

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

Date: August 31, 2017

Meeting #245

Project: Rash Field

Phase: Continued Discussion

Location: 201 Key Highway, Baltimore MD 21230

PRESENTATION:

Richard Jones, Landscape Architect and President of Mahan Rykiel, introduced the scope of the revised design scheme for Rash Field Park, which excludes specific plans for the Pride Memorial - subject to a separate design study.

Peter Stubb, Architect and Principal at Gensler, presented the updated concept design of the Pavilion and Overlook that shift away from the previous formal axis and seek to integrate the movement through the park. The ground floor is shaped to engage geometrically and programmatically with the surrounding elements in the park while the promontory above rises gently and provides gathering space and views towards the Inner Harbor.

Richard Jones described the landscape architecture of the Overlook as it integrates with the Hillside site circulation and main approach to the park from Key Highway. The design team also presented two concepts for a larger, more prominent water feature in the park – one that provides a more sculptural approach and another that incorporates ecological principals. Both are intended to provide an interactive and engaging experience – active or contemplative.

Other revisions to the concept design include clarifying the spatial legibility of the site with clear definition of various programmatic and circulation elements.

Comments from the Panel:

The Panel applauded the skillful development of the project and high quality of design ideas that elevate the project to the ranks of other innovative contemporary urban park spaces. The integration of the harbor promenade with the varied park spaces was found to be particularly successful alongside the overall approach to place-making and taking advantage of the qualities of the site. The following comments address recommendations for further study:

- **Main Arrival** – the panel found the area of arrival from Key Highway at the Overlook slightly unresolved with multiple competing paths causing ambiguity with respect to arrival and potential destination. Recommendations included strengthening the relationship of the place of arrival to the sidewalk, crosswalk and Federal Hill Park across the street, reconsidering the need for two stairs and ramps to the lower level and revising their orientation for improved visibility and spatial clarity.
- **Overlook** – the panel expressed concern over the conflict between the highest point of the promontory platform and the main gathering space and urged the design team to align and clarify the hierarchy of special experiences. Other suggestions included maintaining a more architectural, urban edge to the upper level of the park as a matter of transition between the city and the park.
- **Pavilion** – the panel found the indoor/outdoor café space successful with further refinement needed for the ground floor configuration of the Pavilion as it integrates with the stairs on both side.

- **Water Feature** – the panel was very enthusiastic about the proposed larger and more architectural/prominent water feature and encouraged the design team to consider its programmatic and stylistic expression in the context of the rest of the Inner Harbor as an overall composition and as part of the continuous public experience along the waterfront.

Panel Action:

No action needed.

Attending: Richard Jones, Jason Castillo - Mahan Rykiel
Peter Stubb, Tyller Miller - Gensler
Laurie Schwartz, Lauren Moloney – Waterfront Partnership
Aaron Moore – Greater Baltimore Committee
Dan Taylor – BDC
Kate Brower, Valerie McGuire – BCRP

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

Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Hartsfield, Jaleesa Tate, Matthew DeSantis,
Wolde Ararsa, Stephanie Smith, Kristen Ahearn, Jeff LaNoue - Planning