patrons. Grass slopes could be replaced by retaining walls at the sidewalk to maximize usable outdoor patio areas.
 - 4. Phasing and Site Planning re: 200 Dyer
 - a. Part of the existing 200 Dyer building is depicted to be demolished for Phase 1 of the proposed development. However, the lawn depicted between the smaller 200 Dyer building and the proposed building lacks functional value and also occupies existing parking spaces for 200 Dyer. In future iterations, the design team should include an option that retains the footprint of the existing 200 Dyer building and shows additional parking behind 200 Dyer St to better understand the resolution of the site should the existing building remain.

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

Regards,

utile

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
115 Kingston Street
Boston, MA 02111