

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

Date: July 16, 2015

Meeting No.: 209

Project: BCPS Robert Poole School

Phase: Discussion #2

Location: 1300 W. 36th Street

PRESENTATION:

Architect John Srygley of JRS Architects reviewed history and condition of the site as well as prior design studies and key comments from May 14, 2015 UDARP Discussion #1. Updated parking study presented a small reduction of on-site parking (89 total parking spaces) consolidated in two parking lots dedicated accordingly to ACCE Academy with 71 parking spaces accessed from 36th street and Independence School with 18 parking spaces accessed from Berry Street with additional on-street parking available. The addition of a parcel of land to the project site at Berry and Conduit Streets allowed for the new configuration of the proposed east building addition that houses the new cafeteria, gymnasium, classrooms and support spaces, also introducing a new Community Entry to that portion of the building. Three new design schemes explored the proposed materiality of the additions including brick & precast stone, all pre-cast stone, and curtainwall & precast stone building skin applications.

JoAnn Trach Tongson of Mahan Rykiel presented landscape design strategies that address the needs of both schools including a variety of open and flat outdoor areas for education and recreation as well as individual entry drop-off and gathering areas. Key feature of the proposed design include re-grading portions of the project site to eliminate existing retaining walls, providing shading and screening vegetation for the new parking lots, creating a continuous ½ mile walking circulation system around the site, and introducing variety of ecosystems, materials and water management technologies.

Comments from the Panel:

The Panel was complimentary of the proposed development of the landscape design and building addition layout and discussed the following areas for further study:

1. **Character of outdoor spaces** – the panel encouraged the designers to bring more playfulness and encourage exploration within the restrained clarity and formality of the outdoor spaces by providing more specificity and definition to the nature of the learning and recreational activities that could take place.
2. **Alignment and definition of entries** – the panel discussed the need to bring stronger definition of entries throughout the site. Suggestions included providing a more generous paved area outside of both school entries and consistent Community Entry treatment for a more plaza-like experience throughout. Further, a stronger alignment between the east driveway from 36th street and the Community Entry is needed in order to eliminate some of the ambiguity in flow and introduce a clear hierarchy of pedestrian vs. vehicular traffic at the central court. The termination of the pedestrian walkway from the ACCE entry at the beginning of the east driveway seems unresolved and could be developed to reflect the connection between all key entries.
3. **Building massing and material articulation** – the panel agreed that the new Community Entry volume should not compete with the bell tower of the historic building in height or form. Instead, a language of recess and material differentiation could help identify key areas such as entry and transitions between building parts in order to bring clarity to the proposed building massing as it

relates to the relationship and quality of the existing buildings. It should feel more like the transition and not like a tower. The panel discussed finding a coherent strategy for the proportion and configuration of all new windows at classrooms, gymnasium, and cafeteria spaces. Architectural Option 2 was preferred however, various suggestions regarding potential material treatment studies of the exterior including brick at lower level with precast stone above and different color brick while generally rejecting the use of expansive curtainwall in favor of strategically located glazed surfaces. The new gym mass should have a clear expression and relate to the existing gym mass in its clarity.

Panel Action: Discussion Only.

Attending:

John Srygley - JRS Architects
JoAnn Trach Tongson - Mahan Rykiel
Laurent Mounaud, Susan Williams - STV
Larry Flynn – City Schools
Dawn Sanders, Tiara Moorman – MSA
Greg Ramirez - CSP

Messrs. Bowden, Rubin, Haresign, Burns, and Ms. Ilieva* - UDARP Panel
Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Aaron Bond, Reni Lewal,
Caitlin Audette, Wolde Ararsa – Planning Department