

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

Date: May 28, 2015

Meeting No.: 205

Project: EBDI PUD – Gateway Hotel
Marriott Residence Inn

Phase: Final

Location: Site bounded on the north by Ashland Avenue, on the east by N. Wolfe Street, on the south by E. Madison Street, and on the west Durham Street

PRESENTATION:

Anthony Cataldo introduced the project team. Mr. Scott Levitan, Senior Vice President of Forest City Enterprises, gave a general project overview, noting several modifications to the previously reviewed site plan, noting that the building remains within the approved PUD guidelines, and Marriott is the flag for the hotel. Mr. Levitan also indicated that the development team had targeted the end of the 3rd quarter of 2015 to commence construction. Peng Gu, landscape architect with Mahan Rykiel, and Jim Camp and Maria Rucks from Gensler provided commentary on the design evolution since UDARP’s recommendation for schematic design approval in September 2013. In the overview of the project, the team re-emphasized the following Design Objectives:

- Recognize the significance of this site as the gateway focal point at the head of the park
- Create an exciting destination for the local and visiting Hopkins populations
- Allow for easy and understandable navigation for a range of users – from local to international guests
- Create a community bridge, that connects to East Baltimore, provides a physical and thematic connection to the park, and balances the needs of target users
- Supports and promotes a healthy lifestyle

Key modifications and presentation points from the prior review include:

1. Program/Phasing updates
2. Site Plan and Landscape Design
 - a. Site design and materials, including planting and paving, are intended to reinforce a connection to the Eager Park landscape
 - b. Phased construction affects extent of base construction, and includes a temporary retail terrace in the northwest corner, a midblock single story loading facility, and a surface parking lot on the southwest corner
 - c. The upper terrace retail is pulled back from the face N. Wolfe Street approximately 15’ to create a Retail Terrace.
 - d. There is a 12’ sidewalk and 5’ tree pits along N. Wolfe Street

- e. The porte cochere circulation and design are more specific, with a one way traffic loop with the inbound entrance from N. Wolfe Street, an outbound lane to E. Madison, and planting aisles to assist with temporary parking and traffic control
 - f. There is a mid-block plaza and stair transition to the Level 2 retail terrace proposed for N. Wolfe Street
 - g. The Ashland Avenue sidewalk varies from 12' – 18', with a set of steps and ramp, with a 15' – 18' series of steps and retail plaza/seating area. The upper retail terrace is 15' wide to the face of the terrace retail
 - h. Approximately 12' wide stairs and stepped planters ascend to the retail terrace
 - i. The Durham Street Alley is divided with a significant grade change and retaining wall
 - j. A landscaped upper retail terrace occupies the elevated area that will eventually become the leading edge of the Phase 2 luxury hotel
 - k. Photographs of proposed mostly indigenous plant materials were presented
3. Lighting
- a. General lighting concept is to provide some accent lighting at the base of the building, with upper sections dependent on random internal illumination.
4. Building Design
- a. The design team presented updated exterior design, including:
 - i. The building base is a textured precast panel
 - ii. The primary façade facing Eager Park remains curtain wall and metal panel cladding
 - iii. All other façades above the third floor are scored EIFS with recessed punched aluminum and glass windows, recessed approximately 8". Vertical metal panels at the northwest and southwest corners come to grade and transition above the first floor to create a horizontal cap projection
 - iv. There is a rooftop terrace with a horizontal canopy/trellis edge to edge

PANEL COMMENTS:

The panel appreciated the advancement of the design and consideration of past commentary. The panel also noted the following specific comments and concerns related to the site and building design:

- 1. Site
 - a. Stairs should “ascend” graciously. Re-evaluate stairs from Ashland and N. Wolfe. Provide detailed section w/ stair dimensions
 - b. Further consider the design of the porte cochere area, including traffic control from Madison, and the two island inserts. Show turning radius diagrams to prove reasonable viability
 - c. Benches and street furniture, including at E. Madison and N. Wolfe, are important amenities to include. Proposed benches appear appropriate. Provide further detail for other site furnishings and accessories, including bollards.
 - d. Confirm wall treatment of Section B along N. Wolfe Street
 - e. Northwest Alley and Stair Connection (a permanent feature)
 - i. There is a significant amount of grade being negotiated. The stair has a utilitarian, direct quality, and completely orthogonal geometry. Consider adjusting geometry to allow for ascension rather than climbing, using reduced riser height and increased tread length, with additional intermediate landings

- ii. Re-evaluate the planter/steps and back wall
- 2. Lighting
 - a. Given the interior use and other lighting in the area, appears appropriate.
- 3. Building Design
 - a. The façade facing the park is well designed and appropriate
 - b. The sloped columns are alarming and disconcerting, almost implying a folly. Consider alternatives, including adjusting the lobby wall location, to resolve this in a more visually acceptable fashion.
 - c. Reconsider the blade wall on the northeast corner of the retail terrace, and consider turning the corner w/ glass vs a solid and punched wall.
 - d. The punched windows in the body of the building should remain recessed from the face of the exterior cladding.
 - e. Provide a large scale elevations and typical details of each wall type - facing Eager Park and other facades
 - f. The panel suggested that the design team should consider the dirt run off from the window sills, and use an aluminum sill that provides profile and drip edge.
 - g. Materials
 - i. The panel is concerned about the EIFS – a very economical wall material that looks and feels significantly less permanent sensibility than other cladding possibilities. The panel requested the development team to reconsider
 - ii. The panel is concerned about the specifics of the division and detail as well depth of the window openings. (Suggest larger scaled details)
 - h. The panel requested the team to provide a graphics and signage standards package for review.

PANEL ACTION:

The Panel recommends continued study of the Final Design, and looks forward to additional development for the final design in response to comments.

Attending:

Joe Corson – Blue Book
 Jian He, Peng Gu – MRA Landscape
 Sara Salinas – BBJ
 Scott Levitan – Forest City New East Baltimore
 Maria Rucks, Jim Camp – Gensler
 Caroline Hecker, Justin Williams – RMG
 Pavlina Ilieva
 Natalie Sherman – Baltimore Sun
 Mark Bennett – Greenbaum Enterprises
 Alex Paschalides – Hensel Phelps

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

Planning Department- Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Eric Tiso, Tamara Woods