

July 7, 2023

Caroline Skuncik, Executive Director
I-195 Redevelopment District Commission
225 Dyer Street, 4th Floor
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Parcel 2 Concept Plan Design Review – Response to Comments

Dear Caroline,

Urbanica is pleased to provide this memo, and accompanying presentation, in response to the comments offered by Utile and the Commission's Design Review Panel in their memo dated May 12, 2023, as well as those voiced at our first Concept Plan Meeting on May 17, 2023 by Commission Members, the Neighborhood Design Panel Representatives, and the general public. We will also include an updated list of anticipated waivers.

Site Plan & Public Realm

We are working on refining our amenity program. We envision the ground floor will include a mix of resident only and public amenities that will be strategically placed. The corners of the site will feature public amenities such as retail and our anchor food/beverage concept. Tenant only amenities on the ground floor will be placed in less high traffic pedestrian areas and include a resident lounge which we envision activating with comfortable seating, TV's, pool tables etc. We also plan on having a tenant only gym and some outdoor terraces on the Floors 3 – 5.

We are excited to have retained landscape architect, Kyle Zick, principle at Kyle Zick Landscape Architect (KZLA). He has begun work on this project and is developing the overall landscape strategy and public realm plan.

In response to accessibility issues, we have relocated and straightened the ramp so it runs along the edge along South Water Street. This will improve its visibility and encourage a more intuitive navigation from the street to plaza level. We know that there are other accessibility concerns such as an accessible route to the cafe space at the corner of James Street and South Water Street as well as the arcade that rises above it. We are studying these issues with our landscape architect and will consult with our accessibility consultant for final plan.

We heard and understand the comments and concern that we need to strengthen the corner plaza at James Street and South Water Street. We stand behind the café program as we believe it is a desired amenity for both building tenants, neighborhood residents, and visitors, particularly given its direct route from the pedestrian bridge. For this iteration of the design, we added a wall to the back of our terrace and planters along the edge of James Street to define the outdoor terrace space. The landscape architect and design architect are working together to strengthen the corner plaza at James Street and South Water Street.

Facade Design

We worked to refine and simplify the façade in this iteration of the design and will continue to work on this area as we move forward. Specifically, we will break down and/or articulate the rear facade of the five-story mass facing the river, stop the bay window before the top floor, and continue to work on simplifying and unifying the James Street façade so it holds that corner. We acknowledge the

comments regarding the kink of the gray building volumes facing the courtyard and along South Main may be an example of where there is one move too many. We anticipate simplifying the perimeter of the building as the plan gets more developed.

We explored different approaches to unifying the piers. We did not like the cornice but found many nice historical precedents which have an “open and continuous” pier expression and suited our design.

For the asymmetrical bays and wood-paneled fenestration, we identified a product line which has a more regular and simple wood-looking panel system. We have modified our drawing to include that system.

Materiality

We spent time looking at different materials, colors, textures, and concluded that having two colors is a simple and effective way to achieve the goal of breaking down the massing. The subtle details, such as changing coursing, are cost prohibitive, and will not break down the massing as we intend.

We are very aware that it will be important to address the detailing of the shingle system early to resolve difficult transitions such as corners and how the shingled condition is mediated to meet the ground plane. In our recent project in Jamacia Plain, Parcel U, we used a “X Channel” detail that worked well at the corners and believe will work well for this project. We intend to explore alternative detail solutions to select the best looking and performing outcome for the building. We definitely understand the concern regarding the number of piers and the challenge the corners may present and will continue to pay special attention to these details as the design progresses. We are confident that we will find the right solution given our previous experience.

We intend to conduct studies on the final material and color choices as the project advances through design development to construction drawings.

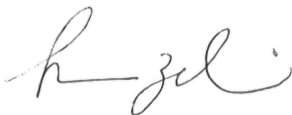
Waiver Request

We anticipate only requesting one (1) waiver for consideration by the Commission as follows:

1. Minimum Ground Floor Height: The I-195 Development Plan states that the Minimum Ground Floor Height must be 18' for non-residential use. In Building B (building that corners Dollar Street) our ground floor height is 16'. We reduced the height of the ground floor in our redesign with SHPO to reduce overall height of the building, while still maintaining the 6 stories to maximize unit count and help with project feasibility.

We thank you for your time in reviewing this memo and look forward to presenting the next iteration of our design at the July 19th Commission Meeting. Please let us know if you have any questions or comments prior to then.

Best,



Kamran Zahedi
President, Urbanica, Inc.