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Project slated for Warwick's business innovation district

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Just last week, Michael Integlia, president of Michael Integlia & Company and I announced conceptual plans for a prospective development in the business innovation district adjacent to City Centre Warwick that will meet the needs of a 21st Century economy and enhance efforts to revitalize the neighborhood into a vibrant, multi-modal residential and commerce center.

Last year, Integlia sought and received approval to subdivide the former 86-acre Leviton property into five separate parcels: one now the headquarters of Dean Warehousing Corporation, which offers superior strategies for global manufacturing and distributing; one 25-acre parcel that will be held as open space in perpetuity; a 7-acre parcel for office space; a 6-acre parcel fronting Kilvert St.; and a 5-acre parcel that includes the Elizabeth Mill dating to 1875.

The new, \$50 million project is slated for the Elizabeth Mill site, which Integlia has marketed since 2013 for adaptive reuse. Integlia hired a consultant, who has concluded that the building is not suitable for that use and will be razed.

Recognizing the role the mill has played in the city's heritage, Integlia is salvaging a variety of materials, including bricks, doors, pieces of the granite water table, cast-iron stairs, and signage, and will incorporate them into the design of the new building.

The four-story, 300,000 s/f, mixed-use building will also feature a number of energy efficiencies. Additionally, this project will strengthen our local economy by creating approximately 300 construction jobs, bringing additional tax revenue to our city and creating hundreds of full-time jobs. It will also enable us to attract other development in this area and in City Centre Warwick.

The development of the "business innovation district" is a critical component of a comprehensive effort to the success of City Centre Warwick. The clustering of target industries in the district, together with open space and recreational facilities and infrastructure improvements, are an added draw to investors and developers and will enhance efforts to revitalize the 95 acres comprising City Centre Warwick.

The award-winning City Centre Warwick Master Plan calls for development of a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development with multi-modal access opportunities, including T.F. Green Airport, Interstates 95 and 295, the MBTA commuter rail, rental car facilities, Amtrak, bus service and ferry, just 12 miles south of Providence and between Boston and N.Y.

This project comes on the heels of Integlia's announcement several weeks ago for development of a new class A office building on the seven-acre parcel. The four to five-story building will offer between 100,000 to 125,000 s/f of office space, with modern construction, smart building technology, and lush, extensive landscaping.

These announcements are positive developments for our local economy, job growth, and our community as a whole. We anticipate additional announcements in the coming months that will show continued momentum and progress in the area.

Scott Avedisian is the mayor of Warwick and the chairman of the RIPTA board of directors.

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