

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

Date: August 16, 2018

Meeting #6

Project: Woodberry Apartments

Phase: Continued Schematic

Location: 3523 Clipper Road – Woodberry Station, Baltimore, MD

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

City Planning staff acknowledged receipt of letters with comments related to the subject project.

A recap of the project was provided by Chris Mfume with CLD Partners, summarizing its goals, program and challenges. While the project is presented as a Transit Oriented Development (TOD), it will contain micro units, enclosed parking and consideration for a bike share. He also noted that comments from the panel at the schematic presentation were adopted and incorporated into the design to further integrate the project into the community.

The design architects P.I.L.K Studio expanded on the challenges facing the project including a recently discovered underground utility running across the site near the proposed main entry lobby. The design of this area was revised to create a covered outdoor breezeway/porch to allow unrestricted access to the utility line, while providing a protected entry to the apartment lobby and access to essential support functions such as mailboxes.

Pavlina Ilieva representing P.I.L.K recapped the panel’s comments and presented the steps taken by the design team to respond and incorporate comments into the ongoing design. She presented many improvements to the design including: the results of further study of the transition between old and new and the perceived datum aligned with the existing stone structures; adding a porch feature at the entry as already noted herein and providing outdoor spaces and balconies that relate to residences across the street; and modifying proposed windows to relate to the existing punched windows within the stone buildings.

The design team noted that further design refinements are ongoing. They include adding an oversized “garage-like” door feature to enclose the breezeway to allow year-round use of the porch. Also, studying how window openings in the new façade meet and abut the return ends of the existing stone structures. Suggested materials were also presented.

DISCUSSION:

Comments from the Panel

Site:

The building footprint covers the majority of the site with setback along the transit ROW to provide relief and separation for residential windows. The setback provides space for construction as well.

Reworking the entry to provide more openness improves the legibility of the entrance. Puncturing the entry with the breezeway/porch feature visually connects the transit way with the street and adds another dimension to the project that celebrates the uniqueness of the community; and references the “urban code” unveiled in the investigation and research presented at the first panel review.

Building:

The building massing is expressed in a 4-story structure and viewed as one and a half stories taller than the houses across the street. It’s flat roof line contrasts with the gable roofed residences immediately opposite, but it is in keeping with the mixed vernacular that includes flat roofs across the transit corridor.

The revisions to the façade are a welcomed improvement, bringing the new façade down to grade and allowing the existing stone structures to stand proud of the new façade plane; as well as setting a datum defined by material color change, at an elevation that relates to the height of adjacent street wall. Balconies centered between the existing stone buildings provide some interest and relatability to the porches across the street, but create a seemingly awkward interface with the street. Further study is required in this area to clarify the separation from street and the residual space created under the balconies.

While eroding and puncturing the northwestern corner creates and defines the main entry, the similar expression at the southwestern corner requires further study to clarify whether this accent feature is misleading by setting up a false expectation as it leads to an essential but less important function, an egress stair, when compared with the main entry.

Windows are improved both in scale, dimension and modularity as the smaller punched window unit, first evident in the stone structures, is carried into the larger window module. In contrast, this module is modified and displayed as a module stretched vertically. Although the punched windows in the existing stone structures are desired, the stretched module is an accepted modern expression. The design team should investigate the structural requirements spanning over the entry porch to avoid change to the location of window sills which may unfavorably impact the proportion of the second floor windows.

Materials selected suggest a palette similar to some buildings in the surrounding context, however further study is encouraged to lighten the overall façade in a manner that better reflects the building’s scale and residential character.

Next Steps:

The panel was very complimentary to the consideration given to community and panel comments and the overall design improvements given the many challenges of the site. The project will move into Design Development review addressing the comments above.

Attending:

Kuo Pao Lian, Pavlina Ilieva – PI. KL Studio
Chris Mfume – CLD Partners
Al Barry – AB Associates
Adam Bednar – The Daily Record
Ed Gunts – Baltimore Brew
Philip Taylor – Citizen
Kevin Lynch – SouthBMore.com
Valorie LaCour – DOT

Ashley DeCapua – Keller Construction Management
Hon. Bill Henry – City Council
Nia Govan – Councilman Henry’s Office

Messr. Anthony*, Ms. Wagner - UDAAP Panel

Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Director Tom Stosur, Matthew DeSantis, Laurie Feinberg -
Planning