

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

Date: April 16, 2015

Meeting No.: 202

Project: 225 N. Calvert Street

Phase: Final

Location: 225 N. Calvert Street

PRESENTATION:

Mr. Frank Andre, Architect with Hord, Coplan Macht Architects, presented project design refinements in response to the Panel comments from the previous December 11, 2014 U.D.A.R.P. meeting. Specific refinements included:

- 1.) The slight adjustment of the “framing” element to clearly define and contain different façade treatments;
- 2.) The elimination of the framing element above the ground floor storefront at the corner of N. Calvert and E. Saratoga Streets;
- 3.) The development of a graphic mural depicting citizens of Baltimore to be painted on a metal mesh screen along the base of the garage facade fronting onto Calvert and Saratoga Streets; and,
- 4.) The incorporation of tree planters and planting beds along Calvert Street.
- 5.) Additionally, Mr. Andre presented proposed exterior materials and color, streetscape furniture and lighting fixtures.

COMMENTS OF THE PANEL:

The Panel was generally pleased with the continued design development of the upper residential component of the project. The random pattern of the color wall panels and the use of the framing device provide visual energy, vitality to that portion of the building.

The Panel continued to express concern about the treatment of the base of the building, notably the mural screening the garage; the stark streetscape treatment at the corner of Calvert and Saratoga Streets, adjacent to the bus stop; and the lack of a comprehensive exterior lighting strategy.

MURAL:

The Panel raised questions about the “readability” of the mural and the “cartoonish” nature of the generic images of Baltimore citizens. Given the overall composition of the Calvert Street façade, the Panel questioned the need/desirability to continue the mural to the south of the secondary entrance where a strong vertical bay system extends thru the garage base. The Panel questioned the need to mark the secondary entrance with a dominant vertical colored panel. It was suggested that the address of the building could be more visible if it were projected perpendicular to the façade.

STREETSCAPE:

The Panel recognized the severe limitations underground utilities placed on the landscape treatment and suggested additional above grade tree planters could be incorporated beyond the four employed to denote both primary and secondary entrances with similar emphasis. Additional concern was raised about the stark nature of the streetscape surrounding the bus stop area. The Panel encouraged the Design Team to “soften and humanize” this area with additional planting and potential cover for bus patrons.

LIGHTING:

The Panel recognized the financial commitment of the Developer to provide a graphic mural to screen the garage. Given that fact, the Panel was surprised that no lighting strategy was presented to illuminate the mural at night. Overall the Panel felt the “pedestrian” nature of the lighting scheme missed the opportunity to highlight the positive and iconic design elements of the project. Continued study seems merited.

PANEL ACTION: Approval of Final Architecture withheld

Attending:

Messr. Bowden, Haresign, and Burns* - UDARP Panel

Frank Andre, Josh Kilrain, Chris Parts, Sharon Pula – HCM
Alexey Ikonomou, Ashton Design

Christina Hartsfield, Tom Stosur – Planning Department
Gaylord Dutton - BDC