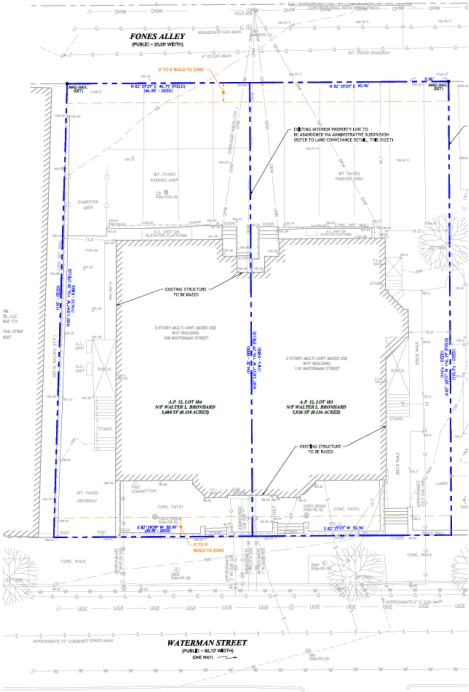


# Providence City Plan Commission

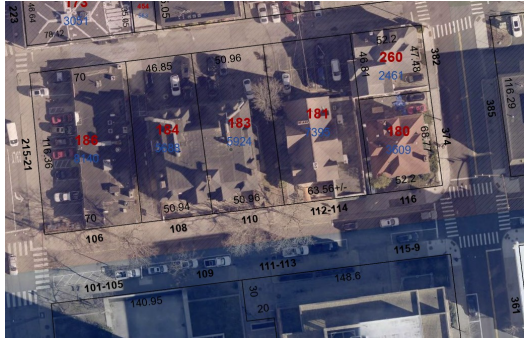
July 18, 2023



## AGENDA ITEM 1 ■ 108-110 WATERMAN STREET



View of building and rendering



Site plan and aerial view of the site

### OVERVIEW

<b>OWNER/ APPLICANT:</b>	Walter Bronhard	<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION:</b>	The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing building to construct a new mixed-use five story building with commercial use on the ground floor and 26 dwelling units through the building. The applicant is seeking a dimensional adjustment for height.
<b>CASE NO./ PROJECT TYPE:</b>	23-030 MA Master Plan	<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	Continue the matter for further study.
<b>PROJECT LOCATION:</b>	108-110 Waterman Street C-2 zoning district, I-3E overlay AP 12 Lot 183 and 184	<b>PROJECT PLANNER:</b>	Choyon Manjrekar
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD:</b>	College Hill		



Elevations and proposed floor plans

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The development is composed of two lots located between Waterman Street and Fones Alley. The site is zoned C-2 under the I-3E overlay. The lots are occupied by a building with a lot line passing through it. The applicant proposes to demolish the building, adjust lot lines, and construct a new five story mixed use building with commercial on the ground floor fronting on Waterman Street, and 26 residential units, a mix of one, two and three bedroom units. The applicant is requesting a dimensional adjustment for height where a height of 50’ and four stories is permitted by right but a height of 60’ and five stories is requested.

**CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETENESS**

The application was certified complete on July 17, 2023. Per R.I.G.L. § 45-23-40(e), the CPC has 90 days to act on the master plan by approving, denying, or approving with conditions. 90 days from July 18 is October 15.

**ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ISSUES**

Use

The property is zoned C-2 under the I-3E overlay. Residential and commercial development is permitted by right in the C-2 zone with no restriction on the number of dwelling units per lot. The I-3E overlay permits higher educational uses but is not relevant to this application.

Dimensions and site design

The building occupying the lots is proposed to be demolished, and reconfigured through an administrative subdivision resulting in a lot with an area of 9,862 SF. The proposed building is set to the front lot line on Waterman Street providing direct street access to the commercial space. Entrance for residents is provided from Fones Alley.

A dimensional adjustment has been requested for a

proposed height of approximately 60' and five stories—including a cellar and roof deck, which is over the 50' four-story height limit of the zone. Four units, the lobby and elevator, will be located on the ground floor in addition to the commercial space. Two units, utilities, and bike parking will be located in the cellar. Five units each will be located on each of the second through fifth stories.

Over 60% of the front façade will be located at the front lot line, meeting the build-to zone requirement. The building's exterior will employ stone veneer, wood siding and a composite panel system, which are materials permitted by right. The south elevation on Brook Street will primarily feature brick and glass on the ground floor, with the upper stories composed of a mix of glass and the masonry veneer with balconies. The transparency on the commercial area will exceed 50% and the upper stories will provide over 10% of required transparency.

A transformer serving the project will be located on lot 181 to the east of the development, which is also owned by the applicant, and accessible from Fones Alley.

#### Landscaping

Approximately 1,500 SF of canopy coverage is required to meet the landscaping requirement based on the proposed lot size. The applicant proposes to meet the canopy coverage requirement by preserving a honey locust tree in front of the building, which will account for 1,000 SF of canopy coverage, and by working with the City Forester to plant a medium tree on the lot, which will account for 700 SF of canopy coverage.

#### Parking

No parking is required or provided as the lot will measure less than 10,000 SF upon subdivision. However, one parking space on the property currently is reserved for another development by the applicant at 134 Waterman St. This would have to be addressed prior to approval. Five bicycle spaces are required to meet the bicycle parking requirement of one space for every five units. The applicant will meet this requirement by providing ten spaces in the basement.

#### Environmental impact

The site is exempt from conforming to the stormwater ordinance and does not require any state approvals. However, the applicant intends to tie into a dedicated storm drain in Brook Street. Trash will be collected from Fones Alley.

The applicant intends to maintain a roof deck that will be accessible to residents, providing seating and a gathering space. The DPD is concerned that the space could have a negative effect on the surroundings as the applicant intends to develop a proximate building with a rooftop gathering space at 116 Waterman Street. The cumulative impact of these gathering spaces could have a negative effect on the surroundings through generation of noise and the potential of residents to disturb other properties. It is the DPD's opinion that a roof deck should not be permitted.

The current building on the property is a distinctive looking structure. It is not in a local historic district. But it is in the College Hill National Register Historic District. It is described as a Queen Anne/Late Victorian structure, constructed in 1877. The DPD is of the impression that the demolition of this structure could have an adverse impact on the national register historic district and the built environment of the city. However, we feel that more study into the significance of the building should be performed prior to formulating a firm opinion.

#### Lighting

No external lighting sources are proposed.

#### Dimensional adjustment

The applicant is requesting a dimensional adjustment for one story and 10' of additional height. The applicant is eligible for the adjustment as mixed use development consisting of residential and retail will be provided.

## Public Outreach

The applicant conducted a public meeting on July 10 to discuss the project with neighbors.

## **FINDINGS**

Section 806 of the Commission's *Development Review Regulations* requires that the City Plan Commission make the following findings as part of their approval of all land development project applications. Based on the analysis contained herein and subject to the conditions contained in this report, staff has prepared the following findings regarding the request for approval of the master and preliminary plan stages:

1. *Consistency—The proposed development is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies.*

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. The plan describes these areas as ones intended to foster pedestrian oriented needs like retail and housing in buildings oriented toward the street. The development conforms to this land use designation. As the building will be located on a main street in proximity to a commercial corridor, it conforms to objective BE-2 of the plan which encourages new development to complement traditional character. Creation of housing will conform to objective H-2 of the plan which encourages creation of new housing. While the proposed building is largely consistent with the comprehensive plan, demolition of the historic structure may be inconsistent with Objective BE5 that calls for "preserv(ing) the historic buildings, districts and areas that contribute positively to Providence's urban fabric." Strategy E under this objective states: "protect and preserve historic resources citywide through the use of design standards, zoning controls, easements, and other tools."

2. *Compliance with Zoning Ordinance—The proposed development is in compliance with the standards and provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.*

Use: Mixed use development consisting of retail and residential use is permitted by right in the C-2 zone.

Dimension: The development will conform to the dimensional and design requirements of the C-2 zone subject to the CPC granting a dimensional adjustment for height. No residential or parking use is proposed within 20' of Waterman St., in compliance with Section 503.A.8 of the ordinance.

Parking: No parking is required as the lot will measure less than 10,000 SF upon subdivision, but the applicant will meet the bicycle parking requirement. One parking space on the property currently is reserved for another development by the applicant at 134 Waterman St. This will have to be addressed prior to approval.

Landscaping: The applicant will meet the landscaping requirement under the supervision of the City Forester.

3. *Environmental Impact—There will be no significant environmental impacts from the proposed development as shown on the final plan, with all required conditions for approval.*

As discussed, the DPD is not in favor of the roof deck. Also, the DPD feels that more study into the significance of the building should be performed prior to formulating a firm opinion on the impact to the built environment of the city.

4. *Buildable Lot—The subdivision or development project, as proposed, will not result in the creation of individual lots with such physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable.*

There are no physical constraints that impact development of this property, as the lot as proposed will comply with the dimensional requirements of the C-2 zone with no impediments to development.

5. *Street Access—All proposed development projects and all subdivision lots shall have adequate and permanent physical access to a public street. Lot frontage on a public street without physical access shall not be considered compliance with this requirement.*

Adequate pedestrian access is provided from Waterman Street and Fones Alley.

**RECOMMENDATION—Dimensional Adjustment**

The CPC should take no action on the request for a dimensional adjustment pending further study.

**RECOMMENDATION—Master Plan**

The CPC should continue the matter to the meeting of September 19, 2023, pending further study into the impact of the demolition of the building on the built environment and further findings of consistency with the comprehensive plan.