

Providence City Plan Commission

February 18, 2025



AGENDA ITEM 2 ■ 269 WICKENDEN STREET



Aerial view of the site



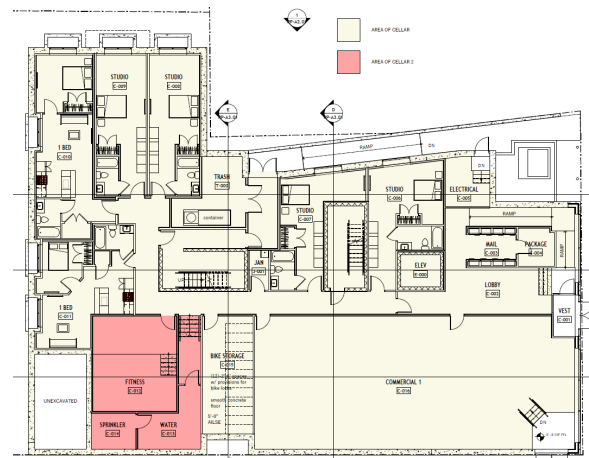
View from Wickenden and Brook Streets



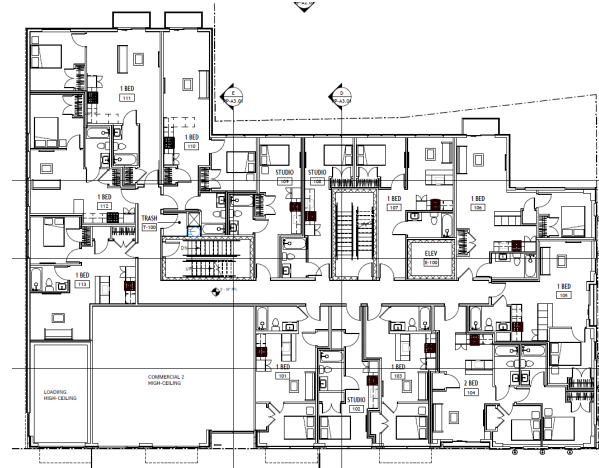
Building renderings from Brook and Wickenden Streets

OVERVIEW

OWNER/ APPLICANT:	Fox Point Capital LLC	PROJECT DESCRIPTION:	The applicant is requesting preliminary plan approval to construct a five story mixed-use building that will provide commercial space and 75 residential units in the C-2 zone. Design waivers and dimensional adjustments for the proposed design and height were granted at the preliminary plan stage.
CASE NO./ PROJECT TYPE:	23-021 MA Preliminary Plan		
PROJECT LOCATION:	269 Wickenden Street C-2 zoning district AP 18 Lots 190 and 192	RECOMMENDATION:	Approval of the Preliminary Plan subject to the noted findings
NEIGHBORHOOD:	Fox Point	PROJECT PLANNER:	Choyon Manjrekar



Building elevations



Cellar and first floor plans

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The development is composed of two lots, each zoned C-2 and occupied by a building that will be demolished. An administrative subdivision will merge the lots, which collectively measure 10,108 SF. The applicant has received an administrative modification from the Department of Inspection and Standards (DIS) to be eligible for a parking exemption as a lot of less than 10,000 SF.

The applicant is proposing to construct a 65’9”, five story tall mixed use building with a cellar level, loading space, two commercial spaces and 75 residential units. A dimensional adjustment for the proposed height was granted at the master plan stage in addition to a design waiver from the height of window sills over 2’ from grade.

ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ISSUES

Use

The property is zoned C-2 where mixed use development consisting of residential and commercial use is permitted by right.

Dimensions and site design

The building will be located on a corner lot fronting on Wickenden and Brook Streets. Brook Street has been designated as the front yard with Wickenden Street serving as the side yard. The residential entrance is located on Brook Street and entrances to the two commercial units are located on Wickenden Street.

A building height of five stories and approximately 65’9”, measured from the average grade to the roof parapet, is proposed. A dimensional adjustment for the proposed height which exceeds the 50’, four story height limit of the zone was granted at the master plan stage.

Plans include a height diagram which establishes the average grade of 25.74' measured from the building's exterior. The plan also demonstrates that the lowest level has more than half of its height below grade and is therefore classified as a cellar, which does not count as a story.

Six residential units will be located in the cellar in addition to a residential lobby, bike storage, fitness area and one commercial unit. Thirteen residential units are proposed for the first floor, which will also have a second commercial space and an internal loading space. Sixteen residential units will be located on each floor from floors two through four with eight units on the fifth floor. Roof mounted HVAC equipment and penthouses will be located on the roof, and set back over five feet from the roof line.

The building will be set to the front and side lot lines, exceeding the 60% and 40% build-to zone percentage requirements respectively. A rear setback of approximately 3'7" will be maintained from the C-2 zone in the rear and a side setback of 10' will be maintained from the R-2 zone at the southern side of the building. The transformer will be located at the southwest corner of the lot. Screening details for the transformer shall be provided at the final plan stage.

The building's exterior will employ materials that are permitted by right in the zone including fiber cement panels and brick veneer. Over 50% of transparency will be provided for the portion of the commercial space at the cellar level on Brook Street. Over 15% of transparency will be provided on the residential portion of the first floor and the amount of transparency will exceed 10% on the upper stories. The building's design incorporates alternating projecting and recessed sections, Juliet balconies, and bay windows providing dimensional variety on the façade. Encroachment permits will be required for the portions of the building that are above and below public rights of way. Roof deck access will also be provided for the fifth floor corner units by setting back a portion of the fifth floor.

The use of a common architectural theme, balconies, and incorporation of varied dimensional elements are in conformance with the design guidelines for multifamily development per Section 1202.K of the ordinance. A design waiver was granted for the window sills on the first floor, which are higher than two feet from the adjacent grade.

Parking

No vehicle parking is required as the building will be located on a lot that isn't considered to exceed 10,000 SF. Fifteen bicycle parking spaces are required, calculated as one bicycle space for every five units of which 80% shall be long term. Twelve bicycle spaces will be provided in the basement to meet the long term requirement and two bike racks with a total of four spaces will be located on Brook Street. The plan has been updated to enlarge the bike storage room and raise the floor, which removes the need for the steps included in the previous version of the plan. In addition, two bike racks will be provided on Brook Street. The location of the bike racks shall be subject to the approval of the Department of Public Works (DPW).

A loading space that meets the dimensions of 10' width, 22' length and 10' of clearance will be accessible from Wickenden Street. In addition, the DPW has approved a loading space at the intersection of Alves Way and Brook Street, close to the residential entrance. An existing loading space opposite the building on Wickenden Street can also be availed of.

Landscaping

A total of 1,500 SF of canopy coverage is required based on the size of the development and 3,700 SF is proposed. The applicant will meet this requirement by retaining a small tree on Wickenden Street and planting two medium and two large trees on Wickenden and Brook Streets.

A detailed plan for the vegetative buffer in the rear that employs small trees and shrubs has also been included in the landscaping plan. The plans were developed in conjunction with the City Forester. The Forester requires that the

applicant be responsible for planting and maintenance of the trees.

Environmental management

The development does not trigger conformance with the stormwater ordinance as the site is less than 20,000 SF and already developed. However, the plan indicates that stormwater will be managed by diverting runoff to pervious areas on the site and to a dedicated storm drain in Brook Street.

The erosion control plan indicates that the silt fencing and other erosion control measures will be used to prevent runoff from the site during construction.

Signage

Plans indicate the use of window, wall, and projecting signs for the commercial spaces and building identification. Plans indicate that the area of projecting signs will not exceed the 20' SF limit and total amount of wall signs will not exceed 2' per linear square foot of building frontage. Sign permits shall be obtained at the permitting stage.

FINDINGS

Section 1006 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 preliminary plan:

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 the Providence 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 and residential uses are encouraged. The development conforms to this land use designation. As the building will be located on Wickenden Street, a growth corridor intended for mixed use and higher density development, it conforms to objective BE-2 strategy E of the plan which encourages mixed use development along commercial corridors and growth areas at a higher density than residential areas. Creation of housing will conform to objective H-2 of the plan which encourages creation of new and diverse types of housing.

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 housing and commercial uses is permitted by right in the C-2 zone.

Dimension: The development conforms to the dimensional and design requirements of the C-2 zone as described above, and with the CPC having granted a dimensional adjustment and design waiver at the master plan stage.

Parking: The applicant will meet the bicycle parking requirement.

Landscaping: The applicant will meet the landscaping requirement by making plantings adjacent to, and on the site.

Signage: A compliant plan of proposed projecting signs and window signage has been submitted.

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 expected 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.*

There are no physical constraints that impact development of this property, as the lot will comply with the

dimensional requirements of the C-2 zone with no impediments to development. The lot is considered to be less than 10,000 SF through an administrative modification.

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 street access will be provided from Brook and Wickenden Streets.

RECOMMENDATION— Preliminary Plan

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

1. The landscaping plan shall be subject to the City Forester's approval. The applicant shall be responsible for the planting and maintenance of the trees.
2. The drainage and erosion control measures shall be subject to the City Engineer's approval prior to final plan approval.
3. The applicant shall obtain above and below-grade encroachment permits at the permitting stage.
4. The location of the bike racks shall be subject to the DPW's approval.
5. Final plan approval shall be delegated to DPD staff.