

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

Date: October 1, 2015

Meeting # 214

Project: HarborPlace Pavilions - Redevelopment

Phase: Discussion

Location: Inner Harbor

PRESENTATION:

Stephanie Mineo, Senior Vice President of Ashekenazy Acquisitions Corporation opened the discussion and introduced Architect Walter Geiger of MG2. Geiger outlined the primary design objectives as follows:

- Get back to basics – *Basic Physical Buildings*
- Restore HarborPlace as a Baltimore destination – *Simple Integrity*
- Recreate HarborPlace as an asset for locals – *Community Driven*
- Create an urban pedestrian experience – *Street Frontage*
- Revive HarborPlace brand through consistency and unity – *Signage*

Geiger, further presented the architectural philosophy and outlined the analysis of the existing conditions with resulting proposed actions for the two pavilions, on both the street and harbor sides. The actions generally include removing dated elements such as the projecting glass “greenhouses” shed structures, cloth awnings/steel awning frames and otherwise expressing the base building more clearly. On the waterside, where the lower level tenants extend beyond the base concrete frame, expanded decks have been created on the second level.

Interior malls have been eliminated on both levels of the Pratt Street Pavilion with new “market” planned for the second level. Tenants on the lower level with extend to both faces with entrances. Proposed materials include metal panels (reddish/brown in coloration), natural and weathered wood, secondary black steel framing, and large sheer glass panels.

Overall signage proposals included new ridge-top “Harborplace” identity on both pavilions. Tenant signing is proposed both directly at tenant spaces and integrated into the architecture of the base building. New landscape proposals attempt to respond to the newly defined streetscape relationships and include major new terraced access to the second level bridge and upper level tenants at the Conway Street entrance and newly clarified bicycle lanes are incorporated.

Comments from the Panel:

The Panel generally was pleased to see a truly comprehensive design and redevelopment approach for the entire HarborPlace complex and felt that the process was off to a good start. Considerable discussion from the Panel centered on the potential elimination of the bridge connection across Pratt Street and the missed opportunity to open a direct exterior connection to the waterfront. There were several challenges voiced from the Panel regarding items of the design which would benefit from continuing study as follows:

A. Over-riding Design Philosophies – Provide design narratives which clarify the over-arching design attitudes regarding;

1. The nature of “pavilion”
2. The role of the structural frame
3. The importance of the gabled entrance porches
4. The role of light, transparency and translucency
5. The impact of the industrial/maritime environment
6. Building materiality as it relates to the above items

B. Specific Comments and Concerns

1. Consider the full concrete structural frame with less emphasis on the two story column;
2. Consider creative tenant signing independent of the building's "neutral surfaces";
3. Consider simplifying and clarifying the projecting gable/porch elements;
4. Consider replacing some opaque surfaces with translucent or transparent finishes.;
5. Consider shade devices other than umbrellas on the expanded second level terraces/overlooks;
6. Consider introducing a safety barrier at the bicycle lanes where they abut on-coming traffic;
7. Consider additional development of the area/landscape space between the Light St. Pavilions, new stair access, and Visitor's Center landscape.
8. Consider ways to bring additional light and landscape into the pavilions at the main gables.
9. Consider the opportunities to increase the porosity of the Pratt St. wall between the City and the Harbor.

Panel Action: Discussion.

Attending:

Stephanie Mineo – Ashekenazy Acquisitions Corp
Walter Geiger, Eric Marks, Mark Taylor - MG2
Ronnie Yountz – YOI
Onassis Burrell – GGP
Kate Dailey – DPOB
Darron Cooper – BDC
Valerie Whiteside – Harbor Place
Addison Palmer – STV
Caroline Hecker – RMG
Lauren Moloney, Laurie Schwartz – Waterfront Partnership
Shihma Wang – Mahan Rykiel
Ed Gunts - AN

Bowden*, Haresign, Illeva - UDARP Panel
Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Wolde Ararsa –Planning Dept