

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

**Date:** January 28, 2021

**Meeting #42**

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**Project:** Harbor Point, Parcel 3

**Phase:** Schematic II

**Location:** 1000 Wills Street, Fells Point

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**CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:**

Max Beatty began by reintroducing the project team: BHC is the architect of record, KPF is the design architect, IO Studio is the landscape architect, and Beatty Development is the developer. Parcel 3 will be the new world headquarters for T Rowe Price. Jeff Kenoff of KPF continued the presentation with a brief overview of how the team addressed the Panel’s comments from the past UDAAP presentation.

Updates to the building concept include:

- Redesign of the “door mat” to avoid confusion of the park blending too much into the building (where there is not a public entrance).
- Materiality that works with the Baltimore character and texture; reflective of the larger context that is largely brick and steel.
- Entrance to the park from the central plaza has been further refined.

Richard Jones of IO Studio continued the presentation turning the focus to the landscape component. Landscape hierarchy has been established through scale and texture. The landscape attempts to elevate the urban experience while returning to a more environmentally sensitive treatment of the harbor. Circular form is used for a number of reasons, including the desire to mitigate the large size. Form is broken down with landscape, paths, etc. to prevent too hard a reading along the softer edge of the waterfront. In addition to revising the formal expression of Point Park, the landscape has been refined and examined in terms of character and feel including identification plant species, tree canopy heights, and more nuanced information.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Panel thanked the team for their overall effort and care with the project, and also for addressing the previous comments so thoroughly. The Panel proceeded with questions and comments.

### Clarifications:

- *Precedent images of park: where are these situated in relation to the green?* – Northern quadrant and waterfront green are possible locations for the programmed areas. The waterfront green is more flexible since it has environmental / ecological component. Retail activity along the edges has not changed much but is smaller and more refined.
- *What is the ADA access to the space?* – Stair on the north side; arced path is AIA accessible from the upper plaza down to the lower plaza.
- *Edges of the building – what is the interface between these and the public sequence (especially with consideration for the retail)?* – Restaurant at the southwest corner of the T. Rowe Price building, with additional retail at the southeast corner (exact type is TBD). The northeast corner of the park will have retail (exact type is TBD) with plaza / landscape to accommodate future use.
- *Variation between the cube and the two masses – what is the mullion system?* – Cap is on the outside – rectangular aluminum extrusion which caps on the exterior of the mullion. Shadow box will only remain in the spandrel course of the main masses to contrast clear glazing.
- *Overhangs – what is happening in these spaces?* – The center canopy is the main building entrance, and the others (northwest and southwest corners) are retail entry points, which are pulled out slightly from the office space.
- *Is the promenade space realistic in the proposed renders with the extensive planting and tree canopy considering this is a capped site?* – The proposed elevation is about 3' above the cap; soil will be added. Technical considerations for protecting the cap are being reviewed by the team, but as designed the renderings are feasible.

### Site:

- Point park seems to be setting naturally as a form into its location.
- The additional study of the circular shape allows the geometry of the site to be resolved well and becomes a place of convergence. It also helps the space to feel more natural and less rigid.
- Where circle meets the podium, space needs to be less obvious - could be mitigated with materiality. Size and precise reading of the circle push back against the softness of the shoreline.
- Diagram showing the circle eroding on the water's edge is very powerful and could inform what happens in the space. The mind completes the circle, and it remains as an organizational element, but it relates better to the softness of the shoreline – acts as a gradient.

- Rationale of the park's geometry seems clear. Location of circle in relation to the overall development and the termination of Central Ave. could be improved with a slight adjustment of that corner. The monumental stair has lost some of the hierarchy in this iteration and seems unresolved. This corner is unique in that it is the only corner that doesn't interact with vehicular traffic; opportunity to celebrate the termination of Central into a pedestrian space by making it more ceremonious – could use some sort of marker to show the termination of Central Ave. and announce the entrance of the park.
- Framed view through the park – everything points to this space connecting to the water, but it doesn't actually physically connect. Diagrams indicate this could happen; less riprap and more floating greens could help the space feel much more connected to the water and not above it on a hard urban edge.
- Admirable to activate the park with retail in addition to programming, but it might not need to be so expansive. Could be more focused spaces that interact with the programming.
- Green is stabilizing element to contrast with more intense activities around it – works well in the courtyard, but the park might be a bit too busy. Not as elegant a relationship between the formal and natural elements – more refinement is needed. Look at toning down the activity and animation in this space.
- T-Rowe Price courtyard seems much more cohesive, but more textures are preferable than the manicured lawns. To marry the strong formal geometric forms with the more natural elements, more plantings are needed – go further with these materials.
- Opportunity to keep the upper lawn and use the middle portion as a fully planted mediation point to relate back to the Chesapeake.
- Free flowing paths in the park as they intersect the street grid is an opportunity – paths seem to be all the same size. Pathway along podium is similar to pathways at lower level. Intervening spaces can act as transition points and allow for paths to become more layered with little pods that relate to retail spaces.
- Reworking the paving in front of the building helps it to blend better with the other buildings; bollards on the park side seem to be unneeded. The carpeted paving with bollards may want to shift to the corner where people will flow around the building to Point Park. Study hierarchy along edge.
- Circulation around Point Park needs to be studied as it relates to volume – the flow can help define the size and shape of the paths. Most pedestrians will not walk around the full circle; majority of flow will occur at the edges as people move from space to space.
- Narrow strip of landscape can become an implied form, allowing the landscape to change. If the walkway is going to be a separator between the types of landscapes, it needs to be more intentional.

### **Building:**

- Building materials are elevated – they are restrained in a sophisticated way and reflect the existing palette of Baltimore successfully. The material selection truly feels like they are an abstract reflection of the existing industrial city, as team intended.
- Improvements to the façade grid are working well. Reworking of the building with finer scale of the mullions and contrast between the volumes of the building are both successful moves.
- Opportunity to frame the boxes above the podium – the transition from Wells to the water to the park needs to be refined more. How the glazing element meets the podium will impact this transitional pedestrian path from the urban grid to the more natural waterfront. Needs to be studied to ensure Wells doesn't become the back door. Note that the team has tried to handle the slope down the street by blending the podium with the streetscape.
- West-facing façade will be bathed in a lot of sunlight. Team has addressed this consideration through special glazing with filters and smart shading systems.

### **Next Steps:**

Continue design addressing comments above.

### **Attending:**

Todd Harvey – BHC Architects

Jeffrey Kenoff, Tulip Yeung – KPF Architects

Kevin Johnson, Adam Gross – Ayers Saint Gross

Richard Jones – IO Studio

Max Beatty, Johnathan Flesher– Beatty Development

Ed Gunts – Baltimore Fishbowl

Melody Simmons – BBJ

Laurie Schwartz – Waterfront Partnership

Peter Fillat, Jed Weeks, Ryan Potter, Nihal Patel, Ariadna Rivas-Souchet, Eva Bruklich, Jerrell Perry – Attendees

Mr. Anthony, Ms. Ilieva (Ms. Bradley supplied comments via email) – UDAAP Panel

Stephanie Murdock – DHCD

Laurie Feinberg\*, Chris Ryer, Ren Southard, Matthew DeSantis, Tamara Woods, Jeff La Noue – Planning