

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

Date: February 27, 2020

Meeting #30

Project: Park Heights Redevelopment

Phase: Schematic Design

Location: Park Heights

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

NHP and Henson are the joint venture developers. They are presenting Master Plan for the 17.3-acre site plus first two buildings. It is a comprehensive development with a variety of unit types.

Cheryl O'Neill presented the overall goals and master plan. They include diversity of housing opportunities, new identity of neighborhood while being compatible with existing community. Though there are limited funds for infrastructure, the goal is to better connect across Park Heights Avenue, create a variety of open spaces, create a sense of permanence and solidity to give Park heights a new image.

Team reviewed and presented history of Park heights and studied how the site sits in community and the City. The site becomes a node within greater Park Heights. Though many houses have been demolished there are some key landmarks such as churches. There is potential significant development around the site.

The first phase of the development includes two new multi-family buildings along Park Heights Avenue, one senior and the other family units with a new public open space in between at Virginia Avenue. The remainder of development is primarily single-family houses, both towns and detached. There are also some small, 6-unit apartment buildings to developed in later stages.

Though the apartments are phase one, the remainder of the site with be activated early on with gardens, tree farms etc.

Alice Enz presented the two buildings. The intersection of Virginia and Park heights is the center of the development with significant plaza space and entries. The Multi-family building is to the south with 53 units and rear parking. It has an entry from Park Heights through a central courtyard. It is predominantly 2-3-bedroom units on four floors. There is an Option 2 with more surface parking rather than garage with a wider alley separation from the house to the south that now must remain.

The senior building is north of the Virginia Avenue intersection and is 103 units with rear surface parking. It has unit entries on the front and side streets for first floor units. There is a new alley separating multifamily from home-ownership in the rear.

The team has also considered moving the public space to the north of their site, park, library and other amenities.

In introducing the building, Alice spoke of the multiple church towers in the area as well as the apartment buildings on major boulevards, sharing multiple precedents. She showed massing options in perspective along Park Heights.

The proposal is to set buildings back 28 feet from the curb line to give private front space.

The multi-family building follows the more courtyard model. The senior building has a tower element on the Virginia Avenue corner. Both buildings are using a traditional brick and punched window language.

Discussion

Site:

- Great combination of extending urban fabric where it isn't. Reflects the best of garden city concepts. The access to greenspace is very positive. Separating the service to the alley is a positive as well.
- Preference for option 1 with courtyard on Virginia. It supports the sequence of open spaces. It announces the entry to the entire development. The tower works well to support the sequence.
- There is a concern about the scale of the first phase single houses, it may need to be better modulated to the overall site. Consider an emphasis on the houses at the Virginia Avenue corridor. Look at developing a better transition along Virginia as you approach the detached houses. Maybe have houses face Virginia or develop larger houses. Also look at unit type to create a transition.
- The early thinking about the activation or the open space is very important and hopefully will continue throughout the master plan.
- Develop the urban edge along Park Heights in a manner that transition between the multilane road and the private entries of the ground level units in a manner that supports the layered character of an urban boulevard with clearly articulated public, semipublic and semiprivate zones.

Building:

- Further study the door yards on Park Heights as well as the overall cross-section proportions. Study that 28-foot front yard further as related to the mass and articulation of the buildings.
- Look at developing a marker/tower on the woodland side without putting the open space there.
- Look at differentiating treatment of the multi-family from the single family to the south. Consider double row of trees to help that transition.
- Multi-family courtyard works well for development. Look at flipping the terrace to the back to consider a different view and experience.

Next Steps:

Apartment buildings can move to Design Development with comments above. But the panel would like to see continued schematic for single family house sites. Specifically they asked to see models for the homes, in other words pictures of other places they have been built.

Attending:

Cheryl O'Neill, Tom Gallas and Alice – Torti Gallas Architects
Tony Cortea, Kristen Gedeon- STV
Catherine Fennell and Eric Price – NHP Developers
Dan Henson and Dana Henson – Henson development

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

Laurie Feinberg*, Ren Southard, Tamara Woods, James Ashford – Planning
Kelly Baccala - DHCD