

# 180-unit apartment complex at new Pawtucket train station gets initial OK

By **Claudia Chiappa** - 03/22/2023



*A RENDERING of the 180-unit apartment complex proposed for 258 Pine St., Pawtucket. COURTESY ZDS ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN*

PAWTUCKET – The Pawtucket City Planning Commission has approved the master plan for a 180-unit apartment building next to the newly opened Pawtucket-Central Falls Transit Center.

The six-story project, located at 258 Pine St., will also include two commercial units. The commission heard plans for the development during a joint meeting with the Central Falls Planning Board on Tuesday.

The lot once housed a chemical company, but a fire damaged the industrial complex in 2018 and it was later demolished. The land was then put under the receivership of the court-appointed special master, attorney John Dorsey. Following a request for proposals, the property was sold to Frank Cruz of Rise Above All Properties LLC for \$1.7 million.

The new plan, presented Tuesday by architect Eric Zuena of ZDS Architecture & Interior Design and engineer Joseph Casali of Casali Engineering Inc., will bring a mix of market-rate apartments and workforce housing to the area, with 180 units of mostly studios and one-bedroom

apartments – with a few two-bedroom apartments. The two commercial spaces, respectively 5,000 and 2,500 square feet, are likely to bring food and dining options.

The development would be located immediately south of the transit center, which includes newly constructed train stop along the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority commuter rail between Boston and Providence. Since its debut in January, both the train station and the 10 R.I. Public Transit Authority bus lines have seen steady traffic, with about 400 daily train boardings, according to the R.I. Department of Transportation.

“It’s a transformational project,” Zuena said during the meeting of the apartment building. “Being in the TOD [transit-oriented development] really gave us the opportunity to think outside the box. And we’ve done exactly that.”

The building will come with 77 parking spaces, below the maximum allowed 83 spaces in the area. And both Zuena and Casali said they foresee many of the tenants to rely on the public transit in the area, including the commuter rail and bus lines connected to the new transit center, which will make the number of parking available sufficient.

The project, which is estimated to cost up to \$65 million, will be split into two phases, each lasting approximately 12-18 months. The applicant also asked for seven variances and two permit waivers, that were all granted.

The property, spanning 2.25 acres, is within what is known as the Conant Thread District in the City of Pawtucket. The area has been receiving a lot of attention from developers in recent years, in particular in light of the opening of the transit center.

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