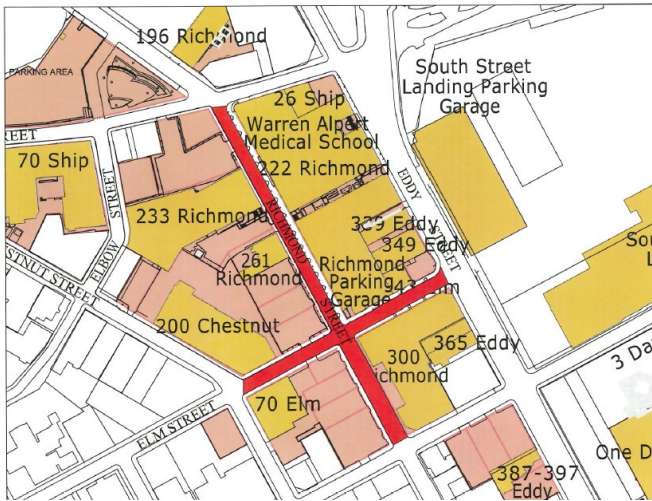


Providence City Plan Commission April 16, 2024



AGENDA ITEM 2 ■ ABANDONMENT OF RICHMOND AND ELM STREETS



Aerial view of the area

Proposed abandonment area

OVERVIEW

PETITIONER:	Brown University	PROJECT DESCRIPTION:	Abandonment of portions of Richmond and Elm Streets
CASE NO./ PROJECT TYPE:	REFERRAL 3574 Right-of-way abandonment		
PROJECT LOCATION:	Richmond and Elm Streets as depicted on petition	RECOMMENDATION:	Recommendation of approval subject to the noted findings of fact
NEIGHBORHOOD:	Downtown	PROJECT PLANNER:	Choyon Manjrekar

OVERVIEW

The petitioner is requesting that the City abandon a portion of Elm Street running between Eddy and Chestnut Streets and a portion of Richmond Street between South Street and Ship Street. The streets abut property owned by the petitioner, Brown University. The City has entered into a memorandum of agreement with the petitioner for voluntary payments and the abandonment is one of the conditions on which the agreement is contingent.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The *City Plan Commission Handbook* Policy No. 1: “Criteria and Guidelines for Approval of Street, Highway and Rights-of-way Abandonment,” states that six standards should be met before the Commission recommends approval of an abandonment request. Below are the standards, including staff comments for each:

1. *A public interest has to be clearly demonstrated. A public interest is defined as one or more of the following: public health and safety, adequate provision of transportation, general improvement of traffic patterns and/or circulation, convenient access to properties, avoidance of a nuisance, significant economic development, preservation of a historical or cultural feature, and improvement of the general welfare of the community.*

All the properties abutting the abandonment area are owned by Brown, with the medical school being the most prominent. The abandonment is intended to serve the proposed Integrated Life Sciences Building (ILSB), a 300,000 SF, seven story building at 233 Richmond Street. As Brown owns the abutting properties, the abandonment will not have an adverse impact on the public’s interest.

2. *No negative impact is evident on existing land uses, future plans, zoning, safety, health or welfare of the community by the proposed abandonment.*

It is not apparent that the abandonment will negatively affect future plans for development or existing land use as the proposed abandonment area is only useful for accessing land that is owned by Brown. Per the petition, Brown will work with the City and stakeholders to ensure traffic safety around the abandonment area. Therefore, no negative impacts to the health and welfare of the surrounding community are expected.

3. *All abutting landowners agree to the proposed abandonment.*

As discussed, the petitioner owns the land abutting the abandonment area.

4. *No physical or legal access will be denied to any land or property in surrounding areas by the proposed abandonment.*

No physical or legal access will be denied as the petitioner owns the land surrounding the abandonment area.

5. *No existing or future public services or facilities need to be protected, provided, or maintained within the right-of-way. An easement retention may be necessary to provide access to, maintain, or provide existing or future service or utility needs.*

It is unknown whether public services or facilities need to be protected, provided or maintained. The petitioner would need to grant any necessary easements.

6. *The proposed or intended use of the street and/or adjacent properties must be shown on a petition or plan, and such use shall be in conformance with existing zoning and Comprehensive Plan Objectives.*

A petition and plan have been provided. The petitioner is required to apply for an administrative subdivision to merge the abandoned portions of the street with the abutting properties prior to appearing before the council.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the foregoing discussion, the City Plan Commission should advise the Committee on Public Works that the proposed abandonment be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. The petitioners shall apply for an administrative subdivision to merge the abandoned street with their respective property prior to the public hearing before the City Council.
2. The petitioner shall grant any necessary easements for access to property, utility access and maintenance.