

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

Date: July 28, 2016

Meeting No.: 229

Project: The National Brewer's Hill P.U.D.

Phase: Continued Schematics

Location: South Eaton and O'Donnell Streets

PRESENTATION:

Architects Debra Seitz and Marty Lin, representing J Davis Architects, presented a revised schematic design in response to comments from the June 16, 2016 UDARP meeting. Design revisions presented included the following:

- The reconfiguration of the entry/corner element in order to reduce scale, promote a more residential aesthetic and improve visual transparency.
- The creation of "European Style" auto entry court off of East Drive at the southernmost point of the site;
- The reconfiguration of the open green space on the north side of the proposed building along O'Donnell Street in order to encourage both social interaction and dog walking functions; creating a space that is both static as a place and directional as a route.
- The manipulation of both the dominant east and west facades thru the employment of a pronounced cadence of balconies and recessed planes to reduce the scale and mass of the project;
- The addition of a strong, continuous cadence of street trees along South Eaton Street and East Drive.

PANEL COMMENTS:

In general, the Panel was pleased with the revised design and appreciated the responsiveness of the Design Team. In particular, the revised massing and architectural fenestration of the corner entry element was viewed favorably and reinforced the public nature and more pedestrian friendly environment of the adjacent new auto entry court. The Panel felt the Design Team had effectively employed a strong cadence of balconies, recessed planes and material changes to reduce the scale and impact of the long, dominant building facades along South Eaton Street and East Drive. Design revisions to the open space along O'Donnell Street, in order to encourage social interaction, were viewed positively by the Panel.

The Panel offered the following comments for careful consideration as the project design continues to advance and develop:

URBAN DESIGN/STREET SCAPE:

1. Study ways to provide street trees along the east edge of East Drive to spatially define the auto entry court.
2. Continue to study ways in which landscape and architecture can improve the pedestrian experience on the north end of South Eaton Street.
3. Continue to study ways to safely direct pedestrian mid-block movement across South Eaton Street.

ARCHITECTURE:

1. Study ways in which the iconic “Corner Elements” can be visually rooted to the ground plane and not defer to the dominant horizontal masonry base expression. Both corner elements on the north and south end of East Drive should visually interrupt the horizontal two story masonry base expression.
2. Changes in window types should be consistent with and reinforce changes in the architectural expression/intent of the facades. Masonry “warehouse facades” should have industrial window types. “Residential facades”, defined by the corner elements and the top “penthouse” floor, should display a different window style.
3. Restudy the treatment of the masonry piers at the base of the building to establish a consistent design intent. Currently some piers are rooted to the ground plane, some are not; while other piers rest on a “water table.” Investigate the use of masonry patterning/texture v. just a color change in the masonry.
4. Restudy the two story base treatment along South Eaton Street and East Drive. The Panel felt the base should be more responsive to the architecture fenestration and massing above in order to reduce the dominant horizontal read. The Panel felt the masonry base at the south end of East Drive should either be eliminated or more submissive to the material and architectural expression of the “corner element” above. Study ways to ‘Humanize’ the grand gesture at the main entry.
5. Restudy the architectural treatment of the walk up units along South Eaton Street so they have a consistent, less foreboding expression and promote a stronger individual two story visual read.

The Panel looks forward to the continued advancement of the design with particular focus on clarity and consistency of design intent and a heightened sensitivity to the lower base floors of the project as a positive contributor to the public/pedestrian experience. Further refining of the 'Rules' and applying them throughout the project will be helpful as the design moves forward.

PANEL ACTION:

Recommend approval with comments.

Attending:

Neil Gray, Marty Lion, KaMan Skinner, Deborah Seitz – Jdavis

Susan Williams – STV

Ellen Allred, Greg Cavanaugh, Lindsay Goetsch – Wood Partners

Rick Diehl, Martha O'Brien, Teddy Obrecht, Claiborne Crozier, Tommy Diehl – OCRE

Branden Brucks

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

Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield - Planning