

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

Date: June 10, 2020

Meeting #47

Project: The Paramount Baltimore

Phase: Design Development

Location: 1300 Warner St.

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

Matt Herbert with Design Collective reviewed the comments provided by the panel at the October 10, 2019 meeting. The existing building has been razed save for portions of the butler warehouse building to the west of the site that will be incorporated in the design. Revised massing diagrams were presented to articulate the design process the team has undertaken with consideration of the program needs and in response to comments by the panel in 2019. Precedents utilizing the industrial aesthetic that the project aims to develop were reviewed.

The main volume, as a result of its program, is opaque with a red brick masonry and a corrugated metal cap with chevron patterning. The volume seeks to articulate a tall bay pattern following the structural bays of the building with reveals intended to reference traditional warehouse buildings in Baltimore. The retail volume is an extruded massing to the east that largely maintains the masonry material with large storefront openings at the ground level and a transparent north elevation. The retail volume may be a second phase of the project so both an option with this volume and one without were presented in plan but not elevation. If no retail volume is constructed the space would be an open lawn to be used as flexible programming space. A transparent glass volume at the north elevation acts as the VIP entrance. The west elevation faces the Russell Street overpass and is a gathering space for patrons before and after events. The south elevation is not open to the public and is a secure loading zone that includes a large-scale art piece.

Large scale signage including at a proposed radio tower are prominent on all sides of the building including a blade sign and canopy sign. The landscape plan includes street trees along Warner Street but leaves the corner of Ostend and Warner mostly open with a large, raised planter as the focal feature.

DISCUSSION:

The Panel thanked the team for the presentation and asked questions relating to the retained butler warehouse building and the western edge of the site in general, material of chevron at

top of the building, access to the southern edge of the site, and the form of the glass volume at the north elevation.

Site:

- The western edge of the site needs development to feel more deliberate and consistent with the rest of the design. Transition to underpass needs to feel more intentional and defined.
- At the east elevation the trees should be street trees regardless of the construction of retail volume in order to reinforce the urban legibility of the block. The use of a lawn for the open space should be reconsidered to be more resilient for heavy use.
- Materiality of the raised planter at the corner of Warner and Ostend should connect with the building. Additionally, attention should be paid to the slope of the immediate vicinity so that the raised edge is appropriately sized.
- Consider how the space will be used outside of major events.
- Consider the amount of space left at the box office to ensure generous circulation while maintaining the various zones well defined by the proposed planter.
- Address the southern edge of the site to ensure that the service area and pedestrian experience and safety are planned cohesively.

Building:

- While the diagram has been clarified, the architecture needs further work specifically around the additive nature of the secondary volumes which need to be further integrated to the overall design.
- The material choice should be reconsidered to allow for a unique identity that isn't bluntly referential to historic warehouses or generic contemporary brick use. If the main volume stays brick, the material of the retail volume should be reconsidered and integrated with the remaining additive elements in a cohesive composition. If a brick materiality is desired closer to the ground/people, then the main volume can be clad in metal with a series of brick volumes and site elements around the periphery and the base.
- If the retail volume is not constructed, the building will have an abundance of minimally articulated brick – the large, minimally recessed bays in the brick façade do not articulate the building in the way historic warehouses do and instead could relate to the flatter contemporary brick uses of generic office/industrial/storage parks. Return to initial diagram to create a finer break down of the elevation and more appropriate proportions.
- The previous version had a stronger sense of ground level, specifically the proportions of the retail space and storefront openings. Reconsider how the building meets the ground and the quality of the urban around the periphery of the building.

- At the western edge of the building, further study how the butler warehouse remnants interact with the main volume and integrate with the remaining volumes wrapping the main building.

Next Steps:

Return for a second Design Development review to address the above comments.

Attending:

Matt Haubert, Eric Lowe – Design Collective

Ryan Potter – GEJ

Jim Baeck – Design 3

Arthur Adler – Caves Valley Partners

Vipul Talwar, Robert Goldstein, Brian Doyle, Michael Peck, Ira Krowler

Mr. Anthony, Mses. Ilieva, O’Neill and Bradley – UDAAP Panel

Caitlin Audette, Tamara Woods, Ren Southard, Chris Ryer, Eric Tiso – Planning

Amanda Yeager, BBJ; Ed Gunts, Baltimore Brew; Kevin Lynch, SouthBmore.com