

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

**Date:** December 23, 2021

**Meeting #56**

---

**Project:** Meyer Seed Building

**Phase:** Schematic Development

**Location:** 600 S. Caroline and 1400 Aliceanna (Fells Point)

---

**CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:**

Nate Pretl, of AB Associates, began the presentation by disclosing that 600 S. Caroline Street has received height and massing Concept Approval from CHAP. The team very quickly recapped the site context and then addressed Panelist comments from the previous UDAAP appearance.

The nearby sidewalks consist of a wide variety of conditions and materials, and the team worked to respond those conditions with their own site improvements. Carla Ryon of CMR continued the presentation with the landscape plan. The vertical additions will be set back to allow for a second-floor outdoor patio, which will have plantings in containers. The streetscape on Fleet Street will include bike racks, lighting and a rhythm of street trees grouped in twos. The trees have been placed to preserve the views from the building, while highlighting the historic windows. Planters are placed in front of windows to give some separation and privacy. The Fleet Street sidewalk width is 15' (pinch points at 5'); Caroline is 17' (pinch points at 8'); Aliceanna sidewalk is 8' and planters have been placed to protect pedestrians from doors (creating a 5' pinch point). Brick banding on the sidewalk was adopted from the neighboring blocks, as it was most consistent, and the team felt it fit the project site well.

Flood protection has been updated and is minimally visible (limited to brackets placed at the edges of the windows and doors. The panels will be stored nearby in a warehouse.

Justin Seto continued with the team's responses to vertical addition comments:

- The bookends have been removed and the windows now turn the corner;
- Garage entrances have been simplified and canopies removed to clarify entrances;
- Mural will be added on the side of the building adjacent to the parking lot

## **DISCUSSION:**

The Panel thanked the team for their presentation. The Panel feels the level of development is appropriate for the present review. As the project becomes more fixed and further developed, more detail will be expected for the building envelope. The Panel then continued with clarifying questions and comments noting that focus today would be on massing, general building improvements, and landscape.

## **Clarification:**

- *The fifth window bay on the existing building – is this how the window is presently situated?* Yes, the previous rendering showing it aligned with the upper windows was not correct. The team is considering moving it but has not made a final decision.
- *What is the finish of the Steel frame super-structure?* The system pictured in the rendering is a painted metal system, with spandrels clad in metal panel. The system will either be steel or aluminum, but the team has not finalized this detail.
- *Pinch points on S. Caroline Street and Aliceanna are significant; has there been any thought about widening the sidewalks?* The team has explored options and recognizes this as a main pedestrian path for people walking to Harbor East. The process would require the approval of DOT. The team has moved the entrance to relieve additional traffic at the Aliceanna edge.
- *What can be done to promote safety in the alley? For instance, raising the sidewalk would signal this is a pedestrian space. The façades and ground plane need attention.* Window openings will have block removed and replaced with windows and the vertical addition will also have windows on that side, which allows for eyes on the alley.

## **Site:**

- Program on the alley side is important:
  - Trucks and operational needs only occur at certain times of the day;
  - The alley will be used by tenants and there are simple things that can be done to stitch it into the project in a meaningful way;
  - Small moves, like lighting, can make a big difference.
- The project should not preclude the alley from being anything more than what it is today (longevity of the urban fabric):
  - This space could become outdoor dining space or have multiple uses in the future;

- Strategize the service program location to enhance the alley and give flexibility even if there is not presently a proposed use.
  - Consider removing the curb cut between the buildings.
- Sidewalks:
  - Provide respite areas at the corners for pedestrian comfort.
  - Pattern should be less about copying what's around, and more about continuity of the fabric; however, the brick banding is very appropriate for this particular project.
- Plantings:
  - The street tree placement is not ideal; intentions are good, but the role of the street trees is to have a rhythmic cadence - the trees belong to the street, not the building and need to reinforce continuity of the urban fabric.
  - Team is urged to space trees evenly or in pairs if coordinated with the tree placement across the street.
  - Shade from the street trees will benefit the building and may enhance the views by filtering light, rather than obstructing them.
  - Additional plantings are encouraged to help with layering and buffering.
  - Planters are appropriate but consider removing them on the Aliceanna and recessing the door for protection. This strategy is deployed successfully in other parts of the project and will work well here too.

**Building:**

- Panel recognizes the CHAP portion of the project has basic approval, but team is encouraged to take cues from this project and make sure the buildings appear as a family.
- More refined elegance is encouraged, and the project is heading in that direction.
- Improvements to the building are very successful – cleaner facades are appropriate for the scale and helps to complete the overall mass.
- Preservation of the solid base is complimented with a more transparent addition. The contrast of these two visual languages anchors the corner better.
- Be particular with the details; the historic base has good quality craftsmanship; thus details will be very important to vertical addition; without careful attention, the addition may appear as something other than a quality development. Study the transition between existing base and vertical addition.

- It is surprising that the bays are able to match so closely with the existing building and constraints of the residential program. Team should strive to maintain this alignment as the design progresses and program is refined.
- Organized entries are much more successful and clarity of expression.
- Façade will need to be detailed; the Panel looks forward to seeing the development of the storefront system.

**Next Steps:**

Continue design addressing the comments above. The Panel will continue its review of 1400 Aliceanna and of the Master Plan elements; 600 S. Caroline will proceed with CHAP review.

**Attending:**

Nate Pretl, Al Barry – AB Associates

Drew Peace – Chasen Companies

Justin Seto – Seto Architects

Carla Ryon – CMR

Ed Gunts – Baltimore Fishbowl

John Smith, Steven Stern – Attendees

Mr. Anthony and Mses. Ilieva – UDAAP Panel

Tamara Woods\*, Ren Southard, Eddie Leon – Planning