

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

**Date:** July 23, 2020

**Meeting #35**

**Project:** Cross Keys Master Plan and PUD

**Phase:** Schematic

**Location:** 5102 Falls Road

---

**CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:**

Arsh Mirmiran of CVP introduced the project starting with an overview of CVPs recent acquisition of Cross Keys. The acquisition includes a majority of the site but does not include any of the existing residential. The team is interested in carrying out the original vision for (created by James Rouse). Some community outreach has been completed to date and there is wide support for taking the plan to its ultimate completion.

Matt D'Amico of Design Collective continued the presentation with a broad overview of the neighborhood context and narrowed the focus to the site and planned additions

Project Overview:

- Existing program includes hotel, retail with inward-facing courtyard, and quadrangle with medical / office tenants.
- Proposed additional program includes a 325-unit market rate multi-family building, 150K SF office space, small grocery.
- Gatehouse and existing retail would be renovated and improve connections to the neighborhood; however, gatehouse will not be acquired by CVP.
- Future phase office – perhaps 5-7 years from now.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Panel thanked the team for the presentation and continued with clarifying questions. Since the site and context are somewhat complex, a good portion of the discussion was devoted to clarifying specific details about the site.

**Clarification:**

- *Has team addressed the path from the existing quadrangle building to the retail? There is an easement that prevents any built interventions, but landscape improvements are*

allowed. Team agrees that a creative landscape solution is the way to go for ensuring a successful connection between the two.

- *What is the program for the Gate House portion of the project?* The gatehouse ~~is~~ program includes: security at entry (during night-time only), management office, meeting room. It is not owned by CVP.
- *Additional program and parking – will there be enough parking given the fact that most people will be driving to this location?* Village Square sit above approximately 350 spaces of existing parking.
- *I-83 is it at grade, or below?* I-83 is at grade here, and the buildings are positioned slightly above due to existing topography with the Jones Falls in between the site and the highway.
- *Small parking lot diminishes sense of arrival – is it necessary?* The small parking lot is required for tenant who needs close proximity drop-off and pick-up location, but can be reconfigured for a better entry sequence, as patrons who are visiting this tenant will be doing so on a regular basis and will know where they are going.
- *Is there a way to introduce as glimpse of the center on the arrival side – wayfinding is fine, but allowing visitors to see where they are going is much more effective?* Not answered.

#### **Site:**

- Opportunity to make the pedestrian sequence more park-like or create a loop for residents and visitors to use for both exercise and utilitarian purposes
- Positioning the grocer which is planned for ~15,000 SF – opportunity to flip the footprint with parking lot or rotate so the short end of the parking is visible. New volume should be oriented in such a way that it echoes the existing language. Note: existing easement runs near / through new grocery footprint (stormwater culvert – cost prohibitive at this point, but team will revisit if they do need to move the culvert).
- Interconnectivity of the ped routes – essential for allowing this mixed-use community to function as a village instead of as a bunch of islands.
- New entrance would be a plus for the future users.
- Is gatehouse really necessary? Opportunity to reevaluate the access and security.
- Need to anticipate car dominant pressures like roundabouts and have counter arguments to maintain pedestrian-focused design as the development moves forward.
- Pay attention to the Jones Falls – views and sounds can be a great highlight for the future office building.
- New buildings should connect to old – neighborhood feel should be preserved; pedestrian's ability to access the existing retail is key to the success of the development.
- New parking lots at the east, combined with the confusing main entrance circulations is going to be a challenge (as shown on the "Proposed Conditions – Circulation and Parking

diagram). Needs to be a design solution – signage alone will not fix the problems.  
Separate pedestrians and minimize crossing points.

- Massing indicates new buildings will be larger in scale – the team should start now to think about how to make the project feel cohesive.

**Next Steps:**

Continue design addressing comments above.

**Attending:**

Matt D' Amica – Design Collective

Matt Herbert, Arsh Mirmiram – Caves Valley Partners

Mr. Anthony, Mses. O'Neill, Ilieva, Bradley – UDAAP Panel

Joe Corson, MacKenzie Twardus, B. Brooks, Ed Gunts, Scott Murphy-Neilson, Heather Hutton,  
Lick Leffner, Eva Castillo, Jed Weeks, Nick Aello, Joe Corson, Lizzy Schmoll

Laurie Feinberg\*, Ren Southard, Tamara Woods, Matthew DeSantis, Martin French – Planning