

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

**Date:** October 25, 2018

**Meeting #9**

**Project:** Govans Elementary School

**Phase:** Discussion #2

---

**Location:** 5801 York Road, Baltimore MD

---

**CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:**

Mr. Carlos Tovar and Ms. Esra Soytutan representing USA Architects and Site Resources, presented the updated project to the Panel. As described, the project proposes a new three-story, Pre-K through 5, 92,500 square foot replacement school that will serve the Govans neighborhood.

The design team focused on addressing the following comments from the previous panel discussion:

- Provide a more defined pedestrian circulation path between Clearspring Road, the main entrance, and York Road.
- Develop a more formal drop-off loop that separates pedestrian, car, and bus traffic.
- Provide a more efficient/better utilized paved parking area.
- Develop the green spaces around the building to provide educational experiences for the students linked with pedestrian circulation.
- Develop an entrance plaza and paths that relate to the geometries of the building and connect to the street grid.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Panel appreciated all the updates made to the building and site presented with the significant challenge the site proposes. Highlights from the conversations included:

**Site:**

- The panel suggested providing a more generous entrance node at Clearspring Road. It is the way that most students will enter the site and approach the building. Additionally, it was recommended that the existing sidewalk along the south side of the site be removed and additional planting be provided to screen the school site from the back yards of the neighboring houses.
- The panel asked the design team to study the possibility of shifting or flipping the main entrance of the building to the corner where the community space is currently located. This relocation would allow students and staff approaching from both directions to have a clear view and approach to the entrance. It would also provide more space for an entrance plaza. Using the entrance mass and design as a terminus along the path from York Road and Clearspring Road is the ultimate goal.
- The panel felt that the pedestrian and vehicular circulation at the front of the building was advanced but still unclear. There was concern about the cars and buses using the

same two-lane drop-off loop, as well as the need for pedestrians from York Road to cross traffic twice in order to reach the main entrance. The panel suggested further study of this complicated situation to refine the drop-off sequencing, potential for bus, and layby lanes by possibly reducing, eliminating, or redesigning the island.

- The panel also suggested studying the fence around the play area. Instead of masking the fence with planting, it was suggesting that the fence become more organic or relate to the geometry of the path.

#### **Building:**

- The panel commended the team on the exterior design of the building. It was noted that the façade and massing have a fresh and contemporary look. There is balance between the glazing and the fiber cement panels.
- The panel encouraged the team to continue to refine the exterior details.

#### **Next Steps:**

Discussion Only

#### **Attending:**

Tiara Moorman - MSA

Carlos Tovar, Tim Schell - USA Architects

Kay Morin, Esra Soyututan - Site Resources

Cheri Vincent - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools

Sandi McFadden - Govans Elementary School

KC Kellener - Councilman Henry's Office

Ashley DeCapua - Keller CM

Scott Geczi - Design Collective

Mr. Anthony, Mses. Wagner\* and Ilieva - UDAAP Panel

Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Ten Southard, Mary Colleen Buettner, Kristen Ahearn, Ariel Humphrey - Dept. of Planning