

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

**Date:** October 9, 2014

**Meeting No.:** 194

**Project:** Proposed PEMCO PUD

**Phase:** Master Plan

**Location:** 5601 Eastern Avenue

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**PRESENTATION:**

Mr. Robert Northfield, architect with BCT Architects presented a revised schematic Master Plan of 2 design options representing a minimum and maximum density urban design plan. Nicole Reedy of Morris & Richie presented a revised landscape architecture plan while Caroline Paff representing MCB Real estate LLC answered questions on behalf of the developer.

The revised Master Plan continues to strive for placemaking within the confines of flexibility with respect to current and future market dynamics. Both the minimum and maximum development options have a singular boulevard entrance commencing at Eastern Avenue at the northern edge of the property and then ending at a cul de sac at the southern edge with a parcel designated as Development Area “C” potential residential/hotel/commercial. The revised Master Plan’s scheme shifts the major pedestrian focus to the 4 corners of the boulevard at Center Drive. The major retail activity lines the boulevard until reaching the corners at Center Drive and then tapers to a quieter street facade ending in Development Area C. The revised design utilizes the corners to serve as the delineation of major activity generators from entry at Eastern Avenue to Center Drive.

The minimum and maximum schemes continue to rely on land uses previously presented to the panel. According to the presentation, Parcels, A and B change densities by placing significant residential density of 5 levels over retail in the maximum scheme. The minimum alternative permits a 85,000 sf. Retail Tenant in Development Area B with residential above shown in the maximum plan. The revised urban design plan strives to optimize the pedestrian experience while accommodating retail uses that are more likely dependent on a vehicular arriving customer base.

The landscaping plan continues to focus on native species and utilize landscaping to enhance the pedestrian experience within the site. The revised Landscape Plan employs a coordinated perspective with respect to the new urban design scheme presented to the panel. This is particularly evident in the Landscape Plan designating “enhanced paving locations” and 7 locations on the site designated as “pedestrian enhancement areas” that include substantial landscaping and street furniture. The Landscape Plan recognizes the need to provide both active pedestrian spaces enhanced with plantings and furniture as well as quieter spaces. The plan appropriately separates, through landscaping treatment, traffic calming and pedestrian activity strategies to adequately separate pedestrians from the vehicular zones.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:**

The revised minimum and maximum plans continue to strengthen the urban design goals for the site while recognizing the need for flexibility in land use choices based on future market conditions. Overall, the panel viewed the hybrid urban design plan to be strongly responsive to prior comments

by the panel; the panel was supportive of the changes and direction proposed by both architectural consultants, design and landscape. The Panel had the following comments:

1. The design of the main boulevard seems wide based on projected traffic and pedestrian activity frequenting the retail and eventually serving the residential population. The panel would request that the applicant study with their traffic consultant, narrower lanes, if feasible.
2. Increase the height of the proposed landscape wall along Eastern Ave. to better screen the parking lot/cars.
3. If possible, the landscape/wall along Eastern Ave. may want to reflect materials represented in the existing Church structure adjacent to the site to add some consistency along the corridor.
4. Continued development, as the end user is identified, will help create a strong terminus at the south end of the north-south street. Specific attention to eliminating pedestrian and vehicular conflicts should be had as well as screening the service court to the east through architecture/landscape treatments.
5. Traffic conflicts with service vehicles should be reduced especially where residential development fronts the streets.

In summary, the panel was pleased with the major urban design changes that have been made since the beginning of the review process. In addition, the panel appreciates the applicant addressing parking needs of the adjacent residents by continuing to allow parking on the perimeter.

**PANEL ACTION:**

Recommend approval of the Master Plan with Comments.

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**Attending:**

Robert Northfield - BCT Architects  
Nicole Reedy - Morris & Richie Associates, Landscape Architect  
Caroline Paff, Dave Frederick - MCB  
Al Barry – AB Associates  
Natalie Sherman – Baltimore Sun  
Klaus Philipsen – ArchPlan Inc.  
Kevin Litten- BBJ

Ms. Meany\*, Messr. Bowden and Haresign - UDARP Panel

Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Eric Tiso, Carmen Morosan, Christina Gaymon, Wolde Ararsa – Planning Department