

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL

MEETING MINUTES

Date: October 9, 2014

Meeting No.: 194

Project: Research Building, 873 W. Baltimore Street
UMBioPark PUD

Phase: Continued Schematic

Location: Site bounded on the north by W. Baltimore Street, to the west by S. Poppleton Street, on the south by Booth Street, and to the east by an alley and vacant lot slated for future development

PRESENTATION:

Anthony Cataldo introduced the project team, noting that staff had an intermediate review with the project team. The developer is Wexford Science + Technology, and the architect is Gaudreau, Inc. Architects. Mr. Jim Bartlett, AIA, Director of Design for Gaudreau, again provided an overview of proposed program and planning modifications, site context and the updated design, specifically addressing comments from the prior Schematic Design review on August 28. Key modifications and presentation points from the prior review include:

1. Master Plan intersection and open space strategies
2. Improved context discussion, including photographs of adjacent existing properties.
3. Context renderings that illustrate future potential development immediately east of the proposed research building
4. Modifications to key building elements, including:
 - a. Simplification of the northeast corner tower, acknowledging its diminished visibility after future construction on the adjacent site
 - b. Simplification of the curtainwall system
 - c. Introduction of balconies on northwest corner
 - d. Elimination of wood and wood-like façade and soffit materials
 - e. Simplification and vertical stack of windows within two story masonry frames
 - f. Reducing masonry and curtainwall spandrel heights with introduction of spandrel glass at masonry, and a horizontal mullion at the curtainwall.
 - g. Continuous two story metal and glass cap
 - h. Specific Wexford sustainable design strategies on completed properties that may be applicable to the current property

PANEL COMMENTS:

The panel appreciated the design and development team's willingness to further consider the original Master Plan, re-examine context, and modify the initial Schematic Design as discussed during the August design review. The panel also noted the following concerns related to the building design:

1. Site

- a. The panel noted that the team had retained the arcade, and we still have originally stated concerns.
 - b. For the Final Design review, the design team must present the final streetscape and landscape plan with details.
2. Building Design
- a. The panel asked the design team to consider a more effective design move to signify the primary building entrance
 - b. Clear diagrams of the “big ideas” are still not evident, though the design has improved.
 - c. Other specific comments:
 - i. Reconsider the massing of the northeast tower-like element. It is currently held back from the predominant face of the masonry. If retained, consider extending the masonry to the roof and creating a top.
 - ii. The secondary masonry piers in the alley should extend to the ground
 - iii. Reconsider balcony horizontal proportions on both streets to create a clear hierarchy of a dominant face, and extend further upward. Also evaluate the transition between the curtainwall and metal panel, and between metal panel and masonry
 - iv. The vertical orientation of the curtainwall was praised by the panel. Consider the detailed design of the curtainwall with a hierarchy of mullions vs strong vertical and all butt glazed horizontals in order to create a subtle texture or weave.
 - v. The light-colored capture plane behind the curtainwall still requires further study, including consideration of a more pristine glass box. Study the relationship and intersection with the masonry at the northwest corner in more detail
 - vi. The massing on Poppleton Street requires additional study; the full bay width metal and glass separator between curtainwall and masonry is too wide. Adjusting the masonry massing ½ bay may address this.
 - vii. The 2 story masonry pier below the curtainwall on Poppleton seems unresolved. Consider using a round column with recessed masonry pier on the inner liner, similar to the West Baltimore Street expression.
 - viii. Reconsider the two story window expression currently shown on the four bays on the south elevation. Consider committing more fully on all facades, or to a different expression using an alternate masonry or other material to define the top of the building.
 - ix. Consider creating a stronger contextual relationship to the surrounding neighborhood, such as by establishing a clear two story base.

PANEL ACTION:

The Panel recommends approval of the revised Schematic Design with comments, and looks forward to additional development for the final design in response to comments.

Attending:

Jane Shaab – UMB/ UMBioPark

David Dampier, Carl Pierce – Carter Memorial Church

Yvonne B. Gunn, Dorothy J. Page – Poppleton

Jim Bartlett – Gaudreau
Natalie Sherman – Baltimore Sun

UDARP Panel Members – Dr. Judith Meany, Messrs. Gary Bowden, and David Haresign*

Planning Department- Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Wolde Ararsa,
Brent Flickinger