

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

Date: May 14, 2015

Meeting No.: 204

Project: BCPS Robert Poole School

Phase: Discussion #1

Location: 1300 W. 36th Street

PRESENTATION:

Introduction by Thomas Henderson, Project Manager for BCPS/MSA/State of Maryland presented a brief history of the School. Originally constructed in 1924 as a neighborhood elementary school, Robert Poole is now a Citywide Transformational School which also houses Ace Academy, an Independent Charter High School. John Srygley of JRS Architects presented the architectural plans and urban design scheme for the project.

Located in the Hampden National Register Historic District, the project is a renovation of the 1924 building (77,350 GSF) and 2 additions of approximately 61,380 GSF, a smaller 3-4 story building addition to the rear with the remaining new construction which includes the new gymnasium proposed for the Northeast side of the existing structure. There are several important architectural and urban design goals; first, to respect the existing building design through scale and materiality, to preserve the historic viewshed from 36th Street, and to open the building accessibility along 36th Street. The architects presented and discussed 2 design schemes for the panel's review. This was greatly appreciated by all members of the panel and staff because it promoted a lively discussion among all the participants. The 2 proposals differed primarily in the placement of the parking and the location of the gymnasium portion of the northeastern building.

COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:

The panel viewed the proposed architecture as generally compatible with the historic Robert Poole School building and prefers materiality complementing the building rather than trying to duplicate architectural style. For instance, one suggestion was to study a glass box approach in the rear rather than a solid brick type structure. Parking seems to be a dominant driver of building placement and should be reviewed. The 2 schemes presented to the panel each showed several strong elements but there was not complete agreement as to either scheme. Rather the panel suggested the architect team study the strengths of both and potentially have a third scheme with less parking on the 36th facade, more open forecourt and by pushing the new building back but maintaining the relationship to the street. The urban design scheme is a good start and can benefit from refinement especially in the area fronting on Berry Street.

PANEL ACTION:

Discussion only.

Attending:

Tom Henderson - MSA

John Srygley, JRS Architects
David Schrader – Schradergroup Arch
John Speights – CAM Construction
Laurent Maouaud – STV, Inc
Ryan Patterson – BOPA
William Doane – City Schools

Dr. Meany*, Messr. Bowden, and Burns - UDARP Panel

Wolde Ararsa, Katie-Rose Imbriano, Reni Lawal, Aaron Bond –Planning Department