



## DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

DATE: October 3, 2023

TO: Old Town North Urban Design Advisory Committee (UDAC)

FROM: Planning & Zoning Staff

SUBJECT: Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS) – Block B (First Review)

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### **Introduction**

The applicant, Hilco Redevelopment Partners (HRP), have submitted their Concept 2 submissions for Block B as part of the redevelopment process of the Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS). The applicant team is seeking UDAC's feedback on the proposed site configuration, architectural approach and conformity with the PRGS Design Excellence approach. The UDAC website contains a link to the applicant's presentation.

In addition to the presentation on the UDAC website, the applicant team has completed the Design Excellence Matrix for the sitewide prerequisites (to be confirmed by City staff) and the criteria (to be reviewed and potentially endorsed by UDAC) for each building and their justification for each building's compliance with the criteria. For this initial submission, staff has responded to each Design Prerequisite with our confirmation that the building complies, or in areas where compliance is not clear, suggested a continued refinement for the proposed building or site design to meet the Design Excellence Criteria. Please see staff responses below in addition to the Design Excellence Matrix.

Broadly, each building is either achieving or working towards achieving the Design Excellence Criteria and staff will provide with the next UDAC submission where we find continued work on the building or site design is important and still needed to achieve the Design Excellence Prerequisites and Criteria's intent for excellence.

### **Prerequisites:**

#### **Prerequisite 1: Superior Urban Form**

**Staff Response:** *Near satisfaction.* The design team has created a site generally composed of two towers connected by a podium base that is primarily retail, though the design and materials of each tower element are carried to the ground floor to achieve vertical emphasis and individual character. Staff is looking for additional refinement of the tower forms, specifically the white-tile-clad condo tower and its "prow," before this prerequisite has been confirmed to be satisfied.

Staff recommends that the prow should be more strongly distinguished from the adjacent building skin through a subtle change in color/material or deeper slot/reveal at the angled prow, and that more study in color differentiation and more detail in precast concrete forms is needed as the design evolves.

**Prerequisite 2: Environmental Innovation Leader**

- **Staff Response:** *Will satisfy.* As the PRGS site includes a Coordinated Sustainability Strategy that each block will employ, staff is comfortable that this will be achieved yet notes that sufficient information has not as of yet been provided.

**Prerequisite 3: Quality and Durable Building Materials are Specified**

- **Staff Response:** *Satisfied.* The proposed materials are high-quality, durable, and will withstand the test of time.

**Prerequisite 4: Off-street Parking is Located Below Grade**

- **Staff Response:** *Satisfied.*

**Prerequisite 5: Exceptional Site Response**

- **Staff Response:** *Near satisfaction.* Staff appreciates how the ground-floor will be lined with retail and active uses in areas that will have pedestrian traffic, and how the southern apartment tower is oriented to the future Rail Corridor Park with the “bend” in the upper floors of the building. The applicant should continue to refine the northern condo tower to enhance its unique qualities that differentiate it from the Block C towers and its relationship to the Waterfront Park. The applicant should provide more details showing the podium design and its interaction with the adjacent streets.