

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

Date: July 14, 2011

Meeting No.: 132

Project: Proton Therapy Center

Phase: Continued Schematic

Location: UMBioPark PUD

PRESENTATION:

John Mishalanie, speaking on behalf of the client, reminded the Panel of the importance of the project, and what it means to not only Baltimore but, more importantly, the people whose lives the technology is saving. Roland Udenze, of Haskell Architects and Engineers, reviewed changes to the project, including the addition of a floor to the hotel (and an increase in hotel rooms from 117 to 138) and setting back the hotel wing from Fayette Street and additional 7 feet, as well as continued development of the building's facades.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL:

The Panel agrees that this is a very important project, and can be a signature building not only for the BioPark but also the City. However, as presented the building (Proton Center and hotel) is a bland brick box. Although the architect spoke about creating an exciting interior that was colorful, sleek, and expressed the technology, the exterior is overly simple and gives no hint to the uniqueness of what is within – there is nothing in the architecture that says how special the building is.

The Panel agrees that the plan is good and relates well to its context and internal needs. The weakest part of the design is the exterior treatment, and comments are noted with the Panel's specific concerns and recommendations:

Exterior expression. The one area of the building that has an opportunity for expressing the cutting edge technology within is the glass and metal corner element at West Baltimore Street and the new access drive. The Panel asks that the design team reconsider this piece and give it an architectural expression to match the special nature of the Center. This could mean a non-rectilinear geometry, more expressive use of fritted glass, and/or expression of the hotel lobby in section. Examples of this type of treatment can be found at the UB Student Center, the new Shock Trauma Center under construction, and the Wilmer Eye Institute at Hopkins.

Articulation of the architecture. As presented the building is very flat with little to no relief – primarily due to the use of thin brick panels for the exterior skin. This gives the building an

appearance of wallpaper. The architect should either explore ways in which to give the building's exterior and windows depth and relief or accentuate the panel nature in the exterior treatment and composition, including the use of color. Currently the exterior wall just looks cheap and not fitting a building such as the Proton Center. Specifically, the Panel disapproves the vertical brick pattern, and would like the stamped asphalt reconsidered.

Miscellaneous comments:

Additional work is needed for the cap of the hotel – here is an opportunity to create a good relationship to the sky as well as relate it in material and/or treatment to the corner element. The various windows and glass elements need to be better related in proportion, such as using the single repetitive window as the module and then doubling and/or grouping it for the larger windows.

Given the increase in hotel rooms and additional floor, it was questioned as to whether a 15' set-back of the hotel from Fayette Street was enough.

The architect should consider the relationship of the Proton Center to the hotel at the west and south facing facades. There is a small set back of the hotel at these locations but not enough to distinguish the two elements. Either cap these Proton facades, better relate the two facades in window treatment and articulation, or bring the upper facades out and create a continuous façade from ground to parapet.

Presentation material. The Panel would like to have the architect bring large sized plans to display in addition to the powerpoint presentation; it is difficult with only the powerpoint and a few smaller sheets to review the various facets of the building (plans, elevations, perspectives) in relationship to one another.

PANEL ACTION:

Schematic approved with comments.

Attending:

Jane Shaab – UMB Biopark

John Mishalanie – APT

J. Jason Perry – APT/Signet

Roland Udenze, Elizabeth Lentz, Christopher Holmes – Haskell Architects and Engineers

Charlie Wilson – ASG

Susan Williams – STV

Gregory Countess – Legal Aid – Poppleton

Kathy Robertson - BDC

Ms. Eig; Messrs. Bowden, Britt, Cameron and Ramberg – Panel

Tom Stosur, Gary Cole, Alex Hoffman, Brent Flickinger, Anthony Cataldo, Bob Quilter – Planning