

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

Date: June 8, 2017

Meeting #241

Project: Port Covington Area of Special Signage

Phase: Continued Discussion

Location: Port Covington, Baltimore MD

PRESENTATION:

Tom Stosur, Director of Baltimore City Planning Department, introduced the agenda for the continued discussion of Port Covington Area of Special Signage as being focused on design issues related to the proposed matrix as well as size and location of the proposed Design Integrated Signage rather than on its content or related policy which are subject to separate reviews.

Ms. Caroline Paff, Vice President of Sagamore Development, outlined the areas of development since last discussion and introduced Mr. Michael Tantala, Principal with Tantala Associates, LLC who introduced his credentials and discussed the nature and scope of his work as traffic safety specialist on the project.

Mr. Ronnie Younts, Principal of Younts Design, Inc., reviewed the proposed updates to the Comprehensive Sign Plan as follows:

1. Revised Signage Districts that introduce Gateway districts at key junctions of the Port Covington area.
2. Precedent Examples describing overall quality of the experience in each District.
3. Vertical Zone Diagram defining three general signage zones A, B and C at heights below 40', 40'-200' and above 200' respectively.
4. Matrix Regulating Factors such as density per façade, maximum area, type of illumination, vertical zone and operating limitations.
5. Revised Matrices for all Districts and types of signage.
6. Massing Models of previous view showing potential types of signage.

Comments from the Panel:

The Panel welcomed the continued development of the Comprehensive Sign Plan proposal with respect to previous comments and offered the following comments for further consideration:

1. **Port Covington Identity** – the panel found the revised Precedent Examples and Signage Districts Plan to provide a greater degree of clarity as to the overall signage strategy. It was recommended that these transition into a formal description of the design goals for each District as part of the signage matrix in order to set the tone and expectations for the subsequent specific signage requirements. The panel also engaged in a discussion of the nature of the Gateway District as related to the overall plan and emphasized the difference between a district as an area of common

experiences versus a gateway as point of a distinct spatial event. The Panel encouraged the project team to consider consolidating some of the areas with common characteristics - districts with both sides of the street contributing to the same character, define areas of transition – edges where street character changes from one district to another and highlight gateways – nodes of special interventions that serve as portals to the city and the Port Covington area.

2. **Sign Matrices and Diagrams** – the panel encouraged the project team to seek further clarity in the organization of the signage matrices by consolidating areas of identical signage and highlighting areas of difference. Further hierarchy of information would outline regulations on an overall District level as related to the rest of the project, at block level using vertical zone diagrams to show relationships between signage types and finally specific signage regulations as articulated in the current matrices. The panel also recommended that the project uses number of stories rather than height in feet to define the vertical zones of signage.
3. **Large Scale Illuminated Signage Impacts** – panelists expressed concerns over the impact of the more intense lighting zones over the ecological goals of the Port Covington Project as well as the accumulated visual effect of multiple large scale illuminated signs throughout the project. Continued development and overall policy in this area is needed to help inform future development of the buildings.

The panel understands the complexity of the ongoing approval processes and the strategic preference of the project team to focus only on design elements of the project as part of the UDARP review process but expressed the need to consider the project in its entirety including content and implementation policy at some point in time in order to be able to provide more specific design comments.

Panel Action:

Continued Discussion.

Attending:

Caroline Paff, Liz Williams, Elizabeth Alexander, Steven Siegel – Sagamore Development
Ronnie Younts, D.J. Thomas – YDI
Alyssa Domzal, Jon Laria – Ballard Spahr
Eric Robin – Robin Wilson
Michael Tantala – Tantala Associates
Alex Jackson – Maroon PR

Messrs. Bowden, Haresign, Ms. O’Neill and Ms. Ilieva* - UDARP Panel

Anthony Cataldo, Tom Stosur, Christina Hartsfield, Tamara Woods, Laurie Feinberg, Wolde Ararsa - Planning