

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

Date: April 10, 2014

Meeting No.: 182

Project: Mary Harvin Transformation Center

Phase: Continued Schematic

Location: 1609 N. Castle Street

PRESENTATION:

Ms. Faith Nevins from the architectural firm Marks Thomas presented the revised architectural and site plan of the proposed senior residential project to the panel. Lynette Pinhey, the landscape architect with Human & Rohde described the specific features of the new landscape plan.

The revised design includes the following design components:

- The building facade along Federal Street has been pulled back to allow for green buffer area. A seating area with benches flanks the main front entrance. The main architectural features of the building remain such as holding to the front property line, the corner to the existing adjacent building. The building construction is wood frame with partial brick faced mixed with fiber/cementitious siding. Samples of the chosen brick chosen to have an aged, historic feel and cementitious lapped siding were presented.
- The landscape plan has been significantly altered since the last meeting. Street trees now line all three streets, with a hard evergreen edge to demarcate the north boundary of the site along the garage alley. A garden/patio has been placed to the rear of the parking area and residential building. The garden area is designed with raised planters which have shown past success at elderly communities.

COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:

Overall the pulled back building façade on Federal Street and the significantly improved landscape plan are successful. The panel had the following specific comments:

- On the Federal St. façade; the building and site plan need to be sure that the newly created green space is well defined, useable, and that it informs the residential entrance to the building.
- The residential entrance at Federal St. should have a stronger presence on the street, possibly through the inclusion of elements such as low walls, a larger canopy, a trellis and/or vertical light poles. The panel considered bollards at the front entrance inappropriate.
- The brick accent banding that is present throughout the design should more effectively inform other elements as they address the ground and as they step down at the changes in elevation.
- Consider redistributing the use of brick and cementitious siding/panels on all of the elevations to create a more rounded building with less of a ‘front’ and ‘back’ elevational feel.

- The proposed cementitious siding appears too close to the tones of the brick. The consensus opinion was that the colors should be lighter for contrast to mark this as a significant building for this site.
- The outdoor seating adjacent to the gardening planters can be successful; however, the panel would like to see some effort to reorganize the garden space to maximize garden sunlight. The panel would like to see more landscape features (as opposed to strictly lawn) at the NW corner of the property (adjacent to the parking lot). The suggestions included gardens or ornamental grasses, with an understanding that the grade would certainly be an issue at this location.

PANEL ACTION:

Recommend Schematic approval, addressing the above comments.

Attending:

Malik Jordan, Kevin Bell – Woda Group
Faith Nevins, Matt Flament, Keith Sullivan – Marks Thomas
Lynette Pinhey – Human & Rohde
Fred Thompson – Gower Thompson
Caroline Hecker - RMG

Ms. Jones Allen and Ms. Meany*, Messr. Bowden and Haresign - UDARP Panel

Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Laurie Feinberg –Planning Department