

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

Date: August 13, 2015

Meeting No.: 211

Project: Canton Crossing PUD Master Plan

Phase: Master Plan

Location: West of Baylis Street btwn Boston Street and (Fmr.) Danville Avenue

PRESENTATION:

Mr. David Manfredi of Elkins Manfredi Architects presented on behalf of the development group, COPT, their Conceptual thinking for a revised Canton Crossing PUD Master Plan. Mr. Manfredi acknowledged that the goals of the proposed revision call for greater density and more focused use of the original PUD Master Plan within a specific zone. That zone is West of South Clinton Street to the waterfront, north to proposed parkland south of Boston Street, and north of the industrial zone identified as the former Danville Avenue. The proposed revision is intended to enhance connections to Canton Neighborhood and enhance connections between the waterfront and existing and future development east of South Clinton Street, as well as the existing Canton waterfront park to the West. The revision would increase the density of the site utilizing a mixed-use approach, and a focus in the aforementioned connections along the waterfront and into the heart of the proposed and existing development. The building massing concept would focus on the increased scale of proposed buildings from South to North, and articulate buildings to maintain view corridors from East through the site to the waterfront. Massing of the proposed buildings within the site would maximize potential views of the harbor and of downtown.

The revision request to the Existing Mixed-Use PUD is as follows:

- Office: 2,117,000 – 2,367,000 SF
- Retail/Restaurant: 278,000 SF
- Residential: 362-712 Rental Units
- Hotel: 300 Rooms (or Rental Units)
- Riparian: 100,000 SF on Public Pier Incl. Retail/Restaurant, Office and/or Residential (Apartments)
- Marina: 200 Boat Slips
- Parking: 6,999-7,610 Spaces

Mr. Manfredi shared the evolution of his team's approach in a systematic review of possible options and precedents. Three concepts were presented with a focus on the connective tissue and the public realm and publicly-accessible private realm. Precedents were offered for each proposal. The common goals for each concept included, but were not limited to:

- Establish a programmable central gathering space within the development, establishing an implied symmetry to the development, though this is not a prescriptive gesture
- Increase the viability of pedestrian and connective tissue linkages
- Develop an uninterrupted waterfront that is entirely accessible along its length and create a development that reinforces this gesture
- Pull car traffic off of Clinton by use of garages along its length, thereby pedestrianizing (to a great extent) the inner site

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL:

Each of the three conceptual proposals explored specific modifications to the overall generative idea. In general, the proposals were met with approval and the proposal is “off to a great start.” The Panel was genuinely pleased with Mr. Manfredi’s narrative and approach to the proposal and was appreciative of the overall conceptual approach of beginning the proposal by focusing on the connective tissue, fabric of the proposed development and concentration on the quality and character of the open spaces.

- Increased density does not seem to be problem for this proposal. It makes opportunities for the site better. But it is dependent upon the accuracy of the traffic analysis, including truck traffic. Not everything can exit to Boston Street.
- Reconsider the position of the marina. Perhaps it should not be directly in front of the proposed central open space. There may not need to be a foreground element to the open harbor beyond.
- Additional study of the northern edge of the development is warranted. Consider the opportunity to front on Boston Street, taking advantage of the value of that address and potential for access. Investigate (with the City) the opportunity for development along Boston Street, especially if the residential land use restriction cannot be lifted off the current site.
- For all options, keep “woonerfs” and pedestrian-oriented streets within the interior of the project. Any analysis or diagrams affiliated with traffic studies should include ALL of the adjacent parcels (not solely the proposed PUD revisions). Continue to develop the pedestrian experience, as it is key to the success of the concepts as described.
- As has been articulated on all Canton-related projects, the Panel has concerns for those structures so closely associated with the fuel tanks to the South of Canton Crossing.
- Sun-Shadow studies should accompany future presentations, as they inform the quality and character of adjacent public spaces. This will have direct impact on the positioning of taller structures in each of the three conceptual proposals.
- Single-story retail kiosks along the waterfront will likely experience intense use. They seem too small individually. Consider 2-story options and a consolidation from three to one and allow the public park space to expand and reach the water directly. To some members of the Panel, the single pad restaurants seem very suburban, as in the adjacent development and there was concern regarding servicing of those buildings.
- The proposed central open space and its adjacencies are significant design elements that warrant advanced study to ensure they are viable due to their value to the three concepts. Ensure that the proposed space is perceived as “public”, as in the examples offered. The

central park should be the “terminus” of the larger waterfront system. It is an important and prospectively powerful element in the entire composition.

- This proposal for increased density is dependent upon well-designed structured parking (that will be visible in key vistas, including the proposed central park. These elements need to be screened or skinned on sorties exposed to important public-realm elements.
- Be cognizant of the “pinch-point” at the northwest corner of the proposed plans. Ensure that it does not limit functional connection from the waterfront to the interior public realm. In all scenarios, whether residential, hotel, or office, the building form (and the responding roadway) compress the northwest corner of the site.
- The Panel was very responsive to options that “break-up” the northern block, allowing vehicular movement through that portion of the proposals. Doing so might allow other areas to be more pedestrian focused, as desired by the design team.
- The southern block seems “abandoned” relative to the development and ideas associated with the remainder of the site. Are there other, more deliberate approaches? Perhaps a southern “destination” element? The southern block’s service road is not a desirable condition. Sections throughout might suggest this to be true. Greater study is needed here.
- 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.

PANEL ACTION: The Panel encourages the design team to continue development and return, addressing the comments above.

Attending:

Caroline Hecker – RMG
Dean Lopez, Wayne Lingafelter – COPT
John Martin, David Manfredi – Elkus Manfredi Architects
Emily Bregel - BBJ
Natalie Sherman – Baltimore Sun
Ed Gunst

Messrs. Bowden, Rubin*, Haresign, Burns, and Ms. Ilieva - UDARP Panel
Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Theo Ngongang,
Kate

Edwards – Planning Department