

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE ADVISORY PANEL

MEETING MINUTES

Date: February 23, 2023

Meeting #53

Project: Perkins 4 – Block E & F

Phase: Design Development

Location: East Baltimore

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

Matt Flament of HCM began the presentation with an overview of the masterplan and updates on the status of the various phases. Jon Gemmell of Floura Teeter Landscape Architects followed and shared general information about the landscape palette and over arching design themes for the site and landscape. These include maintaining a similar palette throughout the entire masterplan area, and the treatment of Bethel Street.

Matt Flament then went through more details for both Block E and F. Block E – at the multi-family portion of the block, the team responded to the panels comments by creating a more consistent masonry base that extends to three stories and providing more of a buffer between the public and private spaces. At the townhomes the team revised the design reducing the number of stoops by creating a connected elevated pathway that includes a ramp along Bethel and modifying the architecture creating a consistent language.

Block F: The building configuration has been refined to respond to the panel’s comments with changes to the materials and attention to

DISCUSSION:

The panel thanked the team for the presentation and strongly encouraged them again to modify their presentations in the future to more clearly respond to the panel’s comments from the previous presentation.

Clarifications

- *What is the whole context for Bethel Street? We need to be able to better understand how the area currently under review relates to the entire length of the street within the project.*

- *Where is the Bethel section located in Plan?* It's a typical section one location that it would represent would be along the parking lot, south of the transformer.
- *Did you study using a single curbcut to the parking lot?* We did, and we were able to remove an entry to the parking lot serving Blocks G & F, and need two at Block E for fire access.
- *Along Bank Street on the continuous elevated side walk is there any separation between the walkway and windows?* Yes, there will be an 18" planted area in front of all the windows.
- *Could you lower the finish floor to address the grade change for ADA access?* We tried and they are as low as possible considering storm water management requirements and the grade change.
- *What is the drop off between Gough and Bank Streets?* 5' total
- *What is the "wood look panel"?* A fiber cement that has a warm wood tone and a wood grain pattern embossed into it. We use this in other blocks including Phase 1 and Phase 5.

Site

- One of the challenges is that we only see an overall site plan, there aren't smaller plans that share the special moments that are being created. This should also be displayed through street sections. What does that edge against those windows actually look like?
- Appreciate the plant palette, which is appropriate in scale and hardiness.
- The location of the transformers and trash area is appropriate and responds to previous comments from the panel.
- Main concern is the lack of privacy to the units and the lack of separation between the public circulation and private space. This is most pronounced at Block E along Bank Street. The solution you've created still makes anyone using the ramp walk all the way around the building. Find other storm water options to mitigate the situation. The storm water solution should not be driving the design.
- At Block E, a reduction to a single curb cut on Bethel would be a much better solution if possible.
- Make sure you maintain consistency along the length of Bethel, it should feel cohesive with the other blocks this will help mitigate its utilitarian use.

Site F:

- The design is improved, but still feels overworked. Specifically, how the wood-like panels are being utilized. Reconsider how the wood and masonry connect on the inside corner of the main entry.
- Make sure that the details are going to be executed elegantly. Need to be more restrained in how you complete the building – less decoration and more intent.
- The stripped relief at the top of the building and the continuity of the material on the upper portion of the main elevation help provide relief.

Site E:

- It's critical that you revisit the stoops along Bank Street. The solution you've created doesn't allow for the individuality that makes townhomes unique.
 - One option is to solve by lowering the elevation

- Another option is to integrate the pathway into a more deliberate space, creating a patio for each unit instead of the common platform.
- At the multi-family building the top of the building looks very heavy, consider raising the windows to reduce the weight of the unadorned space. Additionally, work with the location of windows in relation to the edges of the mass by increasing the solid portions on the sides in order to mitigate the amount at the top.
- The material palette is overdone, again utilize restraint and make decisions with intent. Specifically, at the entrance where the metal panels will be used. Refine design moves so they can be executed with quality and are appropriate to the nature of the materials used.
- Consider turning the trash area to allow the green space to continue along Bethel and have pick-up from within the lot.

Next Steps:

Continue addressing the comments above as each building develops and work with Planning staff to complete the review.

Attending:

Matt Flament – HCM

Jon Gemmell – Floura Teeter

Pam Askew – McCormack Baron Salazar

Melody Simmons – BBJ

Anthony Osbourne, Sharon Bradley and Pavlina Ilieva - UDAAP Panel

Lembit Jog – HABC

Ren Southard, Caitlin Audette, Matt DeSantis, Eric Tiso – Planning

David Ferguson, Trace Shaughnessy - Attendees