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The Jan Companies proposes two residential buildings in Gateway District - by Frank Picozzi

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Frank Picozzi

Last month, the planning board considered a preliminary application from The Jan Companies, which is proposing to redevelop a roughly 5.7-acre parcel adjacent to the Rhode Island International T.F. Green Airport property. The property, at 1880 Post Rd., was once home to a steakhouse before its use now primarily as a parking lot.

The proposal calls for the construction of two, four-story, L-shaped residential buildings to accommodate a total 177 residential units and 266 parking spaces. Building 1, which will be constructed with the front façade along Post Rd., consists of roughly 26,656 s/f for 105 units, a first-floor clubhouse, and landscaping designed to establish a streetscape. A patio, outdoor amenity area and pool are proposed for the space directly behind Building 1.

The second building is proposed at 17,476 s/f to accommodate 72 residential units and will be situated in the interior of the site in order to break up the parking and distribute it around both buildings. Landscaping is also proposed along the entire perimeter of the property. A maintenance building and dumpster area will be screened and situated in the far southwest corner of the parcel.

The development contains a mixture of one- and two-bedroom units. The applicant has proposed that 10% of the units be restricted as affordable, with an Area Median Income (AMI) of 80% or lower and 10% of the units be designated as workforce housing, which is defined as restricted to AMIs of between 80 and 120%.

The property is located in the Gateway District, one of two districts comprising City Centre Warwick, a transit-oriented, intermodal development district encompassing more than 100 acres near and adjacent to the airport and the InterLink intermodal rail station.

Properties zoned Gateway are intended to serve as transitional areas leading from outlying areas like the Post Rd. and Airport Rd. general business districts to City Centre Warwick's Intermodal District. The Gateway District allows limited commercial uses customarily associated with transportation facilities as well as general commercial uses.

Developments in Gateway are expected to follow the City Centre design manual. These guidelines encourage a high quality of design associated with vehicular circulation, appropriate landscaping and architectural design intended to create a separate identity and a cohesive appearance that's distinguishable from the outlying areas. Building placement, architectural character, massing and form, streetscape, the public realm, and screening of areas like parking lots and structures such as dumpsters are all addressed in the design manual.

The buildings' proposed design adhere to these standards, including rhythmic patterns of bays, a differentiated first floor, and bay windows that "are oriented to the street along the façade, helping to provide visual interest and a distinctive architectural expression," according to the applicant's narrative.

This project joins others that are in various stages of development. It's exciting to see them transforming the area and bringing the City Centre vision of a 24/7, live/work/play neighborhood to life.

If you're interested in learning more about development opportunities in Warwick, please email econ.dir@warwickri.gov or call (401) 738-2000.

Frank Picozzi is the mayor of the city of Warwick, R.I.

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