

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

Date: July 18, 2013

Meeting No.: 169

Project: Jefferson Square at Washington Hill Phase II

Phase: Schematic Design

Location: E. Baltimore Street, N. Washington Street, Fairmont Avenue, and N. Wolfe Street

PRESENTATION:

Architects Edsel Arnold and Imran Kifayat of Preston Partnership, and Brent Martin of LandDesign presented the development team's design evolution that resulted from the UDARP Work Session on June 27, 2013. The project program presented in the prior meetings remains unchanged. The team presented the following adjustments:

1. Continued emphasis on street engagement and activation
 - a. Additional stoops and terraces on both E. Baltimore and N. Washington Streets
 - b. Further streetscape design enhancements
2. Massing and Elevations
 - a. The design expression of towers on N. Wolfe and N. Washington Streets at Fairmont Park are now more similar to the towers in the original design.
 - b. Towers are more engaged with a building mass on both the park and street facades
 - c. Corners at the intersections of N. Wolfe and E. Baltimore, and E. Baltimore and N. Washington are treated as building corners, not as towers
 - d. The number of masses on each street and park façade are further reduced
 - e. "Commas" or breaks in building mass are eliminated, allowing adjacent buildings to abut each other
 - f. Canopies are provided over stoops and terraces
 - g. The grand stair on E. Baltimore is replaced with private unit entrances
 - h. The bench at public access points has been eliminated from the planter design
 - i. A public access at the eastern corner of E. Baltimore has been re-emphasized and is under development
 - j. The color and materials palette is further simplified and lightened
 - k. The center building on N. Washington Street is simplified
 - l. Planters and private terrace masonry match the main body of masonry at the building; curved concrete curbs form planter edges where there is no raised planter

PANEL COMMENTS:

1. The panel appreciated the development team's responsiveness to prior comments and clarity of presentation both graphically and verbally. The method showing the project evolution from original presentation, work session, and current design is particularly helpful.
2. The panel suggested that additional building elevations across the street would be helpful and effective to convey the surrounding context.
3. Additional note: show Fairmont Park plan in a more complete fashion so that context is more clear.
4. The panel provided generally favorable comments about the continued development of the design, and offered the following specific comments:
 - a. Site Plan
 - i. The panel agreed that the additional new private stoops and new private terraces continue to improve street engagement.
 - ii. Terraces along the southern building mass at N. Washington Street require additional discussion in order to mitigate height of building and planters.
 - iii. Plant species and caliper should be shown for review during Final Review.
 - b. Massing, Elevations and Streetscape
 - i. General Comments
 1. The panel remains very concerned about the composite wall panel and bay detailing, window/door color and material, balcony and railing details, and requested additional information about detailing and final intent.
 2. Cornices were extruded for working session presentation and need additional thought, as mentioned by Edsel.
 3. Enlarged detail should be provided for all key elements.
 - ii. North Wolfe Street
 1. Base at north building mass has a very strong retail character, and it is difficult to distinguish ground and 2nd floors
 2. Reconsider canopy on the mass to the right of the tower, which implies retail storefront.
 3. Improve sense of mass and depth of intermediate masonry pier to garage opening
 4. Provide additional design refinement for pedestrian entrance adjacent to the garage entry
 5. Landscaping
 - a. Railing details to be further developed
 - iii. Baltimore Street
 1. The loading dock opening seems high within the overall elevation; investigate if that could be lowered and still meet loading truck needs.
 2. The panel questioned the necessity for the stairs to the units in the middle building mass, suggesting private terraces or recessed

balconies to allow for landscaping against the tall sloped façade may offer a better solution

3. The entrance and canopy at the east building mass require additional study

iv. North Washington Street

1. Provide additional study of window spacing/groupings on southern building mass
2. Tall planters and blank facades on southern façade require additional study
3. Reconsider the brackets on the low balconies in the center building mass
4. Refine and adjust pier mass, material and detailing at stoops

v. Fairmont Park

1. Consider combining the center two buildings into a single expression.
2. More clearly express building access points; provide larger scale detail of these elements.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS:

Members of the Community provided the following comments:

1. The neighborhood is much more traditional, small scale, and Victorian in character than the proposed design. The neighbors are concerned about the scale and more modern expression of the buildings.
2. Street trees are a big plus for the neighborhood. The neighbors hope that they will be of sufficient scale to make a positive impact.
3. To minimize vagrancy, the neighbors prefer that planters and terraces are either high or low enough to not encourage loitering.
4. The cornices on existing neighborhood buildings are richly detailed and would like similar attention to the proposed cornices.
5. The neighbors' question the E. Baltimore St. elevation as it relates to the rowhouses that comprise half of the opposing side of the street.
6. The proposed design does not follow the traditional scale rules of floors and windows reducing as they progress in stories above grade.

PANEL ACTION:

The panel recommended approval with comments of the Schematic Design and anticipate the continued refinement based on the Panel comments above.

Attending:

Drew Chapman, Duncan Jones – Jefferson Apartment Group
Imran Kifayat, Edsel Arnold – The Preston Partnership
Brent Martin – LandDesign
Caroline Hecker – RMG
Kevin Litten BBJ

Carolyn Boitnot, Virgil Bartram – Butcher’s Hill Community
Susan Williams - STV

Ms. Diane Jones Allen, Messrs. Gary Bowden, Rich Burns and David Haresign* - UDARP Panel
Mr. Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Natasha Becker - Planning