

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

Date: January 28, 2016

Meeting No.: 220

Project: Port Covington East Waterfront Park

Phase: Schematic

Location: 301 East Cromwell Street - Port Covington

PRESENTATION:

Ms. Caroline Paff, Vice President of Sagamore Development, opened the presentation acknowledging that, although the UDARP members had seen references to this project in the Whiskey presentations several month ago, this presentation was specifically for the development of the water's edge and the incorporation of an adjacent parcel, all of which would comprise the Port Covington East Waterfront Park. It would be seen in the context of the overall Master Plan and the larger Port Covington effort. It is the design team's goal, and that of Sagamore Development, to create a great waterfront park that is performative, reaching regulatory requirements with ease through design excellence. Ms. Paff acknowledged that the team had reviewed and incorporated comments from the introduction of the Port Covington plan at the UDARP meeting on January 7th. And she acknowledged that there is still a design effort in front of them for the area to the west of the Park that "stitches" the Under Armor campus and the Port Covington East Waterfront Park together.

Addison Palmer, Regional Manager of STV Incorporated, reviewed the existing conditions for the Panel. He acknowledged that the effort incorporates aspects of multiple studies, including "The Baltimore Sustainability Plan – 2006", "The Middle Branch Master Plan," and the South Baltimore Gateway Master Plan – 2015". The site sits within the 100-year flood plain.

Mr. Chris Streb, Ecological Engineer with BIOHABITATS, Inc., acknowledged this project as a catalyst for the ecological restoration of the Middle Branch, and a significant connection to the ecological system of the region, not just Baltimore. He acknowledged that water is the connective tissue of the ecological system, reviewed the shoreline assessment and their aspirations for improving it, and the desire to create an authentic place.

Mr. Michael Blier, Principal of Landworks Studio, Inc., acknowledged the desire of the design team to link active ecology with human performance, and the aspiration for a park built "from the place" – the first of a system of destination parks. He described the park in four parts: The Eco Peninsula, Perches & Portals, Linear Park, and Archeological Pier. The connecting element is found in the inclusion of the Eco Ribbon, an continuous path that may be the first iteration of a continuous ribbon that connects ALL of the waterfront parks yet to be designed. Mr. Blier continued to describe the design intentions for the extents of the park.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL:

The Panel thanked the team for a thoughtful schematic design, one that will be a compelling first effort for the Port Covington development area. In particular, the Panel appreciated the iterative presentation made by Mr. Streb and Mr. Blier, who offered a comprehensive vision for the new park through the integration of design and ecological engineering. It is a clear and dynamic diagram, well detailed for the phase and fine grained in its exploration, thus far. Great, BIG ideas.

Site:

- Perhaps the Eco Ribbon could respond in a different manner when it engages a distinct space along its length. Clarify the strategies for this engagement. For example: the Ribbon should be modified when it sits behind the paved path – perhaps it is only fluid when it engages water or, perhaps the ribbon is only expressed when it is engaged with the water’s edge.
- The Ribbon wants to be large enough in width to accommodate groups of people at a time, with gathering spaces and places for pause.
- When the architecture of the “Banana Building” is explored, an effort to create interface between the programmed interiors of the construct should interface with the exterior design with appropriately explored connections.
- There needs to be greater clarity with the engagement of the Pier and the Whiskey site. Does it need to connect on axis with the distillery buildings, or can it have its own logic as it meets land?
- It is not clear how the Archeological Pier’s “decayed” areas are differentiated from the new construction. Greater clarity is required here.
- The Panel appreciates that the design team has placed the Water Taxi along the Archeological Pier, rather than connect this infrastructure to the shore line or the doorway to the Distillery. Perhaps a shelter is needed for inclement weather at the station point.

PANEL ACTION: Recommend Approval of Schematic Design with Comments.

Attending:

Melody Simmons – BBJ

Steve Siegel, Elizabeth Alexander, Joe Geer, Michael Pokorny, Caroline Paff – SDC

RJ Eldridge – Toole Design Group

Mark Sardegna, Jacob Kain – Elkus-Manfredi Architects

Jennifer Missett, Jennifer Dowdell – Biohabitats

Mark Pollak – Ballard Spahr

Patrick Sutton – PSA

Will Dorfman, Davon Barbour – Downtown Partnership of Baltimore

Mitchell Schmale – Maroon PR

Brian Miller, Brendan Robinson, Neil Jurgens, R. Abbruzzase, Scott Gassen – UA

Amy Cha, Matthew Huber, Wolfram Arnold, Frank Grauman, Michael Maizse, Robert Aumer – Bohlin Cywinski Jackson

Jeremy Jordan, Jen Trompetter – NBW
Steven Baumgartner – BuroHappold
Michael Middleton – Cherry Hill Community Council
Ed Gunts – AN/ Brew
Sean Evans – Freedom Temple Church
Patrick Terranova – BDC
Lauren Moloney – Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore
Tom O’Keefe – Wohlsen Construction
Dave Huber – Kaliber Construction Inc.
Kevin Lynch – SouthBMore.com
Betsy Boykin – Core Studio Design
Addison Palmer, Susan Williams – STV
Adam Bednar – The Daily Record

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