

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

Date: March 24, 2016

Meeting No.: 223

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

Phase: Discussion #2

Location: 3701 Eldorado Ave, Baltimore MD 21207

PRESENTATION:

Architect Ran Ilkovitch of SEI Architects reviewed history and condition of the project site followed by updated site plan, floor plans, diagrams, and perspectives for the proposed renovation and addition of Forest Park High School. Key items included:

1. Redesigned Accessible Green Plaza & Entry along Eldorado Avenue
2. Outdoor Learning amenities organized on the south side of the main building
3. New Drop-off and Parking area on the north side along Belle Ave
4. Evening Entrance from Drop-off Area
5. Building Addition aligned with existing central hallway and a two-story through-Lobby that connects Drop-off area on the north side of the buildings and an Arts Plaza and Event Space on the south side as well as first and second floor public spaces
6. Complete replacement of existing brick facades of the existing building
7. Coordinated approach to emphasizing entries and circulation with increased glazing

Comments from the Panel:

The Panel was generally complementary of the proposed changes and recommended the following areas for further study:

1. **North Entry Drop-off and Parking** – the panel urged further study of the north Drop-off and queuing area with concerns for safety and efficiency including providing a pedestrian path aligned with the Community/Evening Entry that connects it to Belle Ave and possibly shifting the drop-off area away from that pedestrian zone. Some panelists expressed concern with using the service/loading dock entry as the primary access to the Drop-off area.
2. **West Entry Plaza** – the panel found the introduction of the accessible walkway and green buffer between the building and the street successful and encouraged the design team to investigate a more layered approach where trees can be planted on the curbside as well as the sloped planter to provide additional buffer for the neighboring housing and shade for pedestrians around the entry.
3. **South Outdoor Learning** – the panel encouraged revision of the location and configuration of some of the outdoor program spaces for the benefit of consolidating green space and organizing it along the main entry walkway from Eldorado Ave to the existing stadium for a more formal approach and better access to the field. Panelists expressed concern with collocating the Culinary Arts Garden and the Automotive Program in direct adjacency with only a hedge wall of separation.
4. **Site Organization** – the panel applauded the intent to line the entire periphery of the site with trees to improve the site's edge definition but questioned the ability of the proposed fence around the existing stadium to define space as well as the ability of the implied axis from the Plaza on Chatham Rd to connect the community to the new building addition as proposed.

5. **Building Organization** – the panel encouraged the designers to investigate potential reconfiguration of the proposed additions in order to align and consolidate the new north façade with the existing or relocate the Community/Evening Entry away from the corner between the old and new buildings in order to achieve stronger emphasis and an entry treatment that is centrally located and consistent with the west façade treatment.
6. **Building Articulation** – the panel found the new skin proposal highly beneficial to the building and its neighbors as it provides greater transparency, access to daylight and an opportunity to integrate the new additions to the existing building. The panel encouraged further study of refining the emphasis on corners vs. entries by controlling the depth of projections in order to maintain proper hierarchy. Specific concerns included inadequate canopy projections at both entries, excessive projections at two main stair ‘towers’, recess and step-down of the addition entry volume, brick ‘cap’ at the central stair tower, cafeteria addition treatment and lack of integration with the remaining building.

Panel Action: No action, discussion only.

Attending:

Ran Ilkovitch, Seth Feriano - SEI Architects
Diane Miceli, Michael McBride – BCPS
Justin Fisher – Hess Construction
Peter Soprano, Bradley Wells – Site Resources
Dan Hagan – City Schools Partner
Laurence F. Campbell – WBC CDC
Kimberly Broadie-Hopkins – Councilwoman Spector’s Office
Ty Miller – Councilwoman Middleton’s Office

Messrs. Bowden, Haresign, Burns, and Ms. Ilieva* - UDARP Panel

Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Laurie Feinberg, Chad Hayes, Mary Colleen Buettner, Wolde Ararsa – Planning Department