

Providence City Plan Commission

September 15, 2026



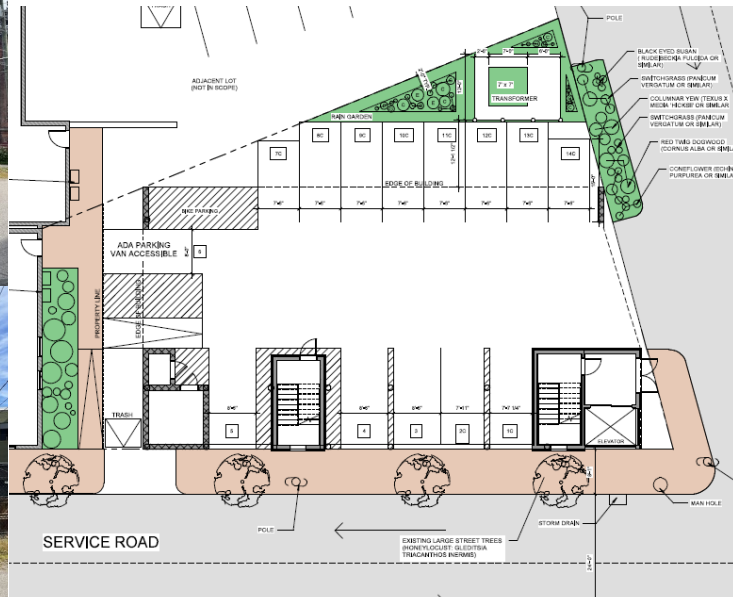
AGENDA ITEM 2 ■ 31 DIKE STREET



Aerial view of the site



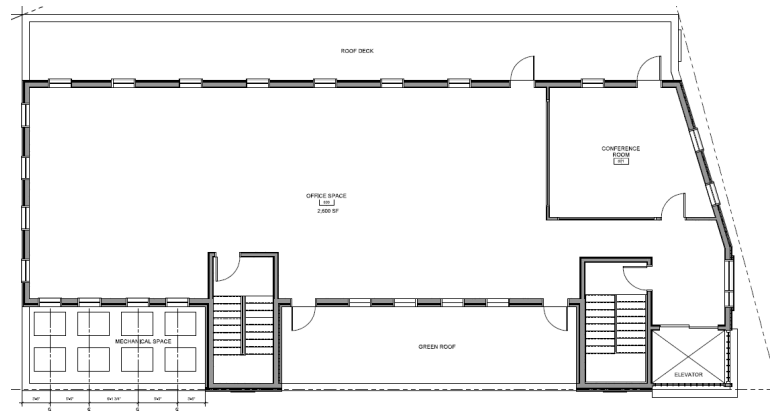
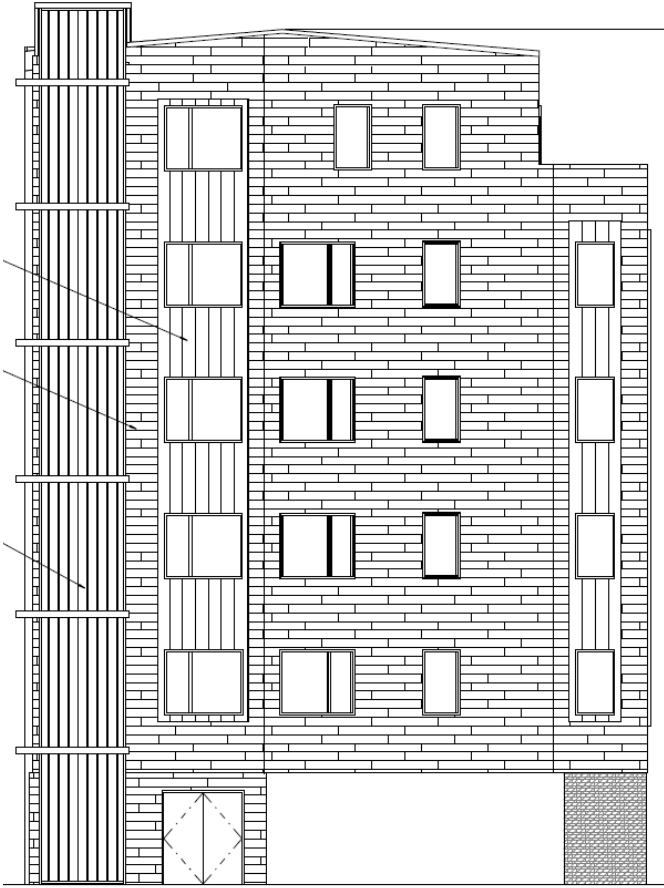
Views from site corner and Dike Street



Proposed site plan

OVERVIEW

OWNER/ APPLICANT:	Postal Kitchen LLC, Owner and Applicant	PROJECT DESCRIPTION:	Construction of a six story, approximately 66' tall mixed use building with internal parking on the first floor, 28 units on four upper stories and commercial space on the sixth story. A dimensional adjustment from the 50' four story height limit of the zone is requested in addition to a design waiver from the build-to percentage requirement.
CASE NO./ PROJECT TYPE:	26-070MA Master Plan		
PROJECT LOCATION:	31 Dike Street AP 35 Lot 542 C-2 zoning district	RECOMMENDATION:	Approval of the master plan and dimensional relief as detailed
NEIGHBORHOOD:	Olneyville	PROJECT PLANNER:	Choyon Manjrekar



Front Elevation, Rendering and Sixth Floor plan

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The development site, which is zoned C-2 and will measure approximately 5,851 SF upon subdivision, is a vacant corner lot fronting on Dike Street and the service road. The applicant is proposing to construct a six story, approximately 66' tall mixed use building with internal parking on the first floor, 28 units on four upper stories and 2,600 SF of commercial space on the sixth story. The development is being reviewed as a major land development project as the amount of commercial space exceeds 2,500 SF. The applicant is requesting a dimensional adjustment from the 50', four story height limit of the C-2 zone in addition to a design waiver from the front yard build-to percentage requirement on Dike Street.

ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ISSUES

Use

The subject lot is zoned C-2 where mixed use consisting of residential and commercial development (office space) is permitted by right.

Dimensions and site design

The lot is an irregularly shaped polygon with differing widths at Dike Street and the rear. The side lot lines are angled, creating the irregular shape. A height of approximately 66' and six stories is proposed for which a dimensional adjustment has been requested. Dike Street is designated as the front yard, providing vehicular access to the parking area and pedestrian access to the upper levels. The building will be set to the

front lot line and occupy approximately 23' of the 81' frontage or 28%, where a 60% build-to percentage is required. A design waiver from the build-to requirement has been requested. The side yard on the Service Road will exceed the 40% requirement, addressing 86% of that frontage. A kneewall will shield the view of the parking area from the service road. The transformer will be located in the side yard on Dike Street and the trash receptacle will be located in the rear yard and accessible from the service road.

The commercial space on the sixth story will be pulled back from the edges, reducing its impact from street level. Amenities like a roof deck, green roof and mechanical equipment will be located on the uppermost story.

The applicant will employ cement, metal paneling and a polycarbonate wall system on the façade, which are materials permitted by right in the zone. Changes in color, material and projections provide variety on the façade. The front and side building façades will meet the 15% transparency requirement for the residential development on the upper stories.

Staff Design Review

Per section 1904.D of the ordinance, land development projects shall be reviewed by DPD staff who will file a report to the CPC. Staff Planner Christopher Ise conducted the review and submits the following:

The design of this proposed residential building is contemporary in character but is overly complicated and lacks a strong, cohesive architectural expression. The combination of multiple materials, colors, window patterns, and projecting vertical elements creates a busy façade with competing features.

The prominent corner element is particularly strong and appears slightly disconnected from the main building mass. The orange metal cladding, polycarbonate, and cement-board cladding contribute to a somewhat fragmented appearance. The termination of the vertical orange cladding at the ground level also appears unresolved. There's no architectural transition or connection to the ground-floor façade, which makes it feel applied rather than integrated.

The ground-floor treatment is also relatively utilitarian and should have a stronger relationship to the street and pedestrian environment. Screening of the ground-floor garage opening is recommended to reduce its visual prominence from the street. The proposed knee wall appears as somewhat of an afterthought and should be more integrated into the overall ground-floor design.

The main residential entrance on Dike Street requires greater architectural emphasis so that it is clearly identifiable as the primary entrance to the building. Consideration should be given to a canopy or entry feature, lighting, or building address to announce the entrance.

The proposed rain garden along Dike Street appears to be constructed on the right-of-way (sidewalk).

Staff recommends simplifying the design with a more restrained material palette, clearer façade organization, and better integration of the corner element and ground-floor treatment. A more cohesive design would better respond to the surrounding context.

Parking

No parking is required as the lot measures less than 10,000 SF in the C-2 zone. However, 14 internal spaces

will be located on the ground floor. Four standard sized spaces, including one handicapped space will be provided with the rest being compact. Six bicycle spaces are required for 28 units and they will be provided in the parking area.

Landscaping

Approximately 880 SF of canopy coverage is required to meet the 15% requirement for the C-2 zone. The applicant will retain three large street trees providing 3,000 SF of canopy coverage on the service road to meet this requirement. Additional planting areas for shrubs and bushes have been identified at the side and rear of the lot.

Design Waiver—Findings

The applicant is seeking a design waiver from section 503.A.6.a of the zoning ordinance for the proposed front yard build-to percentage requirement, where 60% is required but approximately 28% will be provided. Per section 1005.F, the CPC is required to make findings on the following criteria:

i. Literal enforcement of the provision for which a waiver is sought is impracticable.

Meeting the build-to percentage requirement will be difficult given the site's layout and the building's design. The site is irregularly shaped and the front lot line at Dike Street is located at an acute angle from the side lot line on the service road resulting in an irregular front yard which makes it difficult to address the entire frontage. As internal parking will be provided on the first floor, the 22' driveway access does not count towards the build-to percentage requirement. The transformer will be located in the interior side yard on Dike Street, further reducing the available area where the building can address the frontage.

ii. The design or development condition resulting from the waiver has no significant adverse impact on the surrounding natural environment, built environment, or pedestrian and traffic circulation.

Granting of the waiver would not have an adverse impact on the surrounding environment as the building will be set to the front and side lot lines, in character with the development seen in the C-2 zone. Provision of internal parking would have a positive effect on vehicular circulation and is not expected to affect pedestrian movement.

iii. Granting of the waiver is in the best interest of good planning, urban design, and/or architecture practice, as evidenced by consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Granting the waiver would be in the interest of good planning practice as it would allow for development of the site within the constraints permitted by the lot's layout.

Design Waiver—Action

It is the DPD's opinion that the CPC should grant the design waiver based on the above findings.

Dimensional Adjustment—Findings

The applicant is requesting a dimensional adjustment from the height limit of the C-2 zone where a height of 66' and six stories is proposed and 50' and four stories are permitted by right.

1 The application is eligible for a dimensional adjustment because it meets one or more of the eligibility criteria of Section 1904.E.1 of the Zoning Ordinance.

The development is eligible for the adjustment as it meets three of the criteria in the section through

provision of structured parking, vertical mixed use with over 50% dedicated to housing, and no planned burning of fossil fuel on the property. Per the architect, all utilities will be electric, with no gas lines serving the building. Hot water will be provided through heat pump based water heaters.

- 2 *The requested or approved dimensional adjustment is within the allowable adjustments listed in Section 1904.E.2 of the Zoning Ordinance.*

The proposed height of 66' and 6 stories is within the limit of the 24' and two story adjustment that can be granted by the CPC.

- 3 *The extent of the dimensional adjustment is reasonably related to the condition that makes the project eligible for the dimensional adjustment.*

The dimensional adjustment for two additional stories is directly related to provision of structured parking, mixed use development and the project being eligible through no burning of fossil fuel on the property.

Dimensional Adjustment—Action

Based on the foregoing discussion, the DPD recommends that the CPC grant the requested adjustment.

Land Development Project—Findings

Section 1005 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 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 intended for traditional pedestrian and transit oriented uses in buildings set close to the street. The development will conform to objective H-2 of the plan which promotes development of new housing and objective LU-2 which directs growth to an area intended for priority growth.

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 office space is permitted by right in the C-2 zone.

Dimension and design: The development will comply with the dimensional and design requirements of the C-2 zone subject to the CPC granting the design waiver from the front yard build-to zone requirement and the dimensional adjustment for height. The design at the preliminary plan stage shall incorporate the suggestions from the staff design review.

Parking: The applicant will meet the parking requirement.

Landscaping: The applicant will meet the canopy coverage requirement based on the provided plan.

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 conform to all 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 is required to apply for an administrative subdivision to lay out the lot as shown on plans. The DPD is unaware of any impediments to development on the site.

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.*

Physical access to the site is provided from Dike Street and the Service Road.

Land Development Project—Action

Based on the foregoing discussion, the CPC should vote to approve the master plan subject to the following conditions:

- The design at the preliminary plan stage shall reflect the suggestions from the staff design review.
- The applicant shall apply for a minor subdivision to layout the lot as shown on the plan.