

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

Date:	October 12, 2017	Meeting #247
Project:	300 W Pratt St	Phase: Schematic
Location:	300 W Pratt St, Baltimore MD	

PRESENTATION:

Mark Renbaum, Partner at Valstone Properties, introduced the project team and scope for the proposed addition to the historic building located on 300 W Pratt Street.

Peter Fillat, Architect and Principal at Fillat + Architecture, presented the context for the existing building and several scenarios for the addition along Pratt Street. The project seeks to introduce 2,649 SF of retail and office space and a new corner plaza while maintaining the storefront visibility of the existing ground floor tenant. The proposed massing includes a two-story glass cube on the east side of the historic building that serves as extension to the lobby and a one-story infill volume to the west. The goal of the project is to energize the Pratt St edge of the building by providing viable retail space and public plaza experience. The glass cube is intended to maintain transparency and appear detached from the existing front façade while the added retail space on the other side recedes visually in the overall composition.

Ryan Clifton, Landscape Architect and Associate Principal at EDSA, presented several design concepts for the corner public plaza that explored the organization of outside dining, seating and planting as well as screening vegetation along the Howard Street edge.

COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:

The Panel applauded the thoughtful and clear presentation and the discussion of multiple design schemes while noting the need for sensitivity to the award winning design of the existing building addition. The following comments address recommendations for further study:

- **Building Addition** – the Panel debated the need to introduce an addition to the existing historic building and expressed concerns about crowding the site and bringing confusion to the overall composition. The Panel also challenged the viability of the retail space as it is being compromised by the extension of the lobby within the volume and recommended positioning the building entry between the added volume and existing façade and providing a legible entry sequence from the public realm, through the plaza and into the building.
- **Mass and Materiality** – the Panel questioned the practicality of the proposed transparent cube with respect to providing adequate retail support and utility spaces and their visibility from the outside. Other concerns included the lack of articulation and continuity between the two added volumes and the existing structure. Suggestions included composing the new additions as part of the same volume in height and type of articulation in order to maintain clarity and hierarchy of the original historic building and consistent logic of its subsequent additions. Discussion regarding the proportions of the addition and finding ways to relate to those within the original building and existing addition. More details were needed to address comments and questions regarding the connection of the new addition to the original building in both plan and within the existing granite wall material. A reveal and setback from the cast iron façade was also discussed.

- **Corner Plaza** – the Panel found the corner plaza to be crowded and over-programmed and encouraged the design team to reduce it to most essential components as not to obscure the sightlines towards the building. Other recommendations included providing lower vegetation rather than tall trees in order to screen the vehicular traffic on Howard Street and allowing the building addition to disengage from planters and other site elements.

PANEL ACTION:

The Panel recommended continued development of Schematic Design with comments above.

Attending: Mark Renbaum, Valstone Properties
Peter Fillat, Fillat + Architecture
Ryan Clifton, EDSA
Raven Thompson – BDC
Adam Bednar – The Daily Record
Claudia Jolin – DpoB
Melody Simmons - BBJ

Messrs. Bowden and Burns and Ms. Ilieva* - UDARP Panel

Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield - Planning