

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

**Date:** March 31, 2022

**Meeting #60**

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**Project:** TMB2 Under Armour Campus

**Phase:** Schematic Design

**Location:** Port Covington

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**CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:**

Neil Jurgens with Under Armour introduced the project and team before beginning the presentation, which started with an overview of the changes to this project. The campus was originally conceived as a closed campus with structured parking but has evolved into an open campus that is more inviting, with surface parking replacing the structured parking. Vaki Mawema and Bob Perry of Gensler continued the presentation with an overview of the site and campus plan, and a very diagrammatic building form. The design team used five core Under Armour brand principles to guide this project:

- Stronger together
- Train, compete and recover
- Journey and destination
- Clarity, focus and audacity
- Next level performance

The orientation and shape of the building respond to the site. The building angles itself both toward the development along the north side and the water's edge at the east. The retail portion of the building reaches to the northern (public) side of the site, and the performance portion of the building reaches out toward the campus. The building is in the early schematic phase, but the form shown represents what the team envisions for the site.

Nathan Foley with Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects continued the presentation with a look at the landscape. The larger campus plan is organized by a central spine that runs north-south at the western edge. The track and field site is under construction and other buildings to the south are existing. Most of the vehicular traffic is contained to the west, with the pedestrian circulation at the east, closer to the water. Much of the landscape focus has been directed toward pedestrian comfort, and berms have been introduced for seating purposes, to

direct views and to give an added layer of resiliency against flooding. Plants have been selected for sustainability, with a focus on durable native species.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Panel thanked the team for their presentation and continued with questions and comments. Because the building is still very diagrammatic, only minimal comments were made with regard to the form shown. It is expected that the team will present the schematic building design at their next UDAAP appearance, with landscape comments addressed.

### **Clarification:**

- *Please clarify the community outreach mentioned; was outreach conducted with community groups?* The outreach was not necessarily with community groups, but there were meetings with neighboring developers. The team has also communicated with schools and non-profits who may use the track and field, currently under construction.
- *What is the thinking about the connections with the homes to the west?* The team has had conversations with the developer of that project. There is a vegetated buffer planned at the edge of the property. For context, the West Peninsula Drive is private (on UA Campus); landscape and lighting plans have been shared with the neighboring development team.
- *What is the character of the bio-retention areas?* They are currently planned to have lower plantings; the focus is to promote collection and flow of water and meet the ESD requirements with river birch, oaks, and maples.
- *Is there a method to the streets that are planned; what is the intent for the larger street layout?* Port Covington Drive is the main vehicular way, with a secondary path for pedestrians that is also accessible for emergency vehicles around the track. Primary vehicular routes are pushed to the north and the west of the site. Pedestrian traffic is focused on the east (water) side. There is not a public component in Building 37 shown on the plan.
- *What is the intent of the landform?* The edges around the track have been raised up and topography has been manipulated to create a berm for seating and viewing. Additionally, the ground plane has been manipulated for flood protection and privacy. The intent is to create a landscape that envelopes and directs views out to the water. Berms are asymmetrical with less elevation on the interior of the site, and more topography around the edges.

- *Building seems tall; what is the total massing of the building?* The top of the buildings is approximately 80 feet. The ground floor height is 20 feet to accommodate retail component. Building serves as a collector and is oriented with the multiple axis to align with the bulkhead and the future street.
- *Why are there no drawings of the building?* The building architecture is in the process of being resolved; there are some challenges with the height. The team expects to show the building with more process at the next presentation to the Panel.

### **Site – Integration with Building:**

- The building and landscape must be considered together. The success of the project will hinge on the integration of the building and landscape with the surrounding context. This is a complex project with regard to the program and location.
- Building has the potential to hold the site and sculpturally anchor it; the ability for the building to have some mass is exciting. There is energy in the dynamic shape of the diagram and its response to the regulating lines of the urban grid and the bulkhead – the site is set up for success but building needs to be studied within the landscape as they both develop.
- Building plan is very strong diagram to build upon, but there are issues with how the building footprint is organized; the diagonal and the bar are too similar in scale. As the team advances the building, the design needs to be deliberate, clear, and bold.
- Project DNA must have a center of gravity; the building is “just there” – Panel acknowledges it is difficult to create a magnetic force when there is so much space, but the building needs to anchor the site more. Anchoring is not necessarily about density, but about how the building relates to the rest of the pieces of the site.
- Campus pieces need to reinforce each other – the proposed building is pushed very far from Cromwell Street. A previous scheme felt more like part of a continuous experience. Don’t lose the opportunity to incorporate the building along the pedestrian path and position it as a welcoming piece, rather than a detached object.
- As designed, the retail portion of the site feels as though it is designed for cars, not for people. It reads more as an office park with strip mall retail rather than an urban destination. Reconsider locating the building to a more north / west location to respond better to the rest of Port Covington.
- Building needs to have a generosity to it, a clear attitude about the new form of urbanity it will create.

- There is nuance and richness that can be built from the diagram; unclear of how the building and the landscape are creating a full picture, but this can be addressed at the next presentation.

### **Site – Innovation:**

- UA is a leader in the sports world, and this building / campus has the opportunity to reinforce its leadership through the design – some of the features shown, such as surface parking, are not innovative. Could the parking areas be relocated, suppressed, covered in green roofs that reduce heat island effect, anticipate storm surges, process. Building and campus are the face of the brand and should reinforce the innovative ideas.
- The site offers a huge potential for innovation. Bio-retention should be an immersive, educational, environmental experience. The landscape can create a powerful narrative about watershed stewardship.
- Opportunity to rework the design until this campus becomes something that is demonstrably different from other spaces.
- Hunters Point South in New York may be a good precedent for this project.
- The landforms are not yet explicit in their intent; balance between the view to the water and the function of the berms as a resiliency element will need to be resolved. The expansive site makes this a challenge, but a good balance is possible.
- It is essential to include tree canopy in any 3D studies going forward as an important regulator of scale and views for the site and building.

### **Site – Organization and Circulation:**

- The peninsula offers an opportunity to resolve geometry of the water's edge, the urban grid that is developing to the north, etc. Define moments of entry and use them as pivot points. Addressing these entrances with more hierarchy will make circulation more intuitive.
- Thought process of organic water's edge bumping up against the manmade feature of the bulkhead should be used as an opportunity.
- Circulation needs to be organized by how it will be navigated – think through how the circulation will operate, who will be using it and how, what intuitive demarcations will guide people. Think through the difference between team members using the site daily, school groups visiting, etc. Current site plan seems reactive to existing driveways and not reflective of future opportunities.

- Next iterations should show reinforced wayfinding with physical and psychological cues for wayfinding. The building and landscape sections should reinforce each other intuitively.
- Landforms are critical; opportunity to use them to camouflage pavement and shape spaces, but also utilize the views to the water.
- Modeling the tree canopy in 3D – even ghosted in – will help to shape the perception of space.
- West Peninsula Drive – consider discontinuing the drive from East Cromwell. The configuration is very suburban and undermine the project, giving it an “office park” feel. The building has the opportunity to still be in dialog with the context with more generous landscape. Redistribute the parking to the south.
- Hopefully some of parking lots will be future development – the lots to the west and south of the track and field are perfect proportion for a future building, but some of the slimmer lots towards the north are not a good proportion. Consider future development and take it into consideration for designing the lots – treat these as opportunity sites.
- Parking lots snaking around the building exacerbates the irregular leftover spaces that are not well-proportioned or articulated.
- More study is needed to deal with the north-south axis and the [future] houses that will be facing parking lots.

**Next Steps:**

Address the Panel’s comments above for next UDAAP presentation.

**Attending:**

Evan Grimm, Bob Perry, Jon Kraft, Nathan Foley, Neil Jurgens, Vaki Mawema – Development Team

Ed Gunts, Brendan Robinson, Jason Bell, Sandy Hillman, Scott Slosson, Melody Simmons, Alex Mathews, Sam Zankel, Ryan Solomon, Rick Abbruzzese, Klaus Philipsen, Kevin Lynch – Attendees

Mr. Anthony, Ms. Illeva and Bradley – UDAAP Panel

Tamara Woods, Ren Southard, Caitlin Audette – Planning