

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

Date: October 1, 2015
Project: Canton Crossing

Meeting No.: 214
Phase: Continued Master Plan

Location: Northwest Harbor, Boston and S. Clinton Streets

PRESENTATION:

John Martin, AIA, LEED AP, principal at ELKUS | MANFREDI Architects re-introduced the project parameters, goals, context and site influences. Mr. Martin also shared data on the current approved PUD zoning and on the new proposed plan. He noted that the project design had evolved since the prior Master Plan Review in response to UDARP comments from the August 13, 2015 review meeting. Dean Lopez represented COPT, responding to questions about development strategies. Key points that are addressed include:

1. Density and height comparisons of Canton Crossing to Harbor East and to Harbor Point
2. Increasing northern and southern block porosity related to and from the parks
3. Sun diagrams
4. Anticipated routes for different modes of transportation
5. Parking strategies – uses and counts
6. Northern edge between park and new building
7. Elaboration on role of woonerfs and landscape design
8. Clarify role of and typology of pavilions

Mr. Martin reviewed additional information requested for items 1, 3, and 4 above, and presented the selected site plan option with adjustments to the final design based on interpretation of panel recommendations. Modifications in response to recommendation 2 include:

1. Northern superblock
 - a. North Street now cuts through the block providing loading, parking and pedestrian access to different uses. This increases porosity and provides a limited view corridor from S. Clinton to a waterside retail pavilion.
 - b. The taller residential tower has been moved from the northern boundary abutting the park to a prominent location at S. Clinton and Wharf Street. This should result in better evening activation of the Wharf Street, and mark the intersections prominence.
 - c. When asked, the developer indicated that the Hotel tower H and Office building D may change position if warranted by market demand.
 - d. The lower office tower is shifted to the northern edge overlooking the park.
2. South podium
 - a. Street wall is broken into two distinct segments, allowing for a passage from the south parking garage to the woonerf.
 - b. Garage is widened to a more efficient 180' +/-, 3 bay width, which also allows for a lower height.
3. Woonerfs, harbor walk and landscape design

- a. Vehicular traffic within the pedestrian district east of the Office Building C is expected to be limited to after-hours deliveries and service, and occasional drop-off for retail customers.
 - b. Special paving will delineate vehicular traffic areas, possibly with rolled curbs to separate vehicular and pedestrian zones.
 - c. Large street tree boxes occur between paired parallel parking spaces.
 - d. The woonerfs may be closed to vehicular traffic, and are designed to accommodate street/tent pavilion and truck vendors for markets and festivals.
 - e. The water's edge of the site is the western terminus of the city's harbor walk, and will be treated in a consistent way to other treatments.
 - f. The western public open green space is strategically located to maximize views to the harbor and the Baltimore skyline.
4. The relationship to the water and park to the existing Care First tower is reinforced with a pedestrian friendly through-lobby connection through Office Building C. Office Building C, at 120' height limit, is massed as a lower horizontal foreground slab that allows the Care First tower to remain prominent on the skyline.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PANEL:

The panel was generally complimentary of the updates proposed by the architect for the project. Specific panel comments included:

1. Praised the newly introduced porosity at northern and southern blocks;
2. Appreciated the slenderness, height and grace of the residential tower as a new icon and companion to the existing tower; there are no objections to proposed massing as the residential tower could be taller than the Care First Tower;
3. Appreciated clarity brought to parking, services and building entries;
4. Since this is the terminus to the promenade, the panel suggested consideration of improving connection at the northwest corner; retail pavilions appear to pinch circulation and view corridors to the primary open court in front of Office building C (NOTE: this may clarified with further study and larger scale evaluation of this critical intersection/transition;) Consider using the open space to support the axis and terminate the park connection. This may include sliding the retail pavilions south.
5. Clarify character of public realm adjacent to the park;
6. Suggested further clarification of hierarchy of public space and circulation, e.g. reinforcing Wharf Street as THE major pedestrian access to the waterfront; this would include improvements and stronger connections along the north side of the Care First Tower and crossing Clinton Street;
7. Asked team to confirm that view corridor from the north park is not impacted by the westernmost riparian building;
8. Consider making the physical commitment to the view and pedestrian connection to the Care First Tower through the proposed office building;
9. Consider position of retail pavilions relative to water's edge, both north and south, and tightness to the promenade; the panel requested more clear sectional information related to water, promenade, pavilions and terraces;
10. Proposed the urban design principles for the master plan that will outline the development as it moves forward;

11. Development on a pier is an assumption. Presently, development on piers is limited to only water-dependent uses. What is shown is presently non-compliant with pier development. The Developer will be responsible for following-up with appropriate Federal, State, and City Agencies to investigate the potential for pier development and any process that might result from that request;
12. Residential development within the proposed north block is also an assumption. Current Deed restrictions prevent development of residential units within this area. The Developer will be responsible for following-up with appropriate Federal, State, and City Agencies to investigate the potential for residential development here and any process that might result from that request.

PANEL ACTION:

The panel recommends further study of the Master Plan, and looks forward to additional design refinement and discussion in response to comments.

Attending:

Caroline Hecker- RMG
Wayne Lingafelter, Dean Lopez – COPT
Andrew Goetze, John Martin – Elkus Manfredi
Klaus Philipsen – ArchPlan
Laurie Schwartz – Waterfront Partnership
Alex Hutchinson – BDC
Mark Pelusi, Shihna Wang – MRA
Michael Feiber - Neighbor

UDARP Panel Members – Ms. Pavlina Ilieva, Messrs. Gary Bowden, and David Haresign*

Planning Department- Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Wolde Ararsa, Kate Edwards