BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL

MEETING MINUTES

Date: November 13, 2014 **Meeting No.:** 196

Project: Research Building, 873 W. Baltimore Street **Phase:** Final
UMBioPark PUD

Location: Site bounded on the north by W. Baltimore Street, to the west by S. Poppleton Street, on the south by Booth Street, and to the east by an alley and vacant lot slated for future development

PRESENTATION:

Anthony Cataldo introduced the project team. Mr. Jim Bartlett, Director of Design for Gaudreau, provided an overview of proposed program and planning modifications, site context and the updated design, specifically addressing comments from the approved Schematic Design review on October 9. Key modifications and presentation points from the prior review include:

1. Site Plan
   a. Noted transformer ventilation grates along the east edge of the building
   b. Provided a site plan showing special paving
2. Elevation Studies
   a. Elevation Study 1 - View from Proton Center
      Two full masonry bays along West Baltimore Street are illustrated in lieu of the single bay. The two upper floors are recessed and expressed in metal panel, similar to other faces of the building.
   b. Elevation Study 2 – Southwest Corner along Poppleton Street
      The curtainwall is extended a half bay to the south, creating a narrower slot between the curtainwall and the masonry.
   c. Elevation Study 3 - View from Proton Center with two full masonry bays at the corner extended to the roof line
   d. Façade Refinement 1 – Ground Floor masonry piers, 2 bay projected canopy and precast curtainwall surround
      First Floor vertical masonry pilasters are added behind the columns. The 2nd Floor window wall and storefront systems are recessed and allow the columns to stand proud. The precast curtainwall surround partially engages the last masonry pier. The canopy projects 8 feet beyond the face of the building, covering the entry steps and the switchback ramp.
   e. Façade Refinement 2 – Curtainwall and masonry
      A minor horizontal curtainwall snap cover has been introduced to add a subtle texture to the curtainwall. Headers and sills are now cast stone vs. previously shown specially coursed brick.
   f. Façade Refinement 3 – East Elevation at building base

Mr. Bartlett noted that the intermediate masonry piers could not be brought to grade due to transformer ventilation grates that run the full width between columns.

g. Façade Refinement 4 – Canopy, column and spandrel relationships
As a result of structural considerations, the second floor masonry spandrel and sill engage the cast-in-place columns. Retail and main canopies also engage the columns.

3. Exterior Lighting
   a. Recessed down-lights within the minor projected canopies above the storefronts and arcades
   b. Recessed step lights at masonry piers along the south alley
   c. Surface mounted accent lights at each exposed concrete column – 2nd and 3rd Floor spandrel height
   d. LED strips in the main canopy soffit perpendicular to the main façade
4. Materials
   a. Santa Fe Rose molded brick buff colored mortar matching other brick within the campus
   b. Buff colored cast stone sills, lintels and precast curtainwall surround
   c. Light buff colored FormaBond metal composite panels at 8th and 9th Floors, main canopy soffit, entry canopy, and other perimeter canopies
   d. Wood finished Hunter Douglas metal linear soffit at colonnade
   e. Glass is reflective for high performance.
5. Architect's Preferences
   a. Elevation study 1 and all other refinements, except as noted
   b. Original Poppleton Street elevation with the full bay slot between masonry and curtainwall

PANEL COMMENTS:

The panel appreciated the design and development team's willingness to further consider the original Master Plan, re-examine context, and modify the initial Schematic Design as discussed during the August design review. The panel also noted the following specific comments and concerns related to the site and building design:

1. Site
   a. During the panels' discussion period with the architect, the architect indicated that the northeast corner First Floor tenant area may not provide food service, as the panel initially believed based on earlier presentations. The panel continues to question the arcade, particularly since there is no guarantee that the First Floor tenant space will activate it.
   b. The panel noted that the placing tables and chairs on the ventilation gratings on the east side of the building is impractical, and should be removed.
   c. The streetscape and landscape plans are not clearly rendered and difficult to both read and understand. The panel suggested that the existing plans could be illustrated more clearly to show plantings, paving and furnishings. It would also be helpful to know how this ties into existing recently completed streetscapes within the campus.
   d. Provide typical street sections through the 5 different streetscape conditions in the east alley (1,) West Baltimore Street (2 minimum at arcade and retail,) and Poppleton Street (2, retail and solid.) These sections should accurately reflect building canopies, storefronts, overhangs, paving, planted areas and tree pits, and street furniture.

2. Building Design
    a. The panel noted that there are still no “big idea” diagrams (plan and/or elevation) that clearly explain the logic for massing and material changes.
    b. West Baltimore Street Elevation
        i. The panel generally favored Elevation Study 1 with two masonry bays and a metal panel attic story vs the original single bay or extension of masonry to the roofline.
        ii. The panel questioned the effectiveness of the offset along the east façade. This appears to be a leftover from the original tower notion. Would it be more effective if the offset was eliminated, and the masonry was allowed to read as a background masonry box with the curtainwall applied?
        iii. The panel recommended that a half bay mitigating slot between the curtainwall and the masonry mass be considered, similar to the study for Poppleton. This will provide a more consistent approach to the intersection, and would clean up the joint between the masonry and the precast curtainwall surround.
        iv. The panel again questioned if there was not a simpler solution to the transition from curtainwall to masonry. The precast seems indelicate. Could it be just an elegant plate of curtainwall with aluminum returns, or a metal panel surround?
        v. The panel suggested focusing the canopy on the primary entrance, in lieu of also covering the ramp system. The stair should also be studied further, particularly as it relates to the relationship with the columns.
        vi. The panel suggested allowing canopy and retail pieces to sit between and independent of the round cast-in-place columns rather than engage them.
        vii. The band above the entry doors and arcade storefront requires additional study and development.
    c. Poppleton Street
        i. The panel strongly favors the narrower slot between the curtainwall and the masonry.
        ii. Masonry at the retail base needs further study.
        iii. Consider the relationship of balcony ends and columns; develop a consistent approach on both Poppleton and West Baltimore Streets. Consider adding one additional level of balcony to create a horizontal relationship between the balconies and the masonry box.
    d. Lighting
        i. Study the surface mounted pin lights at the columns. Is there a single fixture solution?
    e. Materials
        i. The panel strongly objects to the use of reflective glass at the ground floor, and requests consideration of clear (possibly low e) glass without a reflective coating.
        ii. The panel questions the use of exposed cast-in-place concrete on the columns. There is great concern about graffiti.
    f. The panel requested the team to provide a graphics and signage standards package for review.

PANEL ACTION:

The Panel suggested further study of the Final Design and looks forward to additional development for the final design in response to comments.

Attending:

James Bartlett- Gaudreau Inc.
Jane Shaab – UMBioPark
Steve Hanssen – Wexford Sci. + Tech.

UDARP Panel Members – Dr. Judith Meany, Messrs. Gary Bowden, Rich Burns, David Haresign*, and David Rubin

Planning Department- Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Wolde Ararsa