

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

Date:	April 06, 2017	Meeting #239
Project:	Revised Master Plan: PEMCO P.U.D.	Phase: Continued Master Plan
Location:	5601 Eastern Avenue, Baltimore MD	

PRESENTATION:

Mr. Robert Northfield, Architect with BCT Architects, presented the updates of the proposed changes to the approved master plan for the PEMCO P.U.D. in response to UDARP comments including:

1. Two-way vehicular circulation at all access points from Eastern Ave in order to alleviate congestions concerns at the Center Drive intersection.
2. Three design schemes featuring varied retail and parking ratios at the northeast and southeast corners of N/S and Center Streets intersection with a corresponding strategy for the activation of the N/S and Center Drive including:
 - a) Anchor retail tenant (31,370sf) facing a Multifunctional Plaza/Parking across Center Drive with 327 total parking spaces,
 - b) Multiple retail tenants (24,030sf) facing a Multifunctional Plaza with 347 total parking spaces,
 - c) Multiple retail tenants facing other retail tenants across Center Drive (16,040sf) with 394 parking spaces and a curbless, open intersection.
3. Decreased width at N/S Street by one lane.
4. Identification of industrial artifacts to be salvaged from existing site structure and their potential relocation.

Ms. Nicole Reedy, Landscape Architect with Morris & Ritchie Associates, elaborated on specific design elements for the three proposed design schemes listed above with references to continuous plaza pavement, screen walls, overhead string lighting, pocket parks, industrially themed site structure and furniture as well as continuous surface open intersection treatment. Decorative elements include industrial relics recovered from the original site and placed around the main intersections.

Additional updates included pedestrian circulation at main parking lot aligned with widened retail breezeway and hotel lobby, concept sketches of retail boulevard treated with transitional industrial style palette and contemporary signage elements and branding.

Comments from the Panel:

The Panel applauded the over circulation improvements to the site layout and the general aesthetic and branding vision for the project and offered the following recommendations for further consideration:

1. **Master Plan Proposal** - the panel requested that the design team develops a single design scheme that resolves the corner condition at the N/S and Center Street intersection and the retail/parking ratio rather than leaving it open to multiple scenarios. The project team was also encouraged to find meaningful and dedicated use of the larger identified industrial relics and consider integrating them in the main public spaces or signage opportunities in order to tie the site heritage more seamlessly to the project's identity.
2. **Main Intersection** – the panel rejected the Park(ing) Plaza as a viable option for activating the main intersection as it continues to pose vehicular traffic complications and a potentially ambiguous and unsafe use of space shared by cars and pedestrians. An open Plaza would begin to accommodate the outdoor space needs of the project more effectively if treated as a valuable public space but would need a more robust edge on the parking lot site rather than along the street in order to better integrate the space with the main intersection. The panel also encouraged further study of the main intersection with four retail corners and a larger open space at the current retail via close to the Eastern Ave entry. The panel expressed concerns with respect to site furniture crowding the open intersection and suggested further study in conjunction with the plaza treatment. Other concerns involved the garage entry receiving Center Street at the main intersection and the need for the building to provide a filter/gateway/portal as terminus to the street prior to the garage entry. A similar intervention could be utilized for N/S Street towards the proposed hotel.
3. **Building Massing** – the panel found the contrast between the monolithic multistory apartment structure and the porous single-story retail edge troubling and encouraged the design team to find appropriate breaks in the building massing relative to the functional program in order to provide proportions appropriate to the scale of the entire projects.

Panel Action:

The Panel recommends continued Master Plan development, addressing the above Panel comments and developing a clear relationship between the industrial heritage of the site and the quality and character of the main intersection as discussed.

Attending:

Robert Northfield, Sydney Wallace – BCT Architects

Nicole Reedy – Morris + Ritchie Assoc. Inc.

Adam Bednar – The Daily Record

Russ Robertson – Cap Fex Management Group

David Branmble – MCB Real Estate

Al Barry – AB Associates

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

Anthony Cataldo, Wolde Ararsa, Carmen Morosan, Matthew DeSantis, Tamara Woods - Planning Department

