



EAST PROVIDENCE WATERFRONT SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT COMMISSION

Design Review Committee Meeting Minutes- April 25, 2014

DRC John Gregory, DRC Chairman
Members: John Pesce
Stephen Coutu, DPW Director

Staff: Roberta Groch, AICP- Planner
Oscar Elmasian, East Providence Fire Chief

Consultants: Glen Fontecchio, Architectural Consultant
Sara Bradford, Landscape Architectural Consultant

Chairman Gregory called the meeting to order at 9:17AM.

1. DRC- New Business

A. Design workshop- Village on the Waterfront development project

481 Veteran's Memorial Parkway

Owner: Chevron USA Inc.

Applicant: Chevron Land and Development Company, Providence Realty Investment LLC

Assessor's Map 17, Block 1, Parcel 1

Assessor's Map 18, Block 1, Parcel 1

Assessor's Map 18, Block 2, Parcel 2

The project team of: Ms. Christine Engustian, attorney for Providence Realty Investment (the developer of the Village on the Waterfront project); Mr. Audie Osgood and Mr. Kevin Demers of DiPrete Engineering; Mr. Jay Szymanski of TAT Architects; and Mr. Randall Collins and Mr. Nathan Sochi of Beta Group discussed the changes to the Village on the Waterfront (VOTW) project site plan that was previously approved by the Waterfront Commission.

Mr. Osgood brought the Committee up to date on the progress being made at the Chevron property. There has been extensive remediation and re-grading at the site for the past year: it will be another six to twelve months before it is completed. The \$200 million project will still have 603 residential units: however, the number of apartments is being increased to 199, to meet market demand, and will be smaller than originally planned. These units will be the first to be constructed in Phase 1, along with the retail component, which has been reduced to 30,000 square feet. The project will now be constructed in four phases instead of five. The team has a new architectural firm that has drafted a new site plan to reflect this change from condominiums to rental units. The team hopes to begin constructing building foundations in spring of 2015.

Chief Elmasian of the East Providence Fire Department stated that he was concerned about the turning radii into the project and access to the buildings by his fire equipment: the large grade differences on the site will make the access to the north end of the project a challenge. The minimum road width needed for a fire truck is twenty-four feet. The Chief's concern is the challenge if the Fire Department needs to remove residents from a window in the back of one of the large northern buildings: there is no easy way to reach these buildings from the North

Broadway Fire Station. Chief Elmasian said that he would like to receive a memo and set of plans so that he can discuss them with Fire Prevention. Mr. Osgood replied that he would get the plans to the Chief and schedule a follow-up meeting with him to discuss them.

Mr. Osgood stated that the revised plans do not include the construction of Waterfront Drive in Phase 1. Mr. Gregory stated that he had a problem with this. Ms. Groch stated that the project's tax increment financing (TIF) agreement with the City could be in jeopardy, as the original plans included Waterfront Drive in Phase 1. Mr. Osgood and Ms. Engustian said that they would check into this.

Mr. Fontecchio, architect for the Waterfront Commission, stated that the bicycle path/road/roundabout at the southern end of the site seems barren and unsafe. Mr. Collins, the team's landscape architect, replied that the end of the road gives drivers a place to turn around and emergency access to that end of the development. Mr. Fontecchio asked if the team could re-work this and turn it into more of a gateway.

Ms. Bradford, landscape architect for the Commission, agreed that the roundabout could be made less utilitarian: Mr. Collins replied that it will change due to fire access concerns. The team will look at it again.

Mr. Fontecchio requested that the buildings at the northern end of the site be re-situated such that they refer to each other, rather than seeming to be in random locations. Ms. Bradford agreed. Mr. Gregory asked that the team develop elevations for the Committee. Ms. Engustian added that view corridors were important to the Committee and the Waterfront Commission during the last review of the project and that the team should create plans that show them. There was a discussion about common space and the need to lessen the impact of garage doors on pedestrians.

The VOTW is looking to submit the revised plans to the Waterfront Commission in late May or early June.

2. Adjournment

VOTE: A motion was made to close the DRC meeting: the motion was seconded and unanimously approved, without discussion.

The hearing was adjourned at 10:28AM.

Respectfully submitted,

JEANNE M. BOYLE
Executive Director

JMB/RG