

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

**Date:** March 15, 2012

**Meeting No.:** 143

**Project:** Riverside Wharf

**Phase:** Revised Schematic/Final

**Location:** Corner of Lawrence Street and Key Highway – Key Highway South Area

**PRESENTATION:**

Anthony Cataldo provided background information on the project and introduced its new architect Michael Burton, of Urban Design Group. He reminded the Panel that a predecessor project, “Riverside Lofts”, had been proposed and last discussed in November ’09. Although the upper level residential use of the previous project has been changed to offices, the basic layout is similar with both projects accommodating a ground floor Walgreen’s Drugstore at the corner of Key Highway and Lawrence Street and an integrated two level parking structure to the rear of the property. For this reason, the current design team has requested a combined revised schematic and final phase review, if acceptable.

After showing images of relevant contextual and precedent buildings, Architect Burton described the new project as follows:

1. The three-storied building would have continuous massing along its main curving street-facing property lines from Boyle Street to Harvey Street and has drawn its design influence from traditional wharf warehouse buildings of an earlier era. The rear of the building would be composed of a two level parking structure below two levels of offices served by an open arcaded gallery.
2. The two main straight portions of the proposed building along Key Highway and Lawrence Street most directly reflect the intended warehouse design aesthetic with repetitive bays of brick masonry and Traco windows on its upper levels and retail storefront glazing with projecting cloth awnings on the ground floor. The middle curving portion, with no entry elements or awnings, and the two “bookend” corner office lobby entrances at Boyle and Harvey Streets would be somewhat taller and transparent than the straight sections, employ a cast stone base and projecting rooftop cornices and would utilize Kalwall panels as its primary material. EFIS would also be used.
3. A continuous line of shade trees in planters are proposed along the straight sections of Key Highway and Lawrence with smaller decorative flowering trees at the corner curved section. Service access would be located at along Lawrence Street with the main parking access from Harvey Street.
4. Multiple opportunities for tenant signing were proposed including the main Walgreen sign and potential large tenant (building naming) sign at the corner, as well as individual ground floor retail tenant signs and office signing on the rear of the building. The main entrance to Walgreen’s was proposed along Key Highway.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL:**

The Panel embraced the idea of the warehouse design vernacular and agreed that the massing was reasonable with the middle and ends of the project having some distinguishing features. The following additional comments and suggestions were offered:

1. Street trees and Landscaping -To consider making all of the street trees the same rather than changing the tree type at the corner so that a clearer definition of the continuity of street edge for the project is achieved.
2. That the aggressive contrast and multiple strong design gestures of the different components of the building was disturbing and would benefit from more restraint to achieve a more calming and cohesive overall building façade treatment.
3. That more study be given particularly to the streetscape at the curved corner, by continuing the full storefront and awning treatment, reconsidering the Walgreens entry relationship, and seeking more of a harmonious relationship with the adjacent façade treatments.
4. The Panel unanimously felt that the proposed use of Kalwall as the dominant feature material was inappropriate in this location and recommended against it. Concerns ranged from the nature of the plastic material, its coloration upon aging, the unevenness of nighttime lighting as well as its general flatness and lack of detail.
5. Consider employing fewer building materials and fewer signs. The signs on the rear seem inappropriate for the proposed tenant types and are recommended to be more subdued.
6. Reconsider currently proposed Lawrence Street trash collection and delivery to avoid unsightly and unsafe pedestrian conflicts along this main promenade.

### **PANEL ACTION:**

Site plan and massing acceptable, however recommends continued study of facades and materials especially as they relate to the corners and curved element. The Panel recommends disapproval of the revised schematic and final.

---

#### **Attending:**

Michael Burton, Janelle Horst, Erik Baiamonte - Urban Design Group

Caroline Hecker – RMG

Joan Flora – FTLA

Alex Fine, David Bronfein, Arsh Mirmiran – Caves Valley Partners

Virgil Bartram – Resident LPCA

Tom Smith – Resident LPCA

Al Barry- AB Associates

Jay Brodie - BDC

Ms. Eig, Messrs Bowden\*, Burns, and Cameron - Panel

Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Wolde Ararsa – Planning Department