

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL
MEETING MINUTES

Date: January 24, 2008

Meeting No.: 73

Project: Charles North Physical Development Plan

Phase: Discussion

Location: Charles North (Centered on Charles Street and North Avenue)

PRESENTATION:

Following an introduction by Paul Dombrowski, of BDC, Philip Loheed of BTA+, head of a team of planners, architects and real estate specialists, described the goals and the bold vision plan for Charles North. The ambitious plan presented contained proposals for some 12 sites and included, among others, an expansion for Penn Station, a performing arts center, a backstage district, numerous high rise buildings and extensive green space.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL:

The Panel commented as follows:

1. While appreciating the strength and boldness of the visual identity presented for Charles North, it was suggested that alternative visions be developed that might more realistically be achieved in a more immediate time frame. High rise buildings appear doubtful for this area and many of the churches in the area lack attendance.
2. The development for Penn Station appears to have merit and might serve to establish a more significant heart for the area.
3. Success for Charles North dictates a substantial increase in the residential population for this area.
4. The effective treatment of various edges such as the expressway and 20th Street are critical to successfully integrate Charles North into the surrounding context.
5. The team might consider producing a preservation plan for the area that not only highlights buildings that should be preserved, but also development opportunities that may require incorporation of historic structures or selective demolition.

In Summary, the analysis conducted and the goals presented are admirable, but the Panel is hopeful that the anticipated interactions with community groups and the economic/real estate

investigations will result in alternative concepts, that while still supporting a strong vision, will also have the potential of more realistic realization in the near future.

PANEL ACTION:

Discussion Only – No formal action.

Attendance:

Philip Loheed – BTA +
Eric Evans – Eric Evans & Co.
Craig Purcell – Matrix
Mike Shecter – Bowling, Inc.
Don Donahue – Charles North
Ed Gunts, Lorraine Mirabella – Sunpapers
Jay Brodie, Paul Dombrowski – BDC

Messrs. Ramberg, Schack and Cameron – Panel
Doug McCoach, Kathleen Kotarba, Tamara Woods, Seema Iyer, Carmen Morosan, Martin French, Gary Cole, Bob Quilter - Planning