

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

Date: May 3, 2018

Meeting #2

Project: Greenmount + Chase

Phase: Continued Schematic

Location: 800 E. Chase Street/1102 Greenmount Ave.

PRESENTATION:

James Haley and Bryon Yoder of Haley Donovan presented an overview of the project and the site context, focusing on the changes to the landscape and building design in response to panel comments at the last presentation, as well as advances and refinements to the project design. They also discussed their investigations into a 5 story building massing and explained why for a variety of funding and other reasons it is not viable for this affordable housing project. Kristen Gedeon and Susan Williams of STV presented changes and further refinements to the landscape design.

Changes since the last presentation include:

- Reduction of the surface parking inside the block and the enlargement of landscape areas adjacent to the building;
- Adjustment to the alleys inside the block in response to fire department requirements;
- Adjustment and refinements to the streetscape at the Biddle Street entrance and the corner of E. Chase and Greenmount Ave. including a discussion of the location of existing underground utilities;
- Additional information on the stormwater and planting strategies;
- Redesign of the ground plane at the inside building corner at the Greenmount alley entrance and potential expansion of the outdoor space next to the community/youth room;
- Adjustments and further refinement of the building facades, presented in rendered elevations and three-dimensional views;
- Discussion of proposed building materials.

Comments from the Panel:

The panel responded positively to the many changes made to the site and building design in response to previous panel comments. They appreciated the investigation into the possibility of a 5 story building and understand it is not viable for the project. The panel generally supported the site and building design presented, and had the following minor comments and recommendations:

Landscape:

- The panel recommended further investigation into the introduction of street trees on the public streets, especially Greenmount Ave. in front of the small four-unit building, emphasizing their importance in improving the streetscape.
- The panel felt the plantings proposed on the corner and along E. Chase were overly simplistic and should be redesigned to do more than simply provide a buffer.
 - Corner of E. Chase and Greenmount;
 - Increasing the depth of the planting should be investigated, potentially to include small trees, as well as to integrate elements to activate the space, such as benches, similar to what is being proposed at the Biddle Street entry.

An activated landscape design at this high traffic corner would create a powerful synergy with the activity in the community room and building entry.

- The perennials at the corner are likely to be walked on given their location – a small seat wall would be a better element and incorporate the ideas above.
- Along E. Chase Street.
 - Greater depth in the plantings should also be explored to create more of a porch and door yard entry into the ground floor units. Small trees would also offset the lack of street trees.

Building Facades:

While the panel supported the façade changes and design, overall they felt there were too many elements and the facades would benefit from editing. They had the following specific comments:

- Some elements of the façade, in particular the many yellow components, seem very additive. Fewer such elements that grow organically out of the façade, rather than being tacked on, would be more powerful. Panel members in particular questioned the fin wall at the entry and the yellow elements around the bay windows.
- Eliminating the fin at the building entrance and finding another way to articulate it should be explored. The building entry should be clear but other ways to identify it that are within the existing façade components should be investigated. A hyphen or recess might be a possibility. The Biddle Street entrance may offer clues.
- The stoops at the ground floor residential entries could use more embellishment, in conjunction with the recommendation for a greater depth in the plantings. A more porch-like articulation with architectural elements such as a door recess, railings or low walls at the stairs, and door canopies, would all make more dignified entries.
- The façade of the 4 unit building could be simplified and have a character slightly different than the multifamily building. A more sedate vocabulary that integrates the building as part of the rowhouse string, rather than its current articulation as a distinctive element, is more appropriate to its location.

Next Steps:

This meeting completes the Schematic Level Design Review

Attending:

Sean Closkey, Eric Jerome – ReBuild Metro
Susan Williams, Kristen Gedeon – STV
Bryon Yoder, James Haley – Haley Donovan

Messrs. Anthony, Ostovar, Mses. Walker, O’Neill,* and Ilieva - UDAAP Panel

Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Director Tom Stosur, Marshella Wallace - Planning