

## CAPITAL CENTER COMMISSION

### Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, May 8, 2013

A meeting of the Capital Center Commission (CCC) was held on Wednesday, May 8, 2013 in the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room of the Department of Planning and Development, 444 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903.

#### 1. Roll Call

Members Present: Deming Sherman, Michael McCormick, Guy Abelson, Duncan Johnson, Christopher Thomas, John Sinnott, Seth Handy, William Kite, Martha Werenfels and Melvin Bilezerian

Members Absent: Wilfrid Gates, Chairman of the Committee on Urban Redevelopment, Renewal and Planning, Councilman John Iglizzi, Barry Fain and Greg Benik

Staff Present: Christopher Ise and Martina Haggerty

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM, Chairman Sherman presiding.

#### 2. Minutes

2.1 Approval of Commission Meeting Minutes of January 9, 2013: Mr. McCormick made a motion, seconded by Mr. Johnson to approve the meeting minutes. All voted in favor.

2.2 Acceptance of Design Review Committee Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2012: Mr. Thomas made a motion, seconded by Mr. Abelson, to accept the meeting minutes. All voted in favor.

#### 3. Design Review Committee Advisory Member Appointments

3.1 Renew terms of Derek Bradford (to 6/16) and Sam Bradner (to 6/14) to the DRC: Mr. Sinnott made a motion, seconded by Mr. McCormick, renew the terms of both members. All voted in favor.

3.2 Appoint Lucie Searle to the DRC (to 6/15): Mr. Handy made a motion, seconded by Ms. Werenfels, to appoint Ms. Searle to the DRC. All voted in favor.

#### 4. Parcel 7A: Providence Station Plaza

Presentation and review of the Providence Station Area Improvement Plan

Chairman Sherman gave a brief overview, noting that the project was reviewed at the DRC workshops. Staff gave an overview of Mr. Gates comments from the last DRC meeting. Steve Derdiarian from VHB explained that meetings were held with Planning Staff, Parks Department and RIPTA regarding this project. Tom Queenan, from RIDIOT, stated that he met with the Governor's Office and the Department of Administration regarding the project. They encouraged creating an event space in the park and providing bicycle racks. Mr. Derdiarian noted that they have worked with AMTRAK regarding the proposed bollard installation program. They have provided a new public gathering space west of the Station. He stated that sight lines have been opened up by the removal of the west wall, adding that the design respects the purity of the building form. The plaza also contains a series of public gathering spaces. Mr. Derdiarian noted that the proposed new height of the walls in the plaza are significantly lower than existing. Flagpoles have been relocated to the west side, and the proposed 'grand staircase' has been removed and replaced with two smaller staircases. The new plan encourages the installation of public art, and that once the plan is at 90%, they will be able to determine locations. A simple structure for bicycle parking located in the northeast corner is being considered. Concrete paving is proposed for the walkways and plaza areas.

Chairman Sherman stated that the plantings will be reviewed by the CCC at the 90% design stage. Art may change yearly. In response to a question by Chairman Sherman, Mr. Derdiarian replied that the taxis would be relocated to Gaspee Street. He noted that it will be limited to 8 taxi spaces to preserve views.

Amy Pettine and Greg Nordin, representing the Rhode Island Public Transportation Authority (RIPTA), gave a brief presentation on RIPTA's new Rapid Line that services the Station. Ms. Pettine stated that the R-Line is a \$2 million investment and plans call for the upgrade of amenities associated with the R-Line. R-Line buses will reroute to the Station every 10 minutes, 7 days a week, addin that they intend to link the trolley to the Station. Mr. Nordin explained that the R-Line would replace bus routes 11 and 99, which run from Downtown Pawtucket to Cranston and which serve 11,000 riders per weekday. He noted that this new R-Line reduces the number of stops, from 150 to 56, and includes the installation of 25 unique new bus shelters. He explained that new wayfinding totems would also be installed in addition to the shelters, which will display route frequency, history, etc. Mr. Handy suggested bumpouts at the crosswalks at other areas of the Plaza. In response to a question regarding possible graffiti, Mr. Derdiarian stated that the new lower walls would prevent that. Ms. Pettine stated that RIPTA would maintain the new shelter and totems. Ms. Werenfels inquired about the planting material depth. Mr. Derdiarian thought it would be approximately 24". Other comments included the removal of ice and snow and lighting. Mr. Derdiarian responded that the City standard design would be worked into the plaza.

Ms. Werenfels commented on the need for a flexible performance area in the Plaza, noting the visual importance of the paving patterns in the Plaza. Mr. Thomas applauded the multiple modes of transportation in one area and inquired about the staircase leading to the garage. Mr. Derdiarian explained that it is a secondary means of egress. Mr. McCormick stressed the importance of the geometry of the Plaza in relation to the Station. He commented that the back of the proposed bus shelter would be visible from people exiting the Station. A discussion followed regarding the maintenance of the Plaza. Mr. Queenan noted that it would be the City's responsibility for the maintenance. Todd Turcotte, from Capital Properties, explained that the Downtown Improvement District is trying to expand its services in the area. It was noted that Center Place on Parcel 5 has an agreement with Capital Properties to maintain the Plaza. Lucie Searle commented that she was excited about the public art component and suggested informal conversations with RISD beforehand. She added that RI Council on the Arts should be involved. Chairman Sherman commended the collaborative effort between Mr. Derdiarian and RIDOT.

Mr. McCormick made a motion, seconded by Mr. Johnson, to approve the 30% design submission for the project. All voted in favor.

## **5. Designation of Service Providers**

Staff explained that there have only been slight increases in rates for both contracts.

5.1 Design Review Services. Mr. Thomas made a motion, seconded by Mr. McCormick, to extend the existing design consultant services contract for a new, two-year term due to expire on June 15, 2015. All voted in favor.

5.2 Legal Services. Mr. Thomas made a motion, seconded by Mr. McCormick, to extend the existing design consultant services contract with Roberts, Carroll, Feldstein, & Peirce, Inc. for a new, two-year term due to expire on June 15, 2015. All voted in favor.

## **6. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:46 PM.

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Christopher Thomas  
Secretary/Treasurer