

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

Date: September 10, 2015
Project: 300 E. Pratt Street

Meeting No.: 213
Phase: Continued Schematic

Location: Inner Harbor, E. Pratt, South, Commerce and Lombard Streets

PRESENTATION:

Mike Nicolaus, AIA, Senior Vice President and Greg Luongo, AIA, Vice President of HKS Architects, and Bob Esselburn, ASLA, partner at LSG Landscape Architects re-introduced the project parameters, goals, context and site influences. Mr. Nicolaus noted that the project had evolved since the prior Schematic Review in response to UDARP comments from the March 19 review meeting, and comments from the Downtown Partnership. Key design advancement includes:

1. Architectural refinement – Massing, Ground Floor Plan, Elevations and Preliminary Signage
 - a. A major design goal is to create distinct massing from various perspectives.
 - b. A vertical, punctuated colored plane is introduced between the lower west segment of the tower and the tallest mass.
 - c. The eastern mass on the tallest face is bent to enhance interior views to the harbor.
 - d. Amenities are highlighted by major massing moves for rooftops, insets and private, continuous south facing private balconies and sunscreen projections, with additional select balconies on the east and west facades.
 - e. Retail base along Pratt Street is cut back with more orientation to the southeast, allowing the tower mass to be grounded and creating an outdoor seating area at the southeast corner.
 - f. The ground level has been refined to accurately reflect the garage ramp impact.
 - g. A “fractured” or undulating metal sculptural scrim screens the parking on the west façade, with more orthogonal screening on Lombard and Commerce Streets.
 - h. The top level of the parking structure now includes a louvered mechanical enclosure along the northern portion, with a trellis above the top level of parking.
 - i. A white metal panel and floor to ceiling glass window wall system encloses the residential tower.

2. Site and Urban Design
 - a. Pratt Street grade transitions are simplified with stairs concentrated to the west, and the ramp system to the east.
 - b. A secondary tree planter with three ornamental trees is provided between the ramps.
 - c. The intermediate landing is enlarged to provide an opportunity for viewing.
 - d. South Street stairs and planters are consolidated, with breaks focusing on the residential lobby and parking elevator lobby, and on the hotel entrance. An additional street tree is provided.

- e. The stair for the corner retail at South and Lombard Streets is more appropriately scaled. Two additional street trees are added along Lombard Street.

COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:

The panel was complimentary of the updates proposed by the architect and landscape architect for the project. Specific comments included:

1. Architectural refinement – Massing, Ground Floor Plan, Elevations and Preliminary Signage
 - a. The panel applauds continued clarity and iconic possibilities, particularly at the harbor view facing E. Pratt Street.
 - b. Consider the scale of the Pratt Street retail cap as it relates to the overall building scale. It seems a little “thin”, and may be too low.
 - c. The blade is a positive addition. Consider stopping the blade above the building base. [Note that a sail does not touch the deck.] Develop depth to the window insets at the blade to further differentiate them from the bulk of the building, or let the plane float similar to a lattice.
 - d. The panel was split with 3 members in favor of bold color at the blade, with 2 members in favor of a white panel similar to the body of the building. The panel was also not congruent on the three “bites” on the southwest corner of the blade, and may be further developed as currently designed.
 - e. The garage screening concept along South Street is positively viewed. The panel generally thought that the Lombard and Commerce Street facades could be simplified and treated in a similar fashion to each other.
 - f. More clearly celebrate the residential entry, providing differentiation from the retail storefronts along South Street.
 - g. The northwest retail corner needs additional development; as rendered, it is lacking.
 - h. Further develop the northeast corner stair expression.
 - i. Further refine the signage proposal. Show proposed location[s] and size[s] for hotel signage on upper floor[s] of the building.
2. Site and Urban Design
 - a. The panel appreciates the continued refinement to the initial scheme, particularly with stair design [gracious risers,] planters/trees and general paving design.
 - b. Confirm adequacy of hotel drop-off width and layby.
 - c. Reconsider public access to the retail plaza from the east.
 - d. Provide edge details at the bioswales.
 - e. Consider adding back some of the tree planting and viewing/seating platforms within the Pratt Street stair to create a secondary tree line.
 - f. Consider native ornamental species in lieu of non-native Crape Myrtle.
 - g. Show critical details around the site, e.g. the ramp, planters, stairs, and planters, at a larger scale in both plan and section.
 - h. Provide clarity for pavers, including size at various locations and physical samples.

- i. Consider appropriateness of wood decking on the ramp in light of possible slip hazard.

PANEL ACTION:

The panel recommends approval of Schematic Design with comments, and looks forward to Final Design with continuing refinement and response to comments.

Attending:

Robert Esselburn – LSB Landscape Arch

Mike Nicolaus, Greg Luongo – HKS

Dan Slear, Larry Berhner – Comstock

Chris Krupinski – RKK

Justin Williams – RMG

Al Barry – AB Associates

Ed Gunts – Arch Magazine

UDARP Panel Members – Ms. Pavlina Ilieva, Messrs. Gary Bowden, Rich Burns, David Haresign*, and David Rubin

Planning Department- Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Theo Ngongang, Kristin Baja