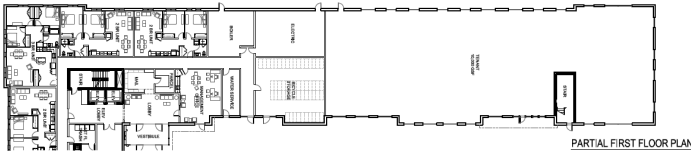


Providence City Plan Commission

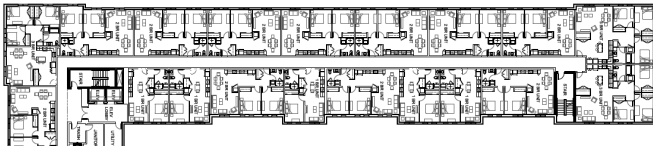
April 16, 2024



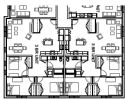
AGENDA ITEM 4 ■ 220 BLACKSTONE STREET



PARTIAL FIRST FLOOR PLAN



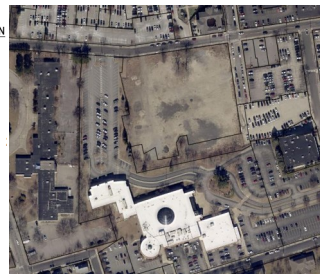
PARTIAL UPPER FLOOR PLAN



Rendering with floor plan



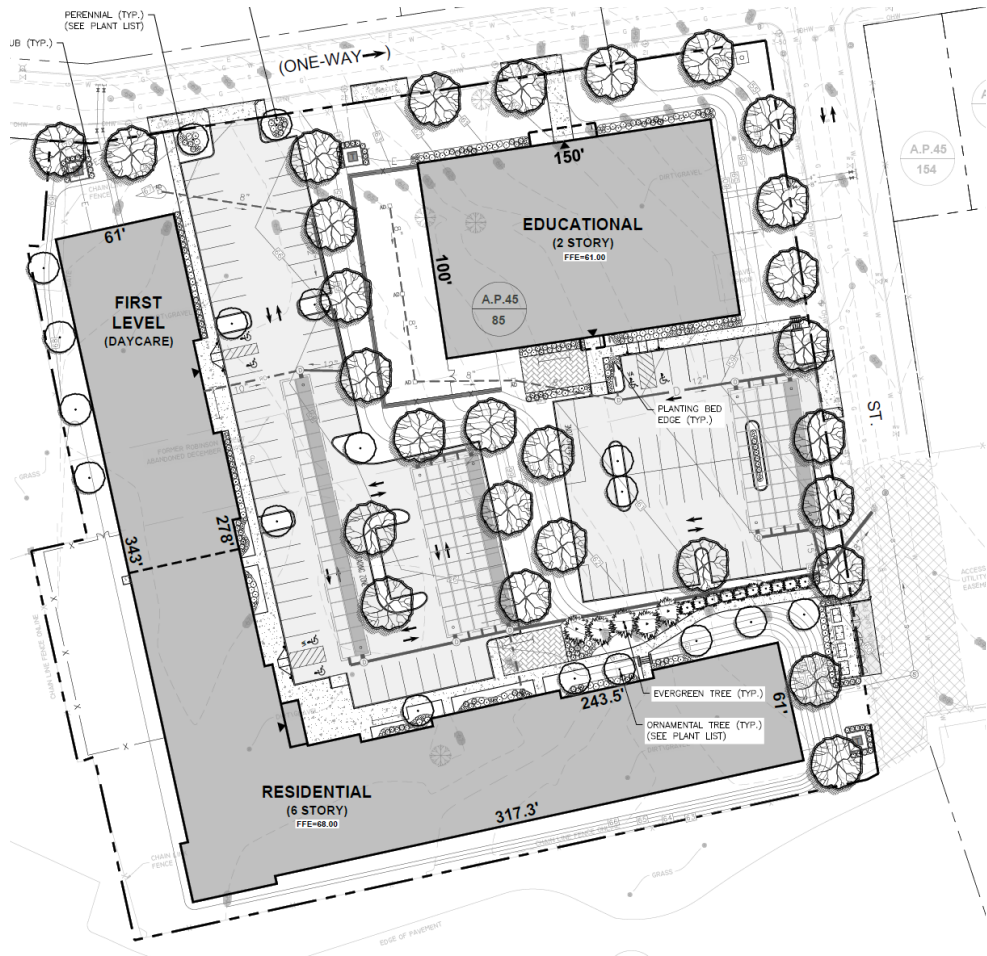
View from Blackstone Street



Aerial view of the site

OVERVIEW

OWNER/ APPLICANT:	Marathon Development LLC, Applicant and Owner	PROJECT DESCRIPTION:	Construction of a six story mixed use residential/commercial building, and a second two story commercial structure proposed for educational use in addition to ancillary site and roadway improvements including parking and landscaping. The applicant is seeking to combine master and preliminary plan approval. A 50% dimensional adjustment from the parking requirement and a waiver from submission of state approvals at the preliminary plan stage is also requested.
CASE NO./ PROJECT TYPE:	24-011 MA Master and Preliminary Plan		
PROJECT LOCATION:	220 Blackstone (AP 45 Lot 85) M-MU 75 zoning district	RECOMMENDATION:	Approval of the Master and Preliminary Plan subject to the noted findings
NEIGHBORHOOD:	Upper South Providence	PROJECT PLANNER:	Choyon Manjrekar



Site plan with landscaping

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The subject lot is zoned M-MU 75, currently vacant and measures approximately 128,733 SF (2.95 acres). The applicant is proposing to develop the site to construct two buildings; a six story, 68’ tall mixed use building with 178 total residential units with daycare on the ground floor, and a second two story building that will be used as an educational facility. Onsite improvements like parking, landscaping and lighting will be provided. In addition to a waiver from submission of state approvals at the preliminary plan stage, the applicant is requesting to combine master and preliminary plan approval. A dimensional adjustment from the parking requirement is requested where a total of 200 spaces are required but 101 will be provided.

ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ISSUES

Use

The subject lot is zoned M-MU 75 where mixed use

consisting of multifamily residential, commercial uses including daycare, and educational facilities are permitted by right.

Dimensions and site design

Mixed use building: The mixed use building consisting of residential and a daycare will be set to the western and southern lot lines of the development forming an ‘L’ shape extending north to south from Blackstone St to the rear lot line and then traveling eastward. The proposed height of 68’ and six stories is within the 75’ height limit of the zone.

The daycare will occupy 10,000 SF in the westerly wing of the ground floor. Bike parking, utilities, common space, and a management office will also be located on the ground floor in addition to 13 residences. Thirty three units consisting of a mix of one, two and three bedrooms will be located on floors two through six for a total of 178 apartments.

The building will conform to the design guidelines for multifamily and mixed-use development outlined in Section 1202.K of the ordinance. Recesses and projections with a cornice are incorporated into the façade to add dimensional variety to the design. The ground floor will incorporate significant amounts of transparency, employing large windows and transparent doors.

School building: The school building will be a 21' tall two story structure oriented toward Blackstone Street located behind a circular pickup and dropoff lane. The driveway will make use of two existing curb cuts. Parking accessible from Gay Street will be located at the rear. The façade will employ expansive transparency on the first floor and upper stories.

The site's layout will conform to the design guidelines in section 803.A of the ordinance by reducing the visual impact of the parking areas through building placement and using landscaping to provide a visual link between both areas of the campus.

Dimensional adjustment—Parking

A total of 200 parking spaces are required, with 178 required for 178 residential units, 10 for the daycare calculated as 1 space per 1,000 SF, and 12 for the school with a requirement of one per 3 employees with 35 employees expected. A 50% dimensional adjustment for parking has been requested as 101 spaces will be provided. The bicycle parking requirements of one per five dwelling units and three per classroom require a total of 66 spaces which will be met on site.

Based on plans provided, it is the DPD's opinion that the applicant is eligible for the adjustment per section 1904.E.i of the ordinance, as mixed use development with over 50% devoted to residential use will be provided, which is a criterion that makes the development eligible for the adjustment. The DPD recommends that the CPC grant the adjustment finding conformance with the ordinance.

Landscaping

With the parcel measuring approximately 151,389 SF, approximately 22,700 SF (15%) of canopy coverage is required. The applicant will meet this requirement by making plantings of small, medium and large trees around the site, mostly in planting strips around the perimeter of the lot and within the landscaped area between both buildings. In addition, 10% of canopy coverage will be provided for the parking areas, which exceed 20,000 SF. It appears that the plan will provide the required amount of coverage.

The City Forester has identified a significant tree on the site that will be affected by the building's siting. As the tree appears to be in declining health, the Forester is amenable to its removal provided an equivalent amount of canopy coverage is provided. The Forester estimates that 2,300 SF of canopy coverage is required to replace the loss of the tree. The applicant intends to protect a 32" diameter oak tree significant tree located towards the front of the property. The Forester recommends that a tree protection zone with a 30' be implemented and shown on the final plan. The final landscaping plan shall reflect these conditions and shall be subject to the Forester's approval.

Lighting

Per the submitted lighting plan, the applicant will use a combination of freestanding lights and wall mounted sconces to illuminate the site. The plan will conform to the ordinance as there will be no light trespass onto neighboring properties.

Environmental Impact

Drainage and erosion control plans have been submitted. The applicant will employ an underground stormwater infiltration system located within the central and eastern portions of the site, which is intended to reduce the amount

of runoff for one to 100 year events. The erosion control plan will employ soil stabilization measures and erosion barriers during construction and will conform the City's regulations. The plans shall be subject to the City Engineer's approval.

Waiver from submission of state approvals

The applicant has requested a waiver from submission of state approvals at the preliminary plan stage, and is requesting that they be submitted with the final plan. The site has received approvals from the Narragansett Bay Commission (NBC) and Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) for a different project previously planned for the site. The waiver is being requested to amend the approvals based on the current project. It is the DPD's opinion that the CPC should grant the waiver finding that it is required in the interest of good planning practice as it would allow the applicant to proceed with the development process.

Combination of stages

The applicant is requesting to combine master and preliminary plan approval. Subject to granting the waiver, the DPD recommends that the CPC combine approval, finding that the applicant has submitted the required elements for both stages.

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 Plans:

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 Business/Mixed Use development. The plan describes this area as one intended to foster the expansion of business, high density residential uses and a variety of uses. The development conforms to this land use designation and is also in conformance with objective H-2 of the plan which encourages building new housing.

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

Use: The proposed residential, daycare, and school uses are permitted by right in the M-MU 75 zone.

Dimension: As discussed, the development will conform to the dimensional and design requirements of the M-MU 75 zone. The exterior treatment and color of the buildings shall be subject to a resolution of the Providence Redevelopment Agency (PRA) which will occur prior to final plan approval.

Parking: The applicant will meet the parking requirement subject to the CPC granting a dimensional adjustment to provide 101 spaces where 200 are required.

Landscaping: It appears that the applicant will meet the canopy coverage requirement. The final landscaping plan and review of significant trees on the site shall be subject to the City Forester's approval.

Lighting: The lighting plan conforms to the ordinance.

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.*

No negative environmental impacts are expected as the applicant is required to come into conformance with applicable environmental regulations.

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.

The applicant shall apply for an administrative subdivision to merge the lots as depicted on the plan prior to final plan submission. Subject to the subdivision being approved, there are no physical constraints that impact development of this property as it will comply with the dimensional requirements of the M-MU 75 zone.

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 vehicular and pedestrian access will be provided from Blackstone and Gay Streets. The existing curb cuts on Blackstone Street will serve as access for the circular pickup/dropoff area for the school and entrance to the parking lot. The curb cut on Gay Street will provide access to the school's parking area.

RECOMMENDATION—Waiver from submission of state approvals

The CPC should vote to grant the waiver from submission of state approvals at the preliminary plan stage subject to the condition that the applicant submit the approvals with the final plan and return to the CPC if the approvals result in a change to the plan.

RECOMMENDATION—Combination of stages

Subject to waiving the state approval requirement, the CPC should vote to combine master and preliminary plan approval finding that all items required for both stages have been submitted.

RECOMMENDATION— Dimensional adjustment

The CPC should grant the dimensional adjustment for parking finding that the applicant will provide mixed use development with over 50% dedicated to residential use.

RECOMMENDATION— Master and Preliminary Plan

Based on the foregoing discussion and conditioned on the CPC approving the items above, the master and preliminary plans should be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. The drainage calculations and erosion control plan shall be subject to the City Engineer's review.
2. The landscaping plan shall be revised to the Forester's specifications and shall be subject to their approval.
3. The applicant shall apply for an administrative subdivision to orient the lots as depicted on the plan.
4. Final plan approval should be delegated to DPD staff.