

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

Date: May 18, 2017

Meeting No.: 240

Project: Port Covington Area of Special Signage

Phase: Discussion

Location: Port Covington, Baltimore MD

PRESENTATION:

Ms. Caroline Paff, Vice President of Sagamore Development, provided an update of the overall Port Covington Framework Plan and recent developments in the area followed by an introduction to an Area of Special Signage proposal.

Mr. Ronnie Younts, Principal of Younts Design, Inc., introduced the proposed signage districts for Port Covington and presented a series of matrices detailing by-right signage strategies for the project area and individual tenants as well as proposed Design Integrated Graphics signage that would require additional approval. The presentation continued with an illustrated narrative of one's signage encounters in the Interior, Waterfront, Under Armor Campus, Boulevard, Innovation and McComas Signage Districts throughout the various parts of a day.

Comments from the Panel:

The Panel was appreciative of a well-illustrated presentation and the overall matrix organization but generally struggled to understand the premise behind the proposed use of Design Integrated Graphics and recommended further consideration of the following:

1. **Port Covington Identity** – the panel urged the team to present a cohesive signage strategy that defines the identity of Port Covington and warrants an Area of Special Signage status by establishing the overall vision for the project and defining in clear terms the character of each signage district as it contributes to the overall vision and provides differentiation for each district. A clear framework strategy that precedes the matrices and outlines the factors used to regulate signage types and their use throughout the project would help establish clear project goals and plan for implementation.
2. **Design Integrated Graphics** – the panel and project team engaged in a lively discussion over the use of large-scale signage and the importance of its content with respect to size and location. General concerns included vehicular and pedestrian safety at high traffic areas as well as overall visual pollution and character of the public realm. The panel urged the design team to consider content type and present definitive strategies and specific locations for these applications as they relate to clear project goals and address the concerns mentioned above.
3. **Use of Precedent** – the panel encouraged the project team to use precedent critically and consider the contemporary implications of examples conceived several decades ago and in different cultural contexts. Further, the team should engage in and present a more substantive analysis of the existing and potential use of emerging technology as it relates to placemaking in contemporary cities and use precedent to gain deeper understanding of its potential to shape urban spaces.

Considering the unprecedented nature of the Area of Special Signage proposal at this scale in Baltimore, the panel expressed the need for the project team to take a step back from tactical applications and engage in a more strategic approach to the overall project.

Panel Action: Discussion only, no further action needed.

Attending: Caroline Paff, Liz Williams, Elizabeth Alexander – Sagamore Development
Ronnie Younts and Thom Hardic – YDI
Jon Laria and Alyssa Domzal – Ballard Spahr
David Manfredi – Elkus Manfredi
Alex Jarison – MPR
Shawn King – UA
Mike Tantala – Tantala Associates
Duncan Hutchins and Bill Nitzel – Sensory Interactive
Ed Guntz - BAF
Valorie LaCour - DoT

Messrs. Bowden, Burns, Haresign, Ms. O’Neill and Ms. Ilieva* - UDARP Panel
Christina Hartsfield, Tom Stosur, Tamara Woods, Brent Flickinger, Jeff LaNou, Laurie
Feinberg - Planning