

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

Date: November 12, 2015

Meeting # 216

Project: HarborPlace Pavilions - Redevelopment

Phase: Schematic

Location: Inner Harbor

PRESENTATION:

Stephanie Mineo, Senior Vice President of Ashekenazy Acquisitions Corporation opened the presentation and introduced Architect Mark Taylor of MG2, who outlined the primary design objectives for the project as follows:

- Get back to basics – *Basic Physical Buildings*
- Restore HarborPlace as a Baltimore destination – *Simple Integrity*
- Recreate HarborPlace as an asset for locals – *Community Driven*
- Create an urban pedestrian experience – *Street Frontage*
- Revive HarborPlace brand through consistency and unity – *Signage*

After a brief review of the defining aspects of a “pavilion”, the presentation continued with a discussion of the proposed design of the Pratt Street Pavilion, considered Phase 1 of the overall renovation plans. The proposed treatment for the street side of this pavilion primarily replaces the existing glass sheds, awnings and awning framework with a shallow light steel and glass frame, (projecting approximately 6 inches in front of the existing concrete frame) and highlighting the original structural elements. Flanking the three existing Pratt Street entrance, the first bays will replace the existing solid panels with new copper panels and limited signing for tenants facing the street. Intermediate bays will be glazed with clear glazing. All three projecting gable entrance bays will again have clear glazing and a proposed ceiling hung signing element identifying the pavilion. Additionally, a major rooftop sign identifying “HarborPlace” is proposed. The central gable, where the bridge from The Gallery is located will provide primary access to the second floor “market” with secondary existing stair connections at the other two entrance hallways. The Pratt Street sidewalk area will be revised with new landscaping, drop-offs and bicycle lanes.

The harborside of this pavilion employs “wood” rather than copper as its primary new identifying solid area finish material. The existing glass sheds, awnings and awning frames are removed on both levels. On the first level they are replaced with new extensions which accommodate wider 2nd level balconies and umbrella covered tables. Additionally, the second level balcony will have a trellis structure as a shading device in front of rollup “garage doors” to tenant and “market” spaces. The secondary harborside gabled entrance “porches” will have partially solid rails and, again, pavilion identifying sign elements.

The Light Street pavilion appears to be similarly treated although the original structural frame is less apparent and there appears to be more solid portions of the façade. The gabled secondary entrances, from the harborside, employ mostly solid rails and tenant signing in addition to pavilion identifying signing elements. The major element of change is a new terrace and near stair near Conway Street, connecting to the bridge across Light Street. A rooftop “HarborPlace” sign is also proposed for this pavilion.

Comments from the Panel:

The Panel appreciates the difficult design challenges in updating these iconic Baltimore structures. In general terms, the Panel felt the project was off to a positive start. There are several comments that should be addressed more fully as outlined below:

- A. **Materiality** – There remains concern that the proposed material choices are not yet based in a clear design philosophy about this project’s special industrial/maritime waterfront location. The reference to and long term durability of wood along the harbor side specifically, raises some concern. The design team should seek ways to subtly tie the two sides of the pavilion together.
- B. **Harborside expression**- Although the building’s incremental structural expression is honored on the streetside of the Pratt Street pavilion, there appears to be little attempt to do so on the harborside of both pavilions. Seek ways to break down the large scale of the retail units by introducing a more regularized ordering device.
- C. **The importance of the gabled entrance porches** – With the proposed extensions of the first level rental spaces, the iconic entrance porches appear to be crowded and diminished in importance. This is particularly true on the Light Street pavilion. The portions of solid rail and tenant signing further diminish their stature. Although pavilion signing may be useful, the current signing proposal places a “ceiling” element on an otherwise generously scaled space. The design team should seek to simplify the overall expression and expression within the gables.
- D. **Signage** - the signage proposal requires significant editing. The need to sign the pavilions individually and so aggressively is challenged. If the “Harborplace” rooftop signs are not possible, a mid-roof location would be preferred to an edge position.
- E. **Main entrance to “Market”** – Restudy the proposed treatment of the second level “market” entrance architecture in the Pratt Street pavilion. Visibility of the complete stair is recommended along with complete visibility to the volume of the market space above.
- F. **Conway Street stair/terrace** – Clarify design intent of stair in terms of location, connectivity to bridge, views, and relationship to mechanical equipment below.
- G. **Existing surfaces to remain** – Clarify intent as regards the cleaning or refinishing of roof surfaces, sandblasting of concrete structure, replacement of rails, glass walls etc.

Panel Action: Recommend schematic approval addressing the comments above.

Attending:

Stephanie Mineo – Ashekenazy Acquisitions Corp
 Eric Marks, Mark Taylor, David Russell, Stan Laegreid- MG2
 Scott Rykiel, Mark Pelosi – Mahan Rykiel
 Ronnie Younts – YDI
 Stanley Fine – RMG
 Lauren Moloney, Laurie Schwartz – Waterfront Partnership
 Valerie Whiteside – HP
 Ed Gunts

Bowden*, Burns, Haresign, and Rubin - UDARP Panel
 Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Kate Edwards–Planning Dept