

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

Date: September 9, 2010

Meeting No: 115

Project: Downtown Open Space Master Plan

Phase: Discussion

Location: Downtown Baltimore

PRESENTATION:

Planning Director Tom Stosur and Downtown Partnership President Kirby Fowler spoke briefly about the importance of long range planning of the downtown's open space amenities after which the members of the design and planning team were introduced. Tom McGilloway of Mahan Rykiel Associates then reviewed the major aspects of the master plan after setting forth the goals of the study – place-making being the unifying objective with its four most important elements as follows:

- Uses and activity
- Comfort and image
- Access and linkages
- Social ability

Places described as the best and worst places in downtown Baltimore were presented and discussed briefly. Additionally it was stated that the study initially utilized 800ft radius walking distances as circles of influence to determine the distribution of open spaces in the downtown district and to identify areas where new open space was needed. Emerging recommendations for development consideration at several specific project areas were presented in detail and included:

- Preston Gardens
- One Light Street (old Southern Hotel Site)
- Arena Park (Liberty Park)
- Temporary Lot in the west side Super-block area
- Lexington Market area
- JFX Market area

COMMENTS OF THE PANEL:

The Panel generally was very supportive of the study and its recommendations and was encouraged that an open space plan would be considered as one guide to future development. However, early discussion sought clarification on suggestions that major new open spaces might be created on key sites previously designated for development. It was also generally felt that this master plan should be considered as only one layer of

consideration in imaging the future of downtown. Other points of discussion:

1. More consideration be given to assessment and enhancement of existing open spaces and public rights of way in Downtown;
2. The present underutilization of existing open spaces (such as City Hall Plaza) and the critical importance of consistent quality programming of uses and activities in all of the downtown places;
3. The need for more diversity of type and sizes of open spaces in the downtown area should be studied;
4. The importance of tying the types and sizes of open spaces to the prevalent or anticipated land uses (hospitality, residential, office, etc).

Tyler Gearhardt, executive director of Preservation Maryland spoke briefly, suggesting that the open space plan might be “the cart before the horse” and that a more comprehensive strategy for development might need to precede an open space master plan. Such a comprehensive plan might include, among others, a strategy for new residential uses and the retention and reuse of existing buildings.

PANEL ACTION:

No action required - for information and discussion only

Attending:

Tom McGilloway, Scott Rykiel – Mahan Rykiel Associates Inc
Kirby Fowler, Nan Rohrer – Downtown Partnership
Ed Gunts – The Sunpapers
Tyler Gearhardt – Preservation Maryland
Molly Buckeit - GBC
Ron Kreitner - Westside Renaissance
Jay Brodie, Paul Dombrowski – BDC

Ms. Eig, Messrs. Bowden, Britt, Cameron and Ramberg – Panel
Tom Stosur, Gary Cole, Alex Hoffman, Will Doane, Anthony Cataldo and Bob Quilter –
Planning