

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

Date: November 15, 2018

Meeting #10

Project: Somerset Apartments

Phase: Schematic Design

Location: N. Central/McElederry St./Jefferson St./Somerset St.

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

Ms. Dana Henson of the Henson Development Company provided the project background and presented the site and its context.

The park is located within the first phase of the Somerset development. The project proposes a new park on an infill lot. Three new residential buildings with ground floor retail will border the park. The team noted that the park is located near other parks and along defined pedestrian routes. The team is striving to create a safe and active public park that will unify the development as well as invite others into the area.

The proposed park has nodes at all corners that correspond with the activity level of each street. The nodes were identified as follows: gateway, monumental, civic, and neighborhood. The interior functions of the park were identified as follows: lawn, play, plaza, fitness, stormwater management, and landscape feature.

DISCUSSION:

The panel appreciated the development of the concepts shaping the park and encouraged further development.

Site:

- The panel questioned whether the park is intended to be “inwardly” or “outwardly” focused and felt that the edges of the park are not clearly defined. Development of each of the park edges should respond to the street/urban conditions and building entrances it interfaces with.
- The shape of the lawn is problematic. The shape is pushing the other program elements to the periphery of the park when they seem to want more space and overlap.
- It was noted that most of the circulation is around the exterior of the park. The panel encouraged the design team to look at reducing the lawn and providing circulation through it to engage the user.
- The panel also felt that the corner nodes could use further study. The gateway should be further developed and possibly integrated in with the monumental corner. Complete separation of the identified ‘use areas’ seemed detrimental to the overall design. Additionally, if the intent is to develop a community monument, involving the artist in the process would strengthen the design of the space.

- There was concern about the location of the play area. Further delineation should be provided between the edge of the play area and the street edge for safety. Additionally, the landscape berm creates a division between the play area and the lawn. The panel questioned the division and whether there should be more flow between the play area and the lawn.
- The panel asked the design team to provide cross sections through the streets to show the relationship between the park and the surrounding development and streetscapes for the next review.

Next Steps:

Continue Schematic review addressing the comments above.

Attending:

Peng Gu - Mahan Rykiel

Susan Williams - STV

Dana Henson, Dan Henson - The Henson Development Co.

Kevin Gallaher, Lembit Jogi - HABC

Magda Westerhout, Andrea Drake, Maja Tokic - Moseley Architects

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

Laurie Feinberg, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield - Planning