

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

Date: July 16, 2015

Meeting No.: 209

Project: Oldham Crossing

Phase: Discussion

Location: Gough and Oldham Street

PRESENTATION:

Ms. Susan Williams, representing S.T.V. Inc.; introduced the project to the panel. As described by Ms. Williams, the 9.8 acre site is bounded by Gough Street on the south, East Lombard Street on the north, South Oldham Street to the east and railroad tracks to the west of the site. The development proposes 171 three story townhomes, a decrease from the 226 stack townhouses proposed in the 2006 plan.

The revised site plan presented by Ms. Williams extends the existing north/south street grid into the site, provides for a generous community open green space and preserves the existing children's playground.

Mr. Rick Hoenes, representing N.V.R. - Ryan Homes; presented conceptual elevations of a typical seven unit townhome "block". In order to promote individual expression of each townhome, Mr. Hoenes employed a variety of materials and colors. The "urban block" was visually unified by a strong horizontal cornice line and continuous pitched/gabled roof. The rear elevations employed a variety of horizontal siding colors, ground level garage doors and second floor projected balconies.

COMMENTS OF THE PANEL:

Site Plan:

The Panel was pleased with the extension of the existing north/ south street grid into the site and the employment of an urban planning typology of main public streets and back service alleys. Although the Panel was pleased with the incorporation of a generous community green space they questioned its placement in the plan and its location next to an existing communications tower. With respect to the site plan, the Panel recommended the following for consideration:

1. Study the size and location of the green space and consider creating two smaller separate linear green spaces oriented east/west.

2. Study the opportunity to integrate the existing children's playground into the proposed open space network. This desirable integration could occur easily through the reconfiguration of the storm water management area and the incorporation of a linear open space located slightly south of the one currently proposed.
3. Study how the base of the communication tower can be effectively screened, landscaped and serve as a visual asset to the community.
4. Study ways to improve vehicular access to the site from Ponca Street.

Architecture:

Although the Panel appreciated the Architect's effort to achieve an "urban solution", it was felt the use of multiple materials and colors; emphasized the expression of individual units over the visual reading of a unified "urban block." To that point, the Panel felt the Developer's most recent built townhome development in the area was more "urban" and visually successful. The Panel offered the following for consideration:

1. Limit the number of exterior materials on the front façade to just two different colors/ texture of masonry. Utilize brick detailing to differentiate units. Perhaps one unit has a strong "belt line", another a rusticated base. Differences in the individual unit elevations should be subtle, not glaring.
2. For end units, particularly those fronting onto Gough Street; emphasize the importance of the side entrance.
3. To eliminate the possibility of someone jumping from one private balcony to another, consider reducing the length of the rear balconies (increasing the space between balconies) and or provide a solid end panel for both security and privacy.

PANEL ACTION:

No action required.

Attending:

Laurent Mounaud, Susan Williams, Kristen Gedeon - STV
Justin Williams – RMG
Rick Hoenes – NVR
Mark Levy – H+H Rock
Mark Shapiro – Shapiro Co

Messrs. Bowden, Rubin, Haresign, Burns*, and Ms. Ilieva - UDARP Panel
Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Wolde Ararsa – Planning Department