



City Plan Commission
Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

June 1, 2018

Councilman Terrence M. Hassett, Chairman
Committee on Ordinances
Providence City Hall
25 Dorrance Street
Providence, RI 02903

Attn: Lori Hagen, City Clerk

Re: Referral 3429-Petition to rezone AP 20 Lot 397 from D1-100 to D1-600
Petitioner: Fane Organization

Dear Councilman Hassett,

The petitioner has requested that the City Council change the zoning for Assessor's Plat 20, Lot 397 (I-195 Parcel 42) from D-1-100 to D1-600. The petitioner has also requested a change in the ordinance to permit the Downtown Design Review Committee to waive design provisions that require buildings to relate to adjacent structures and require a transition line between lower and upper stories. This zoning change would apply to all of Parcel 42, which the I-195 Commission has agreed to sell to the Fane Organization to construct a 46-story residential building on the northern portion of the parcel. The City Plan Commission (CPC) reviewed the petition at public meetings on April 25 and May 15, 2018, pursuant to Section 1900.C of the Providence Zoning Ordinance.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The CPC found the petition not in conformance with the following provisions of the Comprehensive plan:

- In Section 11.1, on p. 109, in the discussion of Areas of Change (within which Downtown lies), the plan states that "new development must take into consideration natural and man-made environmental constraints and focus on preserving those aspects of our environment that we hold dear, including ... historic character." The CPC found that the proposed zoning change and the 600-foot tall building it would enable would be contrary to this statement.
- The design does not complement the existing scale of buildings in the area as discussed in Section 1.2 on p. 19, and in Objective BE2, which calls for "new development to complement traditional character." The CPC found that the proposed zoning change and the 600-foot tall building it would enable would not complement the scale of existing buildings.
- Objective H2, Strategy A: Provide for diversity in the type, density and location of housing within the city to provide an adequate supply of safe, sanitary housing at price levels appropriate to the

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financial capabilities of city residents. The CPC found that the proposed zoning change and the 600-foot tall building it would enable would not conform to this requirement as it would create housing whose costs would not be appropriate for the financial capabilities of city residents.

The CPC also objected to the zoning change for the following reasons:

- The proposal for a new tower lacks significant mixed use.
- The proposal for a new tower lacks affordable housing.
- The necessity for the building to encroach into I-195 Commission land designated as a public park is not beneficial to the community.
- The current 100' height zone is appropriate for the subject parcel.
- If additional height is warranted and desired, the city should undertake an orderly public process to study increased height regulations for the entire neighborhood. The study should include an analysis of the real estate market to determine the extent to which there is a demand for tall buildings.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the foregoing findings, the CPC voted 5-2 to make a recommendation that the City Council deny the proposed zone change. Commissioners West, Gazdacko, Bilodeau, Torrado and Opton-Himmel voted in favor of the recommendation. Commissioners Verdi and Elliott voted against the recommendation.

Sincerely,



Robert E Azar, AICP
Deputy Director, Planning and Development

CC: Jeffrey Padwa for the Fane Organization