



# EAST PROVIDENCE WATERFRONT SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT COMMISSION

## Design Review Committee (DRC) Public Workshop Minutes March 27, 2013

*Members:* John Gregory, DRC Chairman  
Bruce Chick  
Luis Torrado  
Stephen Coutu, DPW Director  
Jeanne Boyle, Executive Director

*Consultants:* Sara Bradford, Landscape architect  
Glen Fontecchio, Architect  
Bradley Leach, Traffic engineer

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Chairman Gregory called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

### **1. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

VOTE: A motion was made to approve the minutes (with changes) from the October 1, 2012 and October 24, 2012 DRC meetings: the motion was seconded and was approved unanimously, without discussion.

### **2. New Business-**

#### **A. Public workshop- Kettle Point residential development project**

The project team was in attendance, along with representatives of C&B Kettle Point LLC, the proposed project developer. A presentation to the DRC and other City officials in attendance was made by: Ms. Christine Engustian, attorney for the project; Ms. Engustian stated that the developer appeared several times before the DRC and Waterfront Commission in October of 2012. The Commission gave the project a preliminary approval on October 24, 2012. Since then, the developer has refined the proposal, based on feedback generated during the preliminary review process. The team gave an overview of the project and highlighted changes to the plans since the Waterfront Commission last saw them in 2012.

The project is considered a luxury development: 1-BR would be approximately \$1,200/month; the 2-BR units would be \$1,800/month. There is a required affordable component is ten percent of the total units.

Mr. Jeremy Lake of Union Studio, the project architectural firm, the project engineering firm, gave an overview of the project. The development consists of two parcels: one is owned by ARCO and one is owned by BP Corporation. The main loop road and the Bike Path parking will be public: the public can also ride bikes on the loop ride. There is a network of pedestrian ways, both public and semi-public. The open spaces have been sited at the high points on the site, for the best views up and down the Bay. The project will incorporate access to the adjacent Squantum Woods park.

Open space will comprise approximately twenty percent of the total development project. The main loop road will have a boulevard feel that will link three areas of open space. Parking for larger buildings will be internal to the blocks, leaving the street edge free of driveways and

garages; duplex condominiums would be accessed through the interior of the block as well. There are view corridors to the water throughout the development.

The project will have a total of 407 residential units: 276 “garden-style” apartments are in the primary buildings, with 1-2 bedrooms; 62 townhouse condominium units; and a 69-unit condominium complex in the “signature” building that may be rental units, depending on the market. The architecture will be traditional in style in a varied color scheme: some buildings will have porches to contribute to a community feel. The building height along the VMP is approximately 35 feet tall, with 3-story buildings that will be setback at least 100 feet from the road. The signature building will have a patio and a pool. There will be a scenic overlook across the street from it: on-street public parking will be provided.

Mr. John Carter of John Carter & Company, the project landscape architect, described the site’s open space in more detail. He showed a drawing of the point at Kettle Point, which will be a public park. There will be public parking available for pedestrian access to the point, which has wonderful views up and down the Providence River. There will be some grading and clearing work at the location: most of what is growing there now is invasive. A path will lead out to the point itself and a spur path will lead to a cleared field for passive recreation for the public. There will be replanting of native species.

The majority of the traffic will be coming from the north. The intent is to abandon the existing road from Veteran’s Memorial Parkway (VMP). The northern entrance will have a boulevard island and two stone towers with plantings and fencing for a more formal entrance. There will be a stone marker with the development name north of the entrance on VMP.

The southern access will have plantings and will be on a smaller scale than the northern entrance. The southern entrance will incorporate access to Squantum Woods park and will have public parking along the road, as well as a small parking area: there would be limited clearing of trees for a promontory looking down onto the Park. There will be extensive planting of shade trees along VMP to try to create a canopy effect along the Parkway, as well as conifers to screen some of the buildings and provide a buffer from the road. There will also be a managed area of grass alongside VMP to create better views and sight lines. The grade difference between the tallest building and the Parkway is less than ten feet, so the buildings will be seen between the trees but there will be breaks between buildings to see the water.

Mr. Fontecchio asked that the connection to the public parking at the Bike Path, even if the road has to snake a little to provide a view corridor, to open up the views. Don Powers of Union Studio stated that this was looked at. Ms. Boyle said the project will also have to go before the Planning Board: the waiver for curbing is for the Planning Board, not to the Waterfront Commission. Mr. Coutu said that the DPW is opposed to the granting of this waiver.

Mr. Paul Bechard of Mountain Ave. asked if there was a plan for improvements in the southern area of Squantum Woods. Ms. Boyle stated that, as part of this project, there is no work scheduled to be done in this area by the developer: there will also be no land swap between the City and the developer. Mr. Smith of South Broadway asked why Squantum Woods is still closed: Ms. Boyle stated that there was an erosion issue that is currently being addressed and the park should re-open soon.

Ms. Jean Kelly of Veteran's Memorial Parkway asked what the plan is for the existing pier at the site: the existing pier is under evaluation and discussion for the highest and best use for its use. There is no plan for it in the current development proposal. She also asked how many signs will there be for the project on VMP and what will be their size: there will be a stone column with the development's name, more like a monument than a free-standing sign. The southern end will have the same treatment. There will be 5-foot tall bollards, approximately one hundred feet apart: they would be approximately fifteen feet off of the VMP, but that is up to the Scenic Roadways Board and the RI Department of Transportation.

Mr. Dennis DiPrete of DiPrete Engineering, the project engineer, explained the process by which the construction drawings were developed based on meetings with State agencies and City departments. The agencies are now generating comments about the plans that the team are responding to. Mr. Audie Osgood of DiPrete addressed the turning lanes because the traffic engineer could not attend the meeting. The VMP will not be widened but will be restriped for a center left-turn lane to accommodate traffic in each direction. The southern entrance location is due to constrained site distances. It is slightly more than adequate, but if the entrance is moved then site distances will decrease. There is no need for a deceleration lane at this location. Most of the traffic will be leaving the northern entrance and head north. The existing driveway will have the pavement removed and replaced by a small gravel walkway for access. No takings of private land are required for the project. City land will also remain City land. Rumble strips or textured pavement are not proposed for VMP in the traffic study.

Mr. Gregory agreed that the average speeds on the Parkway stated in the traffic study seem low. Mr. Osgood stated that the average width is 39-40 feet of existing road: that will not change with the restriping. Mr. David Kelly of Veteran's Memorial Parkway asked about the percentage of cars exceeding the speed limit: 39 mph was the low speed and 49 mph was the high speed.

Mr. Kelly stated that the northbound lane in front of the northern entrance is backed up for two to three weeks per year at 9AM when the Bay View Academy opens. Mr. Osgood stated that this may still be the case after the development is constructed: there are limited options open, due to the State regulation of the Parkway. Mr. Gregory stated that the developer will need to address the intersection at Broadway and Lyon Ave.

Mr. Kelly asked if the original road could remain open as the northern entrance: Mr. Osgood said the site distances are worse than the proposed northern entrance when pulling out of the road onto VMP. The proposed turn lane is centered in the Parkway. Left turns coming from the south into the development will be minimal: only thirty percent of the traffic will be to and from that entrance.

Mr. Brad Leach of Gordan Archibald Co., the Commission's traffic consultant, said that he has talked to the developer's consultant: they will meet to discuss the traffic study further, particularly about the pedestrian access across VMP to the Kettle Point development. Mr. Gregory asked if someone on the team could give a summary of the fiscal impact study, acknowledging that neither the developer nor the Commission had their fiscal consultants present at the meeting. Mr. Richard Baccari, project developer, said that the fiscal impact is positive, especially given the current taxes paid on the property. At full build-out the project will contribute approximately \$750,000/year to the City. Phase 1 clean-up and site work for the project will cost approximately \$50 million; Phase 2 condominium construction will be

approximately \$25 million.

Mr. Baccari stated that the school impact will be minimal due to the underutilization of schools currently in the City. The fiscal consultant for the project did an extensive fiscal impact study for Village on the Waterfront project and has used the same information for the Kettle Point fiscal study. This information will be submitted to the Commission: its omission was an oversight. It will be discussed at the next DRC meeting. Mr. Gregory said that the fiscal impact study did not take into account the City taking over the park at the point.

There is on-going permitting that will need to be done after the project is approved by the Commission. Site environmental monitoring will be determined by the Remedial Action Workplan (RAWP): RIDEM is still working with the development team on developing the RAWP.

Until all of the permits are obtained, the site is still for sale, which is why there is still a “for sale” sign. The timeframe is the end of August for the developer to close on the site. It will be one year from permits to opening and another year and a half before it build-out, so three years from this August to project completion.

VOTE: A motion was made to close the public workshop: the motion was seconded and was approved unanimously without discussion.

The workshop was adjourned at 8:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,

JEANNE M. BOYLE  
*Executive Director*

JMB/RG