

Providence City Plan Commission

July 21, 2020



AGENDA ITEM 3 ■ 946 WESTMINSTER STREET



An aerial view of the site



View of the site from Westminster Street



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

SECOND AND THIRD FLOOR PLAN



Proposed building floor plans and site plan

OVERVIEW

OWNER/APPLICANT: Omni Group, Applicant
IA CFG Portfolio LLC, Owner

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The applicant is proposing to construct three, three-story buildings, each with 16 units, on three adjacent lots at 946 Westminister Street. The subject lots will be reconfigured pending an administrative subdivision. The applicant is seeking final plan approval.

CASE NO./ 19-076 MI

PROJECT TYPE: Final Plan Approval

PROJECT LOCATION: 946 Westminister Street
AP 29 Lots 496, 510, 511
C-2 zone

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the Final Plan if conditions of Preliminary Plan approval have been met.

NEIGHBORHOOD: West End

PROJECT PLANNER: Choyon Manjrekar

DISCUSSION

The subject property is composed of three lots (AP 29 Lots 496, 510 and 511) that front on Westminster Street. Lots 510 and 496 each measure 3,009 SF and lot 511 measures 15,485 SF. The lots are vacant and have been used for accessory parking for the former Citizen's Bank building on an adjacent parcel. The applicant proposes to reconfigure the subject lots to allow for construction of three, three-story buildings, each with 16 units. Preliminary plan approval was granted in December 2019 with the CPC granting design waivers for provision of residential space within 20 feet of a main street, and from the corner side yard setback requirement on lot 511. The CPC's approval was based on its findings of fact, and contingent on certain conditions as listed below.

Findings of Fact—Preliminary Plan

The CPC made the following findings of fact at the Preliminary Plan stage:

1. *Consistency with Providence Tomorrow: The Comprehensive Plan* – The subject property is located in an area that the future land use map of Providence Tomorrow: The Comprehensive Plan intends for Neighborhood Commercial/Mixed Use development. Housing is a use encouraged by this land use designation. The CPC found that provision of housing would conform to objective H-2 of the plan which encourages creation of new housing opportunities in the City.

2. *Compliance with the zoning ordinance:*

Use: The site is zoned C-2, which permits multifamily development by right.

Dimensions and Design: The CPC found that the development largely conformed to the dimensional and design requirements of the C-2 zone. The CPC found that the proposed height of 32'6" and siting of the proposed buildings met the dimensional requirements of the zone. The CPC found that the building design incorporated features encouraged by Section 1202 K of the ordinance including the use of a cornice for an articulated roof form, three dimensional elements like canopies, direct access from the street and a unifying architectural theme that employs varying textures and materials into the façade. Based on their review, the CPC required that the applicant revise the building's design to feature more prominent, detailed entrances.

The applicant requested design waivers from the requirement that no residential or parking uses be provided within 20 feet of a main street, and for the corner side yard setback for the building proposed on lot 511. Per the applicant, the location of the buildings was not conducive to providing retail and non-residential uses.

According to the applicant, mixed use development is planned for a proposed building on AP 29 Lot 501, within the complex. The CPC granted the waiver finding that mixed use development is difficult to provide on the subject lots and that the applicant will be providing mixed use amenities within the complex.

Parking: No parking is required for the buildings as each lot will measure less than 10,000 SF in the C-2 zone upon approval of the administrative subdivision. Parking will be provided on AP 29 lot 502, adjacent to the development. Per the records of the Department of Inspection and Standards (DIS), parking is a legal use. Based on their review, the CPC required that the applicant consider the entirety of the site for landscaping and traffic circulation and present this to the CPC at the final plan stage.

Landscaping: The CPC found that the applicant would meet the landscaping requirement based on the conceptual plan. The CPC required that the final landscaping plan shall be subject to the City Forester's approval.

3. *Environmental Impact*

The City Engineer determined that a stormwater management plan is not required. The CPC found that no negative environmental impacts are expected as the applicant is expected to come into conformance with all applicable environmental regulations.

4. *Buildable Lot*

The applicant shall apply for an administrative subdivision to configure the lots as depicted in the plan. The CPC found that there are no physical constraints that impact development of this property as it will conform to the dimensional requirements of the zoning ordinance and there are no impediments to development.

5. *Street Access*

The CPC found that adequate vehicular and pedestrian access is provided from Westminster Street.

Action—Preliminary Plan

The Preliminary Plan was approved subject to the following conditions:

1. The CPC granted the design waivers from provision of non-residential space on a main street and for the corner side yard setback for the building on lot 511.
2. The applicant shall apply for an administrative subdivision to align the lots as depicted in the plan.
3. The site shall be considered comprehensively with more information provided on landscaping and traffic circulation for the entire site.
4. The CPC required that the applicant meet with the community about the proposed development including the councilperson, and verbally report to the CPC on the process at the final plan stage.
5. The landscaping plan shall be subject to the City Forester’s approval.
6. The design of the building entrances shall be enhanced and further developed at the final plan stage.

Final Plan—Discussion

Based on the above findings, the applicant is required to appear before the CPC for final plan approval to demonstrate compliance with certain items. The applicant has addressed them as follows:

- The applicant shall meet with the community about the proposed development, and verbally report to the CPC on the process at the final plan stage.

The applicant conducted a virtual public meeting on July 15, 2020 using the zoom platform and has planned another for January 20, 2020. The applicant will report on these meetings.

- The design of the building entrances shall be enhanced and further developed.

The submitted final plans feature facades that have been enhanced from the preliminary submission, with a transparent projection running vertically on the façade on stories two and three. Awnings with the identification for each building further enhance the presence of the development relative to the street.

- The site shall be considered comprehensively with more information provided on landscaping and traffic circulation for the entire site.

The subject project is for the development of a portion of the former Citizen’s Bank property. In the short term, the applicant intends only to develop the three apartment buildings that are the subject of this project, and to convert a portion of the former bank to residences. The applicant intends to eventually develop the entire site, however. The CPC requested that the applicant present an overall concept for the development of the entire site at the final plan stage. The final site plan submission provides a comprehensive image of the entire site which includes the three subject buildings, the portion of the former bank that will be converted into 20 apartments, and the bank building that is proposed for office use. A proposed commercial or mixed use development is depicted along Cranston Street. A comprehensive landscaping plan is proposed for the entire site, which is currently mostly bare and fully paved. Landscaping strips are proposed along the perimeter and interior of the site. Some common landscaped space will be provided to the rear of the residential buildings and the renovated bank building. Although details on the tree species have not been provided, the landscaping would far exceed what was initially proposed and it appears that the plan will exceed the canopy coverage requirement and introduce more pervious surface onto the site. The applicant is required to provide a detailed landscaping plan with tree species and a canopy coverage calculation that will be subject to the City Forester’s approval.

RECOMMENDATION

The applicant has submitted responses to the conditions of Preliminary Plan approval. The CPC should determine if these conditions have been satisfactorily fulfilled. If it makes this determination, then it should grant final plan approval in accordance with the findings noted above.

DEVELOPER:



PROPOSED ADAPTIVE RE-USE AND PRESERVATION



ADAPTIVE RE-USE COMMERCIAL BUILDING



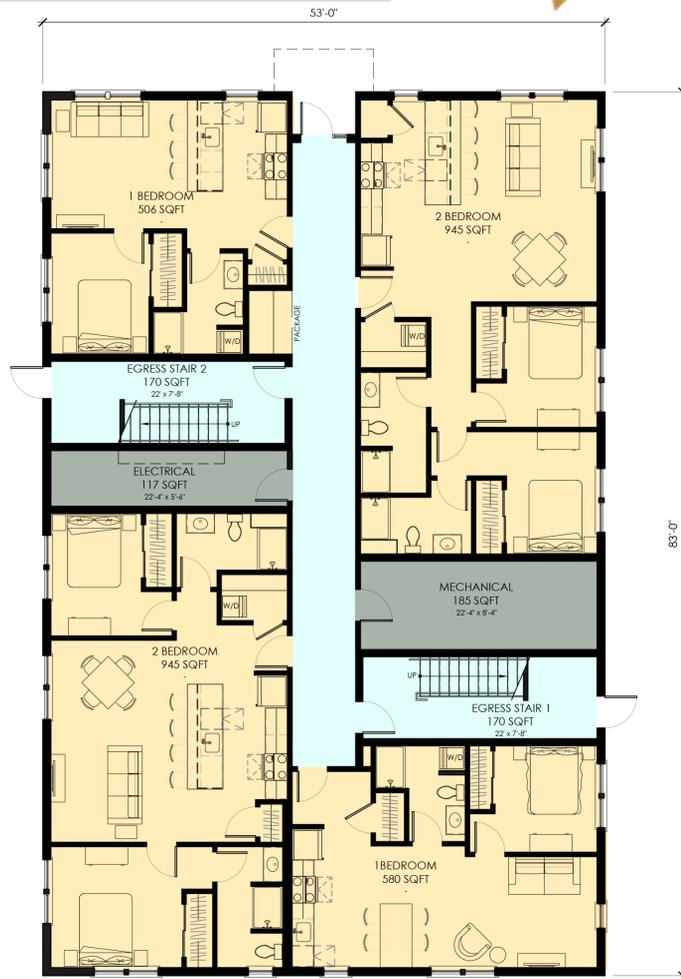
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS



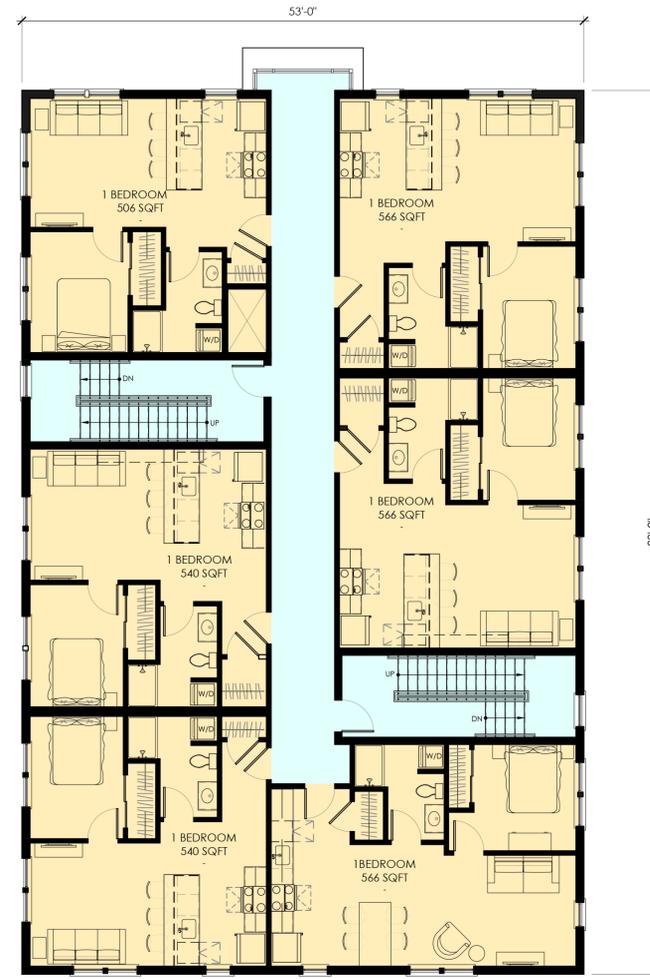
DEVELOPER:



PROPOSED NEW CONSTRUCTION RESIDENTIAL APARTMENTS



GROUND FLOOR PLAN
NORTH



SECOND AND THIRD FLOOR PLAN
NORTH

- 48 NEW RESIDENTIAL APARTMENTS (16 APARTMENTS PER BUILDING)
- 1 & 2 BEDROOM APARTMENTS
- LAUNDRY IN-UNIT
- OFF-STREET PARKING
- ACCESS CONTROL & BUILDING SECURITY
- MODERN, HIGH-END INTERIOR FINISHES

