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Nine Post Rd. receives approval for six units and commercial space - by Frank Picozzi

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Frank Picozzi

After several years of planning, the owners of a property in historic Pawtuxet Village recently received planning board master plan approval for a mixed-use building consisting of six residential units and 1,510 s/f of commercial space along the banks of the majestic Pawtuxet River.

Bridge Group, LLC owns the property at Nine Post Rd., which is presently the home of the former Hunter's Garage, a business housed in a 1930-era, one-story masonry building that was a village landmark for decades. The proposal calls for the demolition of the existing building and construction on two lots with a combined area of roughly 19,225 s/f (.441 acres). The property is bound by the river to the west, a vacant lot owned by the Pawtuxet River Authority to the north, a residential property to the south, and Post Rd. to the east.

The developers propose constructing a new, 10,566 gross s/f mixed-use structure. Two 2.5 story buildings will be connected by a two-story common area that will feature the building entry, stairwell, and lobby space. The western building will have two, one-bedroom, ground-floor, single-level apartments and two, two-story townhouses on the second and third floors. The eastern structure's ground floor units will have patios, while the upper townhouse units will have decks. The eastern structure's ground floor will offer 1,510 s/f of commercial space, which can remain intact or configured into two, 755 s/f units, with the upper floors reserved for two, 1.5 story, two-bedroom townhouses.

Plans also call for 22 on-site parking spaces, which exceeds what's required by zoning ordinance, ample landscaping along Post Rd., and pervious patio areas facing the river. A 24-ft. driveway will provide access to the property, and a right-turn only egress will ensure compliance with existing traffic patterns in the village. Stormwater management and enhanced utility connections are also among the planned improvements for the property.

The project still needs review by the historic district commission, the city council, and the state departments of environmental management and transportation before returning to the planning board for a final vote. If it receives all of the necessary approvals, with the popularity of Pawtuxet Village as a very desirable neighborhood in which to live, there's no doubt the residential units will be occupied very quickly. The new development will be a stone's throw from O'Rourke's Bar & Grill, Noon Design Shop, a sweets shop, and several other restaurants and retailers just over the city line. It's also right on the route for the annual Gaspee Days parade – sure to be a selling point for those who enjoy the culmination of the two months of events that celebrate "America's First Blow for Freedom" every May and June.

There are other opportunities for redevelopment here in Warwick. Please call (401) 738-2014 or email econ.dir@warwickri.gov if you're interested in learning more.

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