

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

Date: October 28, 2010

Meeting No.: 117

Project: 25th Street Station - Architecture

Phase: Final

Location: Maryland / 25th / Howard / 24th Streets Vicinity

PRESENTATION:

Robert Gehrman, of Brown Craig Turner, went through each of the Panel's recommendations from the previous meeting and how the design team addressed them. He also reviewed the material samples, lighting, and signage. Anna Owen of STV presented the changes to the streetscape and 25th Street Plaza.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL:

The Panel complemented the design team on the positive progress of the project and their consideration of the Panel's and the community's concerns. However, members felt that there were still a few items that needed additional attention:

Sign tower / building at Howard and 25th Street. The Panel was still concerned that the Walmart and Lowe's signage at the corner was confusing regarding the entrances to these stores and the identification of the project as the 25th Street Station. It was recommended that there be a clearer distinction between the large signage and the retail signage of the store at the corner. This might also be accomplished by emphasizing the piers at the corners and eliminating the strong horizontal cap that currently tops the tower.

Location of the bank building at 25th Street. While having the low wall turn back and more fully enclose the parking lot on 25th Street is an improvement, it is still recognized that having a building front 25th Street would create a better pedestrian realm along the street.

Maryland Avenue residential building. Changing the treatment of the parking garage stair to relate with the residential building was viewed as an improvement, although it was recommended to lower the base and create openings that were similar to the windows. Also, the base and top treatment needs additional articulation.

Lowe's entrances on 24th Street. The Panel was favorable to the smaller sign at the main entrance to Lowe's, but felt that the sign and entrance on east end of 24th Street was still too large. Members recommend that the two signs better relate to one another and that more brick be introduced into the larger sign and less stucco. .

Sisson Street wall. Although the Panel appreciates the attempt to use as much of the salvaged stone as possible, it was felt that the large stone panels near the entrance should better relate to the rest of the wall. Also, the architects need to give additional consideration to where changes on the wall materials happen and where the simulated stone would be used. Finally, it was recommended that the architects return to a lighter colored brick in the inset panel that would provide a greater contrast.

Walmart sign on the rear facade. Some Panel members believe the sign seems to be too small and out of scale with the expanse of the wall.

Materials. The Panel recommended an off-white or creamier shade of mortar rather than the white as shown. Also, the simple sconces look too modern for the style of architecture proposed.

Several members from the surrounding community made public comments regarding the project. It was generally felt that the Lowe's sign along 24th Street was too large, that only real stone (no simulated) be used on the Sisson Street wall, and that the architects use arched openings on the garage to relate to the Sisson Street wall. Also, the light levels and hours of lighting were of concern. Finally, the community recommended that the Walmart sign that faced Remington not be lit.

PANEL ACTION:

Final Approval recommended with comments.

Attending:

Robert Gehrman, Paul Evenson, Meredith Williams, Emily Reid - Brown Craig Turner Architects

Nancy Liebrecht - Marks Thomas

Addison Palmer, Anna Owen – STV, Inc.

Caroline Paff - WV

Kelly Ray - Office of Councilman Stokes

Douglas Armstrong - RNA

Megan Hamilton, John Viles - HFCA

Cathy Yates - Old Goucher CA

Ed Gunts - Sunpapers

Jay Brodie – BDC

Messrs. Bowden, Britt, Cameron and Ramberg – Panel

Tom Stosur, Gary Cole, Anthony Cataldo and Bob Quilter - Planning