

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

Date: October 23, 2014

Meeting No.: 195

Project: 3200 St. Paul Street

Phase: Revised Final

Location: 33rd and St. Paul Streets

PRESENTATION:

This project is part of an approved PUD and the specific building site was given schematic approval by UDARP in late 2007 but the project has been delayed and is now ready to proceed.

Mr. Tony Nero, developer from Armada Hoffler explained that his firm was the chosen developer through an RFP process by Johns Hopkins University to develop a retail and residential mixed-use building. The building program is first floor street retail of +/-30,957 sf wrapping the building. Above are +/-157 units, constituting +/-569 beds catering to students from the university. It also includes +/-160 parking spaces.

Mr. Nick Mansberger of Design Collective, the Architect, provided the panel with a comprehensive, detailed presentation of the design and specific functions of the building. Since the current panel had not been constituted at the time in 2007, he covered all the major aspects of the neighborhood, site and building envelope. Also, he indicated that his presentation would address the 4 comments previously made in the UDARP minutes of the last meeting held on this project.

The site is bounded by 33rd Street which also serves as the entrance side of the building, St. Paul Street on the east and Lovegrove Alley on the west with a pedestrian alleyway on the southern border of the site. There is a strong context of tall mid-late century residential buildings surrounding the site. The proposed building acts as a Gateway with the existing Commons building, holding the urban edge on the Site. The C shaped building fronts mainly on St. Paul Street placing the entrance to the 2 level parking garage on Lovegrove Lane. This design approach is intended to activate the corner at 33rd and St. Paul Streets. This is achieved by the building massing which begins on 33rd at a height of 12 stories (140 Feet) that is slightly below the approved PUD height of 150 Feet. The building then turns the corner and steps down to a 10 story facade along the St. Paul Street frontage of the property. Key design elements are:

- To anchor the corner of the building, the architect has proposed a wrap the corner with glass. The function in the tower are living room spaces for the residential units.
- The St Paul Street facade is pulled back 10 feet from the edge to separate the retail from the residential above.
- There are three 2-story residential lounge area in the building noted on the building faced with differentiated window treatments. On the 33rd Street facade the idea is the lounge is floating above the retail.
- The design and placement of the garage entrance on Lovegrove significantly diminishes the impact of the garage on the building design.
- The use of a series of bays across the building facade to articulate depth and shadow.
- There is an intended strong architectural language of bottom, middle and top. The top is further articulated with a strong modern top. The guiding design principles were: to celebrate the public space of the building, look at the skyline of the city and back to campus, create a

strong edge at ground level in accordance with the surrounding neighbor and provide for welcoming public interaction with the building.

COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:

Overall the panel found the building design to be strong, contextual and functionally well organized on the site. The stronger modern design approach is a welcome addition to the neighborhood. The building respects its neighborhood context but loses the opportunity to acknowledge youthful vigor given that it is primarily a student housing building. Therefore materiality becomes a point of discussion, in particular relation of color rather than all brick could create a building for the 21st century, namely a building of its time. Specific comments from the panel were as follows:

1. The 2 story retail has no rhythmic connection to the building floors above.
2. The corner tower is overpowering and may be discordant with the intended function within the building. The expansion glass tower may not stay as a beacon of transparency but instead become a clutter of window coverings or chaotic furniture placement representing the yearly occupant individuality of each floor.
3. The three changes of elevation across the building appear to be excessive and lead to clutter rather than simplicity of design. One less change may be preferable.
4. There needs to be greater ground plane connection at the corners and along the street front (33rd st), the floating mass seems too heavy and uncomfortable with the present design.
5. Stronger recognition of the building function for students and young professionals should be explored in the architecture and/or materiality. Now that the clear rules had been set through analysis, find opportunities to break them.
6. The street experience is critical to a full building experience and a robust Landscape Architecture presentation must accompany the architecture, including adding streetscape context to the plan drawings for connection.

PANEL ACTION:

The panel was pleased with a majority of the design work that has been accomplished. The project should return as soon as feasible addressing the major concerns expressed by the panel discussion and review.

Attending:

John d'Epagnier – RK+K

Jamie Watt – Profiles, Inc.

Kim Rhodes, Bailey Whittaker, Sharon Pula, Nick Mansberger – Hord Coplen Macht

Sandy Sparks – Charles Village Civic Association

Liam Davis – Council President's Office

Tony Nero - Armada Hoffler

Dr. Meany*, Messrs. Bowden, Rubin, Burns and Haresign - UDARP Panel

Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Jill Lemke, Christina Gaymon, Martin French –Planning Department