

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL

MEETING MINUTES

Date: February 1, 2007

Meeting No.: 53

Project: The Icon @ Lighthouse Point

Phase: Master Plan

Location: Lighthouse Point PUD

PRESENTATION:

The session began with Robert Quilter, Department of Planning, describing the master plan review for a Planned Unit Development (PUD), which includes site plan, massing and height, and conceptual landscaping and open space, and reminded the Panel and attendees that various components would come back for architecture and site design review.

Marco Greenberg, representing Cignal Corporation, presented an overview of the project and emphasized the organizing elements of the master plan - the creation of a retail street, a "European" plaza along Boston Street, and a waterfront plaza/promenade along the harbor.

Matt D'Amico and Luis Bernardo of Design Collective, then presented in more detail a series of plans, renderings, and studies for the proposed open space and building massing. The master plan goals, as expressed by the design team, are:

1. celebrate connections from the neighborhood to the water
2. transform the character of Boston Street
3. create a "place" along the harbor promenade
4. mark the site with the building's height and massing

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL:

The Panel appreciated the thorough presentation by the design team and response to previous comments, and was favorable of the project, which will require amendments to both the PUD and the Canton Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan. However, the Panel had several comments and recommendations:

Site Plan

The Panel was favorable of the site plan arrangement, with the building framed by an open space along Boston Street, a pedestrian-oriented retail street (Main Street) building upon existing retail frontage and a waterfront plaza. However, several Panel members felt that vehicular circulation along the Main Street and to the parking garage was still problematic. Recommendations included an entrance-only to the parking garage from the Main Street, whether the Main Street could be one way from Boston Street, and no right turn onto Boston Street from the Main Street.

Massing and Height

The Panel was favorable to the proposed 260' height of the building (including the mechanical equipment) and the location of the building close to the water and along the Main Street. Recommendations include creating more of a presence of the tower along the water, developing how the tower meets the ground and engages both the waterfront plaza and Main Street, and continued development of the tower's articulation and skin to create a slender profile, as well as continued attention to how the building meets the sky.

Open Space / Landscape

As a follow-up to previous Panel comments regarding the 'meaningfulness' of the open spaces, the Panel requests continued development of the plaza along Boston Street to address potential conflicts between pedestrian access and vehicular traffic, as well as creating a lively space both visually and with activity. Additionally, the sidewalk and treatment of the pedestrian access along the retail edge of the new building was encouraged to be as wide as possible and developed in a way to clearly express the public nature of this important access route from the neighborhood to the water. Finally, a visual terminus for the Main Street should be explored, as well as continued development of the waterfront plaza and how its edges are defined.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS:

Carolyn Boitnott, representing the Waterfront Coalition, spoke about community concern with and objection to the Icon project as presented, including increased traffic congestion for a project of this size, concerns with how the parking base will be treated, whether the J.S. Young building can be covered, and the height of the building and negative impact on views and the scale of the neighborhood. She also presented a letter of concern from several community groups in the area disapproving the Boston Lakewood Area Study.

PANEL ACTION:

Master Plan Approved with Comments

Attending:

Armando Cignarale, Marco Greenberg, Randy Mohr, Tom Faust – Cignal Corporation
Luis Bernardo, Matt D'Amico, Warren Strovel, Tom Zeigenfuss – Design Collective
Carolyn Boitnott – Waterfront Coalition
Claire Williams – Burgess & Niple
Al Barry - AB Associates
Ed Hitchcock – Counsel
Peter Auchincloss
Jay Brodie – BDC

Ms. Dietsch, Messrs. Bowden, Ramberg, Schack, Britt and Cameron – Panel
Douglas McCoach, Gary Cole, Laurie Feinberg, Thor Nelson, Andrea Houseman, Bob Quilter - Planning