

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

**Date:** December 1, 2016

**Meeting No.:** 234

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**Project:** Hammerjacks

**Phase:** Schematic

**Location:** 1300 (Lower) Russell Street (@ Ostend Street)

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**PRESENTATION:**

Matt Herbert of Design Collective began the presentation by summarizing the location of the proposed entertainment venue. Uniquely situated at the corner of Lower Russell Street (as opposed to the elevated roadway) and West Ostend Street, the site is situated on the edge of the “entertainment” district. The site borders two neighborhoods: the Carroll Camden industrial, Pigtown area, and the Stadium-Casino district.

This proposal envisions the adaptive use of a 1940’s warehouse/industrial building for the purposes of a 2500-person concert hall and entertainment venue.

Mr. Herbert was joined by developers Andy Hotchkins and Kevin Butler, as well as legal representation, Carolyn Hector, to respond to questions from the Panel. When asked about vehicular and pedestrian queuing outside of the proposed establishment and about vehicular turn-around at the end of Russel, the project representatives acknowledged that there is a proposed agreement with the stadium parking lot owners to the north to reserve spaces for use by Hammerjacks; no provisions for limousine queuing or valet attendants has been made on site. After inquiring, the developers acknowledged that the large billboard sign will have a “modest relocation”, when/if approved. The new location will be atop a large pylon in the Biergarten area. Additionally, the Panel inquired whether the new hipped roof over the bar area could include a clearstory to allow nighttime illumination to be seen from the elevated Russel Street.

**COMMENTS OF THE PANEL:**

The Panel acknowledges that this is an exciting vision for the proposed performance and gathering venue. Simple but significant comments were made for impactful changes to the project.

There is significant concern for the limited space allocated to get people up and into the building, and equal concern for those exiting en masse. The developers and the City should work to ensure the safety of those gathering and egressing by utilizing the area under the Russel overpass. Take advantage of the expansive area and do not limit the entrance and egress experience in the short term. In their next presentation, the developers should offer a proposal that includes diagrams

demonstrating queuing and control and how that will be achieved beyond the slim area currently defined for entrance and egress to the venue along Russell.

In general, the vision of the project should be expanded beyond the parameters of the property to include the opposite side of Ostend, the opposing building on Russell, and the extent of Russell to the South, in total. There are clearly opportunities to be had under the elevated Russell Street expanse, and although this is City property, a vision for its use should be considered in collaboration with the City and the Hammerjack developers. This vision should include safety concerns for entrance queuing and egress, as well as event gathering and celebrations outside of the proposed use of the building. There is opportunity for further study of materials, drivable surface extent, as well as pedestrian-defined zones and bollarded areas, and for the illumination of the space, including the underside of the roadway above.

Continued study of the distribution of windows facing Ostend and Russell is advised: window type, proportions, and number needs to be studied. The round-headed windows proposed seem to be contradictory to the building type. The retail windows on Ostend should have glazing to the sidewalk for greater retail opportunities and visibility.

The Biergarten gates should be studied for their prospective expressiveness – they are potentially a prime feature. And the monumental billboard pylon (which is sited in the Biergarten area) should engage that space more effectively.

Take advantage of the hipped roof and consider introducing a clearstory that will allow the vibrancy of the interior experience to escape and be visible to those passing at night on the elevated adjacent Russell Street. In addition, the lighting proposed for Ostend Street appears more decorative than the character of the site warrants; allow the lighting for the Russell Street side to be the bold statement.

Rather than fabricate a reason for the display of the Hammerjack sign on the stairwell tower, perhaps consider using the length of the proposed hip roof for the project declaration, in a manner similar to Port Discovery. With this move, the stairwell can be “opened up” using glazing to allow for the movement of concert-goers to be seen (and in turn, they can see the activity of the Biergarten and of people gathering outside).

Go beyond code for bathroom quantities when considering amenities inside the building. And create even greater engagement with the Biergarten space for both internal venues. Is there a way they can connect more fully?

Consider other precedent sites: The Flats in Cleveland, The Rustic in Dallas, and the Standard’s Biergarten at the Highline in NYC.

In conclusion, the Panel finds this proposal to be very compelling and a valuable addition to the neighborhood in which it is sited. Continued collaboration with the Planning and the Department of Transportation should be scheduled.

**PANEL ACTION:** Recommend Approval with Comments.

**Attending:**

Kevin Butler, Andy Hutchkiss – Hammerjacks Entertainment Group

Matt Herbert, Daniel Cartagena – Design Collective

Bryan Adgate – Morgan Keller Inc.

Caroline Hecker – RMG

Ed Gunts – AN

Jon Munshaw – BBJ

Kevin Lynch – SouthBmore.com

Mr. Rubin\*, Mr. Burns, Mr. Haresign, Mr. Bowden, Ms. Ilieva – UDARP Panel

Anthony Cataldo, Tom Stosur, Brent Flickinger, Wolde Ararsa, Christina Hartsfield, Martin French – Dept of Planning