

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

Date: February 15, 2018

Meeting #252

Project: Tru Hotel

Phase: Schematic

Location: 415 S Central Ave, Baltimore MD

PRESENTATION:

Holladay Properties Senior Vice Presidents of Development Mr. Austin Haynes and Ms. Manette Tepe, AIA & ASID introduced the project team and the overall vision for the 8-story, 140-keys proposed Tru Hotel by Hilton located on the east side of the Central Ave corridor between Eastern Ave and Bank Street.

Mr. Peter Notari, Architect and Baltimore Director with K2M Design introduced the urban context and initial area zoning/massing studies for the proposed hotel. Ms. Julie Kirsch, Architect and Senior Project Manager with K2M Design discussed Tru Hotel's typical exterior materials and key brand elements. The design team presented several iterations of schematic design studies and focused on their preferred concept that involves a continuous masonry base with an entry canopy, to primary masses and a 'wedge' brand façade element. The material/color scheme for the exterior includes masonry, EIFS and fiber cement panels assembled in warm grey and brand accent colors.

Comments from the Panel:

The Panel applauded the clarity of the design presentation and the overall thoughtful approach to integrating the Tru Hotel brand into Baltimore's urban context with the following comments:

- **Main Entry and Brand Element** – the panel encouraged the design team to take further advantage of the proposed hotel's urban location and work to integrate the main entry stair, ramp, canopy, planters and seating area so they may screen and absorb the change of elevation and transition between sidewalk and the hotel's lobby/social area by creating an 'urban porch' element. The panel further suggested that the façade "wedge" brand element be relocated to the south west corner of the building to improve its visibility from the high-trafficked corridor to the south and to tie it to the main entry 'porch'. The goal would be to create a legible and coherent urban experience that can help strengthen the hotel's brand and the quality of the developing Central Ave corridor.
- **Service Area** – the panel reminded the project team to be mindful of surrounding properties and provide adequate screening for waste area in the alley behind the hotel and plan waste removal operations with limited idle time and away (not directly in front of) surrounding properties and businesses.
- **Massing and Façade Articulation** – the panel suggested flipping the building massing so that the taller volume coordinates with the entry and brand element on the south side of the lot or switching to a single volume while the overall articulation of the facades gets simplified in favor of fewer stronger, bolder elements. Other recommendations included using a single style of

window for the upper floors of the buildings and maximizing the warehouse-style large window at the ground level for greater visual connectivity and continuity with the commercial streetscape of the area. The panel emphasized the need to simplify, clarify and edit the overall material scheme, be cautious about mixing elements from various styles and integrate the brand elements into the architecture of the building rather than using them as applied treatment to the facades.

Panel Action:

The Panel recommended continued Schematic Design addressing comments above.

Attending: Austin Haynes, Holladay Properties
Manette Tepe, Holladay Properties
Peter Notari, K2M Design
Julie Kirsch, K2M Design
Melanie Stern, K2M Design
Brian Greenan – HABC
Justin Williams – Rosenberg Martin Greenberg
Tom O’Keefe – Wohlsen Construction
Gary Olschansky – Trout Daniel & Associates

Messrs. Bowden and Burns, Mses. O’Neill and Ilieva* - UDARP Panel

Anthony Cataldo, Marshella Wallace, Wolde Ararsa, Tamara Woods - Planning