

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL

MEETING MINUTES

Date: June 18, 2015

Meeting No.: 206

Project: 301 East Cromwell Street – Whisky Distillery

Phase: Schematic

Location: 301 East Cromwell Street

PRESENTATION:

Mr. Joel Fidler of Ayers Saint Gross presented the history and intent of the project, reviewing the conceptual design ideas and the modifications of the design addressed by the team over the course of the presentations to the UDARP committee. Mr. Chris MacFarlane of Landworks Studio reviewed the modifications of the site design since the last presentation, acknowledging the Panels request to address the visual containment of the parking area, ensure that the landscape elements complement the architectural design, reinforce the simplicity of agrarian design, establish a vocabulary for the trellis that marries that structure with the water tower.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL:

The Panel acknowledged that the composition has improved. The Panel encourages the team to work toward the following goals:

BUILDINGS:

- Generally, a nice balance between mass and openings in the walls of the structures, but a complexity and perhaps over-development (multiple use of materials) on the “glass” facades: by example, on the Restaurant, perhaps simplify by taking out the stone piers.
- The entry to the Restaurant could have greater acknowledgment as THE main entry to the structure.
- The exterior “Tasting Area” appears randomly placed and insignificant to the rest of the project. It is also exposed to the sun and would benefit from a treatment in keeping with the Trellis or slating of the buildings.
- The “eyebrow” at the Restaurant works in pure elevation but less so in perspective from the parking area.
- The glass entries appear “ever so slightly” too tall in elevation.
- Consider making the depth of the stone walls of the buildings appear to be of greater thickness, as would be the case with a real springhouse.

SITE:

- The site and the building materials do not seem to speak to each other, suggesting a lack of connection between the disciplines and the interface spaces. The composition, in the end, should look to be one gesture.

- The Trellis structure still needs some development but it was generally agreed that characteristics are improved, particularly with the addition of the trestle components. It was generally agreed that the umbrella (central support poles) do not serve the form well. Please continue to see whether the Trellis and actually engage the Water Tower.
- The Water Tower would benefit from a “cap” with a two-foot overhang for a shadow line. Consider making the roof cap red, as part of the branding effort.
- Stone piers at the car entry gate need a little more weight (heft) to be successful. Their present design seems weak.
- Let the buildings, where possible, be the wall that separates Cromwell from the interior of the property.
- The loading dock wall should become a backdrop element/background information, and not stand out as singularly identifiable. Or perhaps that wall should be an extension of the building’s stone wall.
- Consider aligning the trees of the promenade in front of the Restaurant so that they form an edge to the Beach Lawn. Perhaps consider their alignment to be and the flagpole alignment to be one gesture.
- The tree pit apertures are narrow at 4’ wide. These may work to support the trees’ growth if sufficient planting soil volumes are provided below the paving system.
- Continue to refine the internal court space and provide clarity in form if it is truly a formal green or more fluid.
- When the overall masterplan of the waterfront is developed, ensure that the loop walk along the water’s edge makes greater sense in the overall composition.

PANEL ACTION:

Recommend approval with comments

Attending:

Joel Fidler,– Ayers Saint Gross

Shawn Batterton, Michael Pokorny – Sagamore

Chris MacFarlane – Landworks Studio

Paul Plymouth, Jasmin Collins, Bria Holman – City Council President’s Office

Jenn Ladd – BBJ

Bob Gehrman – BCT Architects

Patrick Terranova – BDC

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

Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Alex Hoffman, Kristin Baja – Planning