

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

Date: April 25, 2013

Meeting No.: 165

Project: UMMC Midtown Campus Ambulatory Care Center

Phase: Discussion

Location: Howard Street and MLK Boulevard

PRESENTATION:

Mr. Mark Wasserman, with the University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS); informed the Panel of the change in name, focus and mission of the Maryland General Hospital. The institution, to be renamed the UMMS “Midtown Campus”, will have a focused academic medical profile. As outlined by Mr. Wasserman, the “Midtown Campus” will be bounded by Howard Street, Madison Street, Eutaw Street and MLK Boulevard. A new Ambulatory Care Center, focused on metabolic diseases, is planned for the campus and will be located at the corner of MLK Boulevard and Linden Avenue.

Mr. Chuck Goodman, Architect with CR Goodman Associates, introduced the Phase One campus expansion program consisting of the seven-story 107,000 square foot Ambulatory Care Center and a four-story addition to the existing adjacent parking garage. A component of the development will be an enclosed elevated pedestrian bridge connecting the new care center to the existing hospital. Although in the early stages of programming, Mr. Goodman presented initial concept design direction.

COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:

The Panel appreciated the opportunity to engage in a preliminary discussion with UMMS staff and the Architect concerning the creation of a meaningful “Midtown Campus” and the design of the new Ambulatory Care Center.

Campus Master Plan:

The Panel expressed the need and importance to initiate a campus master plan to guide all future development, including the proposed Ambulatory Care Center. A critical issue to be addressed in the Master Plan would be the desired vision for the campus and the role or purpose to be played by Linden Avenue as the central campus spine. Does the spine have a strictly functional purpose to accommodate vehicular and service needs? Or, is the spine conceived as having a more pedestrian orientation and sense of place? A clear understanding of the nature of Linden Avenue as a defining component of the Master Plan vision will help inform the design of the Ambulatory Care Center. Establishing design guidelines for Architecture, streetscape and open space as part of the Master Plan would also benefit the design of the proposed Center and future campus buildings.

Building Design:

Without the insight of a guiding Campus Master Plan vision and recognizing the preliminary nature of the conceptual building design, the Panel offered the following comments:

- The iconic architecture statement at the corner of Linden Avenue and MLK Boulevard seemed misplaced and over scaled. An iconic element defining the campus would appear to be more appropriate to the corner of Howard Street and MLK in a future phase development.
- The proposed seventeen feet cantilevered building portion along Linden Avenue appeared to be visually and urbanistically disconcerting and needed to be “grounded” thru the use of piers or columns, creating a pedestrian arcade and or a vehicular port-co-chere.
- The overall design of the building with the strong horizontal strip windows interrupted by the large glass corner element appeared too assertive and self-conscious and needed to be a participant as a “campus building”. This is not to suggest the building should become a banal backdrop building, but have a quiet sophistication and attention to pedestrian scale, street level activity and urban context.
- The location and height of the pedestrian bridge needed to be revisited in the context of a guiding Master Plan and vision for Linden Avenue at the “Campus Spine”.

PANEL ACTION:

Discussion Only

Attending: Juan Cardenas, CR Goodman Associates
Chuck Goodman, CR Goodman Associates
Johnathan Campbell, CR Goodman Associates
Kay Morin, Site Resources, Inc
Anand Bhandari
Darryl Mealy, UMMS
John Thompson, BDC
Brian Greenan, Office of the Mayor
Girume Ashenafi

UDARP Panel- Messrs. Bowden*and Burns
Planning Department- Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Alex Hoffman