

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

Date: April 4, 2019

Meeting #015

Project: Mother Mary Lange Catholic School

Phase: Schematic

Location: 200 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Baltimore MD

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

Mr. John DiMenna representing JMT Architecture, introduced the project to the Panel. As described, the project proposes a new Pre-K through 8 school at the corner of Lexington Street and MLK Boulevard. The new three-story, 65,000 square foot school will have a projected capacity of 520 students. The school will provide before and after care services, so the school will be active from 6:30 am until 7:00 pm. Additionally, the school and related field will be available for community use.

The school will sit on 3.9 acres and has significant grade change across the challenging site. The main entrance will face MLK Boulevard and strive to have a strong presence. Car and bus drop off will be provided along a new drive in front of the school. A small parking lot for staff will be located along the north side of the site. The athletic field will be located at the higher site elevation on the west side of the site. A secondary entrance will be located on Lexington Street.

The immediately adjacent neighborhood is primarily two-story townhouses with larger development located across MLK Boulevard.

DISCUSSION:

Site:

- The panel appreciated the organized, rational layout of the site and floor plan. Further study was suggested for the proposed 6 foot tall fence around the athletic field. A lower fence with landscaping would still provide a barrier, but with less visual obstruction and a connection with the homes across the street.
- The panel recommended further study of the car and bus circulation at the front of the building. The circulation seems confusing and it is unclear if all three lanes are needed. The panel wondered if the gates at the entrance/exit to the drive were needed or if they will always be needed. The gates could be temporary and eliminated at a later date. Investigate additional ways the landscape to be designed to better connect through the spaces.

Building:

- The panel felt that more study should be given to the datum that continues around the building. The line transitions multiple times and does not align on all facades. A more rational approach should be used that allows the datum to become an organizing feature for the elevations. Investigate allowing the main building along MLK to have one cohesive read and work on detailing the glazing too have a subtle vertical read. The secondary masses along Lexington St. could then take on a slightly separate character/potential brick color. The community entrance mass can act as the hyphen between the main academic building and the gym mass.
- There is tension between the vertical and horizontal windows. A language should be established using no more than two or three window types.
- The panel also suggested the study of the brick color. The yellow brick could be eliminated which would help emphasize the verticality and be reinforced by the window types.
- The panel encouraged further study of the gym windows. The corner windows currently used seem foreign to the rest of the building.
- The north and west elevations that face the play area warrant further study. These elevations face out to the community and will also be an important face of the building.

Next Steps:

Project can move into Design Development addressing the comments above.

Attending:

Ryan Potter - Gallagher

Nolan McCoy, Matthew Regan - Archdiocese of Baltimore

John DiMenna, Jonathan Miller - JMT Architecture

Mr. Anthony, Mses. Wagner, O'Neill, and Ilieva - UDAAP Panel,

Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield - Planning