John Goncalves
Councilman - Ward 1

PROVIDENCE CITY HALL
25 DORRANCE STREET, ROOM 310
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903
OFFICE: 401-521-7477
WARD1@PROVIDENCERI.GOV

COMMITTEES

Special Committee on State Legislative Affairs- Chairman

Special Committee on Economic Growth Strategies

January 11, 2022

The Honorable Daniel McKee
Governor of Rhode Island
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

I-195 Redevelopment District Commission
Robert C. Davis, Chairman
315 Iron Horse Way, Ste. 101
Providence, RI 02908

Dear Chairman Davis and Governor McKee:

We understand the I-195 Redevelopment Commission will soon be deciding on a developer for Parcel 2. As the elected Councilman for Ward 1, I would like to take an opportunity and share my constituents' concerns and feedback for the development of the land, after a thoughtful and thorough Ward 1 community process.

Following presentations at a Ward 1 community meeting, we returned nearly 75 written surveys including those of dozens of direct abutters to the parcel in response to the three proposals. A condensed breakdown of those comments, particularly from abutters, showed the following:

- The height of all three proposals is at odds with the community.
- The building should have two fronts; seeing that the site is between two "A" main streets, The Fox Point-facing east entrances should be as much the 'front' of the structure as the river-facing west entrances. The Fox Point and College Hill neighborhood entrance should not be a back door.
- Lack of parking spaces
- More green space is needed

The proposed height of the project between five and six stories is too tall and conflicts with the skyline view, particularly for neighbors on Benefit Street. Community feedback is strong for a reduced structure. Given the RFP, we understand that this is a lofty ask. As such, the incorporation of a transparent element in the design would help allay concerns. Additionally, step-downs in height and scale should be incorporated so as to not obstruct river views of Benefit Street residents. As such we respectfully request that the Commission work with the selected developer to produce shadow studies that can be shared with abutting neighbors during the design review phase.

John Goncalves
Councilman - Ward 1

PROVIDENCE CITY HALL
25 DORRANCE STREET, ROOM 310
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903
OFFICE: 401-521-7477
WARD1@PROVIDENCERI.GOV

COMMITTEES

Special Committee on State Legislative Affairs- Chairman

Special Committee on Economic Growth Strategies

Secondly, all proposals lack adequate parking for residents and visitors. The long-term implications of parking congestion on South Water Street and a spillover effect on South Main, Benefit, and lower Wickenden Streets are uncertain. Many businesses already lose customers because they cannot find parking. Pollution from emissions, light, and noise is also a high concern. More parking, above and beyond what zoning calls for, is warranted. A more comprehensive road planning and development plan in partnership with the city and state around this site and in the general neighborhood, informed by the most up-to-date traffic studies, is also required to proactively address and mitigate these concerns.

Lastly, more green space is encouraged. Neighbors would appreciate the addition of more greenery, a green roof, side street plantings and trees, less hardscape, and more permeable paving.

We understand the immense task before the Commission, which includes balancing the considerations of our neighborhood with development and growth in the capital city and state. With that said, neighbors have expressed to me, as their elected voice, to respectfully request the Commission be considerate of all of these concerns and ensure that your final decision on the proposal happens "with the community" rather than simply "to the community."

Thank you for your time and consideration as this Parcel 2 development will have implications on the neighborhoods for years, if not decades, to come.

Sincerely,

John Goncalves
Councilman Ward 1
Chairman, Committee on State Legislative Affairs

Tayo Heuser
Resident/Abutter, Benefit Street

Jeffrey Shore
Resident/Abutter, Benefit Street

Carl & Grace Farmer,
Resident/Abutter, Benefit Street

Barbara Garabedian
Resident/Abutter, South Water Street

Rebecca Wild
Resident/Abutter, South Water Street

Tom Wesley
Resident/Abutter, South Water Street

Ronna Sanchez
Resident/Abutter, South Water Street

John Goncalves
Councilman - Ward 1

PROVIDENCE CITY HALL
25 DORRANCE STREET, ROOM 310
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903
OFFICE: 401-521-7477
WARD1@PROVIDENCERI.GOV

COMMITTEES

Special Committee on State Legislative Affairs- Chairman

Special Committee on Economic Growth Strategies

Pam A. Casadonte
Resident/Abutter, Benefit Street

David Savitz
Resident/Abutter, Benefit Street

Tom & Rose Connaughton
Resident/Abutter, Benefit Street

Jeffrey Wickham
Resident, Sheldon Street

Carol E. Kuempel
Resident, Sheldon Street

Leslie Myers
Resident, Sheldon Street

Sarah Gleason
Resident, Fox Point

Nicholas Cicchitelli,
President, Fox Point Neighborhood Association

Charles W. Hewitt
Resident, Benefit Street

Rick Champagne
President, College Hill Neighborhood Association

Nina Markov
Vice President, College Hill Neighborhood Association

Liz Mauran
Mile of History Neighborhood Association, Benefit Street Resident

CC: Caroline Schunik, Executive Director, I-195 Redevelopment District Commission
Sandra Smith, I-195 Redevelopment District Commission
Barrett Bready, I-195 Redevelopment District Commission
Stefan Pryor, I-195 Redevelopment District Commission
Bonnie Nickerson, I-195 Redevelopment District Commission
Michael F. McNally, I-195 Redevelopment District Commission
Marc Crisafulli, I-195 Redevelopment District Commission

State Representative Christopher Blazejewski, District 2
State Representative Edith Ajello, District 1

John Goncalves
Councilman - Ward 1

PROVIDENCE CITY HALL
25 DORRANCE STREET, ROOM 310
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903
OFFICE: 401-521-7477
WARD1@PROVIDENCERI.GOV

COMMITTEES

Special Committee on State Legislative Affairs- Chairman

Special Committee on Economic Growth Strategies

State Senator, Tiara Mack, District 6
State Senator, Samuel Zurier, District 3