

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

Date: August 10, 2017

Meeting #244

Project: Walbrook Mill Apartment

Phase: Schematic

Location: Coppin Heights Community

Presentation:

James Riggs, representing Developer Osprey Properties Companies introduced the project and its overall goals for a portion of a much larger development parcel on the former Walbrook Lumber Company site on the northern side of North Avenue west of Coppin State University. The proposed primarily residential building, occupying the northeast corner of Braddish Avenue and North Avenue will accommodate retail uses on the ground floor with limited on-grade parking beyond. Two existing buildings are slated to remain in addition to an entrance drive from North Avenue which provides access to parking and future development.

Architect Brandon Schultz and MJ Wojenodzki of Cho Benn Holback + Associates further described the project's schematic layout, massing and proposed exterior finish materials which included brick masonry, steel, wood and fiber cement panels

Comments from the Panel:

The Panel welcomed the addition of affordable housing redevelopment and general improvements to this important site along North Avenue. There were some issues that arose during the presentation and subsequent discussion that the Panel felt required further study:

Site

- The entrance drive from North Avenue, appears extremely tight to serve as the main entrance to significant future development. Additionally, there also appears to be minimal space at the east end of the building for pedestrian connections (sidewalk and landscape) to parking and servicing for the retail uses. Please re-evaluate these areas keeping in mind future redevelopment within the site overall.
- The current proposal for the residential related trash handling from Braddish Avenue is challenged as possibly inadequate but also raises questions about the nature and management of the Braddish Avenue sidewalk environment.
- In deference to the traditional front porches in most of the existing neighborhood, it was suggested that the North Avenue residential entrance terrace might provide some covered or protected communal outdoor space rather than have it so integrally connected to the retail uses.
- More green and less paving was suggested for the front terrace areas (or reorganizing, to some extent, what is proposed there).
- Questions were raised regarding the existing and proposed building setback conditions and their relationships, on both North and Braddish Avenues. Although the many photographs were helpful, please clarify these specific adjacent conditions in subsequent site plans.

Building Design

- The overall choice of building materials presented a good beginning although the use of wood, (again in deference to the former lumber yard) could be more meaningful, particularly at eye level (perhaps in the trellises of the retail storefronts, or the underside of canopies or awnings, or possible porch structures in the residential portions).
- The introduction of the “all brick” bays directly over the North Avenue residential entrance were challenged with suggestions that the entire Braddish building corner mass and its terrace could read as one and still relate to the eastern corner treatment. (See also the comment regarding “porches” above.)
- Concerns regarding the building’s base level treatment along Braddish were raised. Suggestions ranged from the possibility of actual apartment entrances (perhaps for accessibly handicapped individuals), planted terraces or other landscaping devices to potential lighten this façade and provide a more pedestrian friendly extension of Braddish Avenue.

Panel Action: Recommend continued Schematics addressing the above comments.

Attending:

James Riggs - Osprey Properties Companies
Brandon Schultz, MJ Wojendzki - Cho Benn Holback + Associates
Andre Robinson – MRCDC, Conscious RT
Min. Glenn Smith – CHCDC
Dan Ellis – NHS of Baltimore
Jericka Robinson – Rep. Senator Barbara Robinson
Selisa Jefferson – Councilman Leon Pinkett’s Office
Brian Greenan - BDC

Bowden*, Burns, O’Neill - UDARP Panel

Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Matthew DeSantis, Chad Hayes – Planning Department