

Providence City Plan Commission January 21, 2025



AGENDA ITEM 2 ■ ABANDONMENT OF STEELE STREET



Proposed
abandonment area



View from Steele Street



Aerial view of the site

OVERVIEW

PETITIONERS:	161 Ridge Street LLC	PROJECT DESCRIPTION:	Abandonment of a portion of Steele Street
CASE NO./ PROJECT TYPE:	REFERRAL 3591 Right-of-way abandonment		
PROJECT LOCATION:	Steele Street adjacent to AP 5 Lots 314 and 469	RECOMMENDATION:	Recommendation of approval subject to the noted findings of fact
NEIGHBORHOOD:	Mt. Hope	PROJECT PLANNER:	Choyon Manjrekar

OVERVIEW

The petitioner is requesting that the City abandon a portion of Steele Street that is located between AP 5 Lots 314 and 469. Lot 469 is owned by the petitioner and can only be accessed from Steele Street as it is located to the rear of lot 316 which fronts on Woodbine Street. Lot 315 to the rear of lot 469, appears to be accessed from York Street. A portion of Steele Street is paved but it is largely undeveloped.

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.*

The portion of Steele Street proposed for abandonment is undeveloped and only appears to be useful for accessing property that it abuts. The petition expresses interest in abandoning Steele Street north and south of the area abutting lot 469, but it appears that those portions of the street are used for accessing the lots they abut. The DPD would not object to the abandonment of the portion of the street abutting lot 469 as it would not have an adverse impact on the public 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 the petitioner. No negative impact to the health and welfare of the surrounding community is expected as that portion of the street is not essential to provide access to other parts of the City.

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

The petitioner owns lot 469 that abuts the abandonment area. However, it is unclear if the owner of lot 314 on the western portion of the proposed abandonment area would claim a portion of Steele Street. It is also unknown if the owners of lots 315 and 316 would agree to abandoning the area to the north and south of the proposed abandonment area. It is the DPD’s opinion that all abutters should agree to a plan of abandonment prior to appearing before the council.

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

As discussed, no physical or legal access will be denied as the portion of the street proposed for abandonment is only useful for providing access to the lot it abuts.

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.

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. All abutters to Steele Street shall come to an agreement on a plan for abandonment prior to final approval.
2. The petitioner shall apply for an administrative subdivision to merge the abandoned street with their respective property prior to appearing before the City Council.
3. The petitioner shall grant any necessary easements for access to property, utility access and maintenance.