

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL

MEETING MINUTES

(Revised 4-4-07)

Date: March 29, 2007

Meeting No.: 56

Project: Guilford Avenue Development
Phase 1a and b – Parking Garage

Phase: Schematic

Location: 300 Block Guilford Avenue (west side)

PRESENTATION:

Robert Quilter, Baltimore City Planning Department, began the presentation with a review of the Urban Design goals for the project, including the addition of a goal to retain historic resources unless retention presents a substantial economic hardship. Jon Fisher and Dan Isackson, of Kann & Associates, provided an overview of the project, including a description of the context and location within the larger block parcel, followed by a presentation of the design of the parking garage. The garage will be approximately 120' high - with retail and an entrance to the garage on the first floor and ten floors of parking above (to accommodate 650 +/- parking spaces). The garage is being designed *to support a potential 37 story condo building above*. Plans for the *adjacent* parcel, the Terminal Warehouse (current Fort Knox building), were not presented. *The program and the number of stories for the future phase have not been finalized; yet is anticipated to be apartments, condos or other. The design team also noted that there were no historical structures located on the specific site presented.*

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL:

The Panel found the presentation to be insufficient in terms of material presented for a schematic review and leave too many unanswered questions – the elevations were too small and difficult to read, it was not clear how the sloping floor related to the elevations, the massing and siting of the proposed building above the garage is undefined, intentions of materials that would be used, and how the Guilford Avenue streetscape might be handled (such as widening the sidewalk) – all of which make it difficult to comment on the design of the parking garage. The Panel recommends that the client and design team work with the Planning staff to clarify the material being presented and to address the following additional recommendations:

- While the Panel recognizes that the garage needs to be built before the tower above, it recommends that the design team think about how the garage will serve as a base for what is projected to be a signature development – as it was presented, the garage looks mundane and not representative of what this area could be. The Panel encourages the design team to be freer with the composition of the garage elevations and materials used, especially given the need to accommodate the sloping floor.

- Additional information about the south and north sides of the garage is needed, including an elevation of the north elevation since, at the moment, it rises above the Terminal Warehouse building.
- A massing model with the proposed tower is recommended. As presented, the location of the structure in the garage suggests a set-back of the tower from Guilford Avenue, but this is unclear. How the tower rises from the garage is important to how the façade is treated along Guilford Avenue.
- The Panel was concerned with the set-back of the first floor with the creation of an arcade and feels that this will create a poor public realm and not be preferable to retail at this location. It therefore recommends eliminating the arcade and the drop-off, and widening the sidewalk and adding trees to match the proposed streetscape treatment on the 400 block of Guilford Avenue.

PANEL ACTION:

Schematic Approval withheld

Attending:

John Ginnever – RWN Development Group
Dan Isackson, Jon G. Fisher – Kann and Associates
Susan Williams – STV
Kate McGraw - DPOB
Jay Brodie, Shubroto Bose – BDC

Messrs. Bowden, Ramberg, Schack, Britt and Cameron – Panel
Doug McCoach, Kathleen Kotarba, Wolde Ararsa, Bob Quilter - Planning