

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

**Date:** April 24, 2014

**Meeting No.:** 183

**Project:** Oliver Redevelopment

**Phase:** Schematic

**Location:** Oliver Neighborhood – East Baltimore

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**PRESENTATION:**

Martha Cross, Director of Development Operations began the presentation by introducing the new architect for the triangular Preston Street site, Rich Villa, of Ambit Architecture from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It was decided that the two Phase I properties (1627-35 E. Preston Street - the triangular site and the 1301-15 N. Bond Street) would be presented and reviewed separately.

**Part I - 1625-35 E. Preston Street - 2 unit grouping – triangular site**

Rich Villa described the dominant features of his modernist design concept for the triangular site. Those features include:

- new lot configurations that allows both properties access from the rear yards to Preston Street for garbage/trash pickup;
- privacy fences between rear yards and taller screening fences toward the rear automotive repair shop;
- third floor partial roof decks and the elimination of the prior scheme's 2<sup>nd</sup> level balconies;
- “punched” window approach utilizing a combination of fixed, awning and casement windows; ends of units utilize vertically stacked “slot” windows and spandrels;
- differing expressions for the two Preston Street facades with the interior unit utilizing two different colors of brick and the corner unit utilizing composite panels and painted “German siding” at the entrance which continues as the privacy fence along the street; Rear finishes mostly painted stucco;

**Comments from the Panel:**

The Panel felt that the new design shows significant improvement and was headed in a good direction. There were, however, a few issues that require further study and resolution:

1. **Window Expression** – Study the window expression, particularly along Preston Street; edge “slot” window condition questioned; Investigate the opportunity to express two storied interior spaces or stair locations on the front façade;
2. **Rear Yard development** – show more detailed rear yard development including concepts of trash can storage, rain gardens, water retention etc, if applicable;
3. **Entrance cover** – investigate providing either recessed entrances or canopy cover at main entrances;
4. **Cornice Expression** – provide details of treatment at cornice line or tops of walls.

**Panel Action:**

Recommend Schematic approval, addressing the above comments.

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**Part II - 1301 – 1317 N. Bond Street**

Rich Villa described the preliminary design concepts for this group of five, three story townhouses on the east side of Bond Street between Ellsworth and Preston Streets. Two alternative expressions for

the facades were presented with differing brick coloration and differences in the vertical expression of the joint detail between units. Features of the design are as follows:

- Width of individual properties are mostly 26 feet with two end units at 28 feet and 29 feet;
- 8 street trees along Bond Street with 4 trees along Preston Street;
- continuous raised planters flanking recessed and covered double entry doors;
- vertically stacked floor to ceiling windows sometimes mark the boundaries of units, being located at the ends of the two story living rm and the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor master bathrooms (in one alternative); the second alternative utilizes a more consistent window treatment and marks the separation of units with a narrow vertical niche;
- individual lots are defined by a wood fence with a patio, landscaped area and one off street parking space;
- end units have additional windows with mostly stucco expression on the side streets;
- materials – brick on fronts with stucco and “German” siding on rear;

**Comments from the Panel:**

The Panel generally felt that more study was needed although the direction had great potential. The issue of coloration and material consistency (or variety) needs to come from a conceptual basis of the designers rather than seeking a consensus from the Panel. The specific areas of concern in these five unit grouping are as follows:

1. **General**– Consider less regimentation in the facades – more playful; find elements that might offer opportunity for more expression, relief, for example- the stairs, 2 story spaces, the cornice, individual color at entry recess;
2. **Rear Yard development** – show more detail of rear yard development including concepts of trash can storage, gates, rain gardens, water retention etc, if applicable;
3. **Ends of units** – particularly along Preston Street – turn brick material around corner to some logical and defining point before changing to lesser material;
4. **Width of living room** – consider widening the living room wing and using that new mass as the place to extend the brick material around the sides of the end units;
5. **Windows** – clarify the role, intent, and contextual fit of the selected window types;

**Panel Action:**

Recommend Continued Development of these units, addressing the above comments.

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**Attending:** Martha Cross - Development Operations at TRF Development Partners  
Rich Villa, Architect – Ambit Architecture

Ms. Meany, Messr. Bowden\*, Haresign, Burns - UDARP Panel

Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Tamara Woods –Planning Department