

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE ADVISORY PANEL

MEETING MINUTES

Date: November 10, 2022

Meeting #70

Project: 3110 Elm Street

Phase: Schematic Design

Location: Hampden

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

Peter Fillat began the presentation by orienting the panel to the site located in Hampden adjacent to the JFX and Falls Road, on a formerly industrial site next to the residential neighborhood. The property currently houses two industrial building that include a chimney utilized by migratory chimney swifts. The property is zoned IMU-1, which allows for multi-family residential for roughly 155 units with a maximum height of 60'. Mr. Fillat continued with a detailed review of the context, shadow studies, and review of the street network. The team explored a variety of massing options, choosing a wrapped building that limits the exposed parking garage. The building mimics the slope to the Jones Falls and steps away at the corners to help bring the massing down to the scale of the residential buildings.

Katharine Barnes a landscape architect with Morris Ritchie and Associates then presented the landscape plan which include compact street tree spacing, and planters at stoop entries, as well as decorative hardscaping.

DISCUSSION:

The panel thanked the team for the proceeded to clarifying questions and comments.

Clarifications

- *Have you worked with an ornithologist or the Audubon society to figure out what is necessary to accommodate the birds? Yes, the Baltimore Audubon society chapter president was at the last community meeting and skeptical of the success of the proposal. We do intend to work with experts to make this work.*
- *All of your images show the forest hill. Do you have plans to help maintain the forested hill near the site? Yes, we do not intend to impact the existing trees surrounding the site with construction.*
- *What are the dimensions of the tree pits? 4'x12' with a 5' sidewalk.*

- *The corner balconies are shown with lush planting, are those managed or are those private balconies?* Not yet decided, probably wants to be common area -but currently design as only accessible from the unit.
- *You've got 242 parking spaces that serve 155 units, can the number of parking spaces be reduced?* Yes, it could be.
- *It seems as if you're partially below grade due to the hill, have you looked at an option where you have more underground parking?* We have, but it wasn't necessary.
- *Why are you building more parking than required?* Parking in an urban area is very sensitive and when we asked the community how many parking spaces should be provided the answer was 300. Potentially we could remove some parking or allow the neighborhood to utilize the extra parking. Currently providing one parking space per bedroom.
- *You shared with us some sun studies of the existing building. Have you prepared any similar studies for the proposed massing that you're sharing?* We have, but are not prepared to share those at this time.

Site:

- Part of the charm of Hampden and similar communities is the connection between the workforce housing and the industrial buildings adjacent. The early massing studies that maintained the historic façade built upon that existing physical connection. The other massing options without the historic façade disconnect the building from the surrounding context. There's a responsibility to reciprocate within the community. How can the building enhance the quality and character of the neighborhood? The current proposal can easily be relocated elsewhere and isn't grounded in its site.
- The more you can compact the building the more breathing room can be provided on the street to provide more human scale street scape experience.
- At the alleyway need to be careful with the condition at the edge and provide a degree of care and purposefulness at that edge.

Building:

- The eroded corners don't really step down or reduce the massing of the building. There are iterations that can sculpt the mass of the building and not just its corners and start to address the issues of how the building relates to its immediate context.
- The proposal is the same on all sides, but the context is not the same on all the sides. Consider shifting a higher volume to the west side and limiting the height on the east side to four stories. The higher volume could be double loaded with units looking over both east and west.
- The parking layout is inefficient – the one-sided parking aisle could reduce the parking by a level and perhaps build some of those units on top and then set back the massing.
- Is there too much program? On one hand you're trying to capture the charm of the community, but at the same time the proposal overwhelms the community.
- You've got way more parking space than is needed, which bloats the size of the building. How do you pull it back to achieve the highest programming? Consider excavating for the parking and have the parking front onto Falls Cliff Road – you may not want to have any residential units fronting on that street anyway.

- Since the chimney swifts are a sacred element for the site, recommend you bring an ornithologist on the team to get closer to a true bio-mimicry that will leave as little to chance as possible. It could be a truly magical part to this project.
- Condense the parking and allow for the north and east edges to drop down to 4 levels and build up from there. The hill concept has opportunity and think about what elements will erode the hill. Allow it to be less uniform and concentric and shaped by the context.
- The simplicity of the exterior is refreshing and straightforward – similar to the historic building in it's simple detailing.
- The amenities all located on the roof – might keep the quieter experience on the streetscape rather than burdening the ground plane – but consider if amenities on the ground floor will help activate the space. Develop additional strategies at the ground plane to strike the right balance for the amount of activity and amenity space on the ground floor.

Next Steps:

Continue addressing the panels comments above and work with Planning staff prior to returning to UDAAP.

Attending:

Caroline Hecker – Rosenberg Martin Greenberg
 Andrew Segall, Ariel Westmark, Peter Fillat – Fillat+ Architecture
 Katharine Barnes – Morris Ritchie & Assoc.

Christina Lawless, Jennifer McBrien, Jen Lyall, Nora Burns, Paul Morrill, Valerie Hoffmann, Conor Creaney, Fabiana Berenguer Gil, Iina Chaudhuri, Kevin Roycroft, Carol Schreter, David Addison, Nicole Hovermale, Peter Smith, Christina Way, John Ellsberry, Rachel Waxman, Robyne Lyles, Angela Guss, Aris Vlanton, Iris Li, Kathleen Littleton, Trevor Heburn, Yunfeng Zheng, Justin, Shelagh Davidson, John Ellsberry, Alice, Ashley Kidner, Beth D., Mary Anderson - Attendees

Melody Simmons - BBJ

Councilwoman Odette Ramos – City Council

David Framm - DOT

Osbourne Anthony, Pavlina Ilieva, Sharon Bradley - UDAAP Panel

Chris Ryer, Ren Southard, Tamara Woods, Caitlin Audette, Lauren Schiszik, Marie McSweeney Anderson – Planning