

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

Date: October 22, 2015

Meeting 215

Project: 21st Century School Initiative – Forest Park High School

Phase: Discussion #1

Location: 3701 Eldorado Ave, Baltimore MD 21207

PRESENTATION:

Architect Ran Ilkovitch of SEI Architects reviewed history and condition of the site followed by schematic plans, diagrams, and massing studies for the proposed renovation and addition of Forest Park High School. This project involves the renovation of approx. 172,000 sf, 4-story existing structure and addition of 17,500 sf new construction.

Forest Park High School is located in Northwest Baltimore and is surrounded primarily by residential properties. The 12.4-acre site consists of the existing building, football field, running track, baseball field, and four tennis courts. Proposed addition and outdoor spaces are to accommodate student population increase and provide amenity to the surrounding community.

The design team presented schematic Site Plan that organizes the addition of community, performing arts, and athletic spaces at the northeast portion of the site, on axis with the main building entry. Service entry remains at the existing location and is screened by the new outdoor eating area. Proposed outdoor spaces include outdoor classroom, basketball court, and automotive program in addition to bio-retention, gathering plaza, ¼ mile walking path, and other landscape improvements along the periphery of the site. Proposed addition layout seeks to establish a second point of entry to the building that is accessible after school hours and organizes the community spaces on two levels via a lobby area. A series of controlled entry points provide further access to select public programs throughout the building. Proposed materials for the addition include brick, glass and metal panel and the projects is required to achieve a minimum LEED Silver rating. The project involves extensive tree planting in compliance with forest conservation requirements.

Comments from the Panel:

The Panel recommended the following areas for further study:

1. **Site Organization** – the panel encouraged further clarification of the specific strategy involved in treating all edges of the site according to their relationship with surrounding context and adjacent outdoor program in order to help bring scale to the surrounding streetscape, define various outdoor areas, and mark important destinations. Other discussions addressed the need to organize vehicular traffic and provide a drop-off/pick-up area as well as softening the relationship of the existing formal entry to the surrounding context.
2. **Building Organization** – the panel encouraged the designers to investigate potential reconfiguration of the proposed addition in order to consolidate parking along the east side of the site and to provide a more clearly articulated and formally defined plaza and entries. Other suggestions included expressing the volume of the proposed addition as a “pavilion” by providing a formal or material separation from the volume of the existing building.

3. **Building Articulation** – the panel was complementary of the initial effort to create a destination for arrival at the proposed addition entry and encouraged the design team to be more generous with the space provided and to seek opportunities for lines of sight between the various levels connected by the proposed lobby.

Panel Action: No action, discussion only.

Attending:

Ran Ilkovitch, Shiho Shibasaki, Seth Feriano - SEI Architects
Borndavid McCraw, Lawrence A. Ashworth II – Forest Park HS
Diane Miceli, Michael McBride – BCPS
Justin Fisher – Hess Construction
Peter Soprano, Bradley Wells – Site Resources

Messrs. Bowden, Haresign, and Ms. Ilieva* - UDARP Panel
Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, – Planning Department