

Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel

AGENDA ITEMS: Design Advisory Panel Procedures
Exceptional Design Points Discussion

DATE: November 29, 2017

ATTENDANCE:

Karl Du Puy (Panelist)
Damon Orobona (Panelist)
Rod Henderer (Panelist)
Paul Mortensen (Panelist, Senior Urban Designer in the Director's Office)

Laura Shipman (Design Advisory Panel Liaison)
Nicholas Dumais (Associate General Counsel)
Gwen Wright (Planning Department Director)
Elza Hisel-McCoy (Area 1 Regulatory Supervisor)
Michael Brown (Area 1 Master Plan Supervisor)
Leslye Howerton (Area 1 Planner Coordinator)
Stephanie Dickel (Area 1 Planner Coordinator)
Margaret Rifkin (Director's Office)
Neil Sullivan (Area 1 Planner Coordinator)

Discussion Points:

- Nick Dumais gave the Design Advisory Panel a brief overview of Maryland's Open Meetings Act.
- Laura Shipman led a discussion of the Exceptional Design Points review process and allocation. The panel will provide qualitative recommendations on the appropriateness of the amount of Exceptional Design Points requested by Applicant teams. The panel will let teams know at Concept/Sketch Plan if the project is not on track to receive the minimum 10 points required for all Optional Method Projects in the Bethesda Overlay Zone.

Panel Actions:

1. No action taken.



Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel

FROM: Laura Shipman
Design Advisory Panel Liaison

PROJECT: **4540 Montgomery Avenue**
Sketch Plan No. 320180010

DATE: November 29, 2017

*The **4540 Montgomery Avenue** project was reviewed by the Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel on **November 29, 2017**. The following meeting notes summarize the Panel's discussion, and recommendations regarding design excellence and the exceptional design public benefits points. The Panel's recommendations should be incorporated into the Staff Report and strongly considered by Staff prior to the certification of the Site Plan. Should you have any additional questions and/or comments please feel free to contact the Design Advisory Panel Liaison.*

Attendance:

Karl Du Puy (Panelist)
George Dove (Panelist)
Damon Orobona (Panelist)
Rod Henderer (Panelist)
Qiaojue Yu (Panelist)
Paul Mortensen (Panelist, Senior Urban Designer in the Director's Office)

Laura Shipman (Design Advisory Panel Liaison)
Leslye Howerton (Lead Plan Reviewer)
Gwen Wright (Planning Department Director)
Margaret Rifkin (Director's Office)
Neil Sullivan (Area 1 Planner Coordinator)

Pat Harris (Attorney, Applicant Team)
Sandy Silverman (Architect, Applicant Team)
Matt Bell (Architect, Applicant Team)
Rob Eisinger (Property Owner, Applicant Team)



Discussion Points:

- The building addresses development on a compact site very well.
- Is the material a metal panel?
 - *Applicant response:* yes.
- Are you undergrounding utilities?
 - *Applicant response:* yes.
- How many retail bays?
 - *Applicant response:* not yet finalized, likely one tenant.
- It is good that this is a narrow building, but why the symmetry on the east elevation? Give more emphasis to the corner of Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street. The corner wants to be articulated and asymmetrical.
- Articulate the base of the building to correspond to the base of the air rights building. The base could read as two-stories.
- It is good that the entrance is being pulled back, could imagine once the other side of Pearl Street is developed the southern portion of the shared street could be mostly closed with plaza atmosphere.
- Provide further development of streetscape to include more trees and stormwater management along the street.
 - *Applicant response:* More detail will be provided at site plan.
- Can vegetation be tied in throughout pearl street façade to tie to green roof? Balconies with vegetation could address this issue.
 - *Applicant response:* We were seeking very simple and clean lines, the way the balconies are decorated by users may add some of this texture to the façade.
- Can you increase windows on southern façade?
 - *Applicant response:* Building code issues prevented this.
- If this is to act as a gateway it will be interesting to explore the view of the building coming from the west along Montgomery Avenue, a one-way street.
- Views back to downtown from the corner units will be interesting.
- How has the top of the building been articulated? Consider a different proportion for more emphasis of the top.
 - *Applicant response:* articulation and mullion pattern provide some differentiation of the top, but will explore further.
- Are there only balconies on the second floor?
 - *Applicant response:* they are currently located on the second and top floors, the team is still debating the location of balconies.

Panel Recommendations:

The following recommendations should be incorporated into the Staff Report.

1. Exceptional Design Points: The design is headed in a positive direction to go higher than the requested 15 points as a creative development solution for a compact site, if there is attention to the recommendations listed below.



2. Give more emphasis to the corner of Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street.
3. Articulate the base of the building to correspond to the base of the adjacent Air Rights Building.
4. Provide further development of the streetscape to include more trees and stormwater management along the street.
5. Explore the view of the building coming from the west along Montgomery Avenue.
6. Consider a different proportion to further emphasize the top of the building.



Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel

FROM: Laura Shipman
Design Advisory Panel Liaison

PROJECT: **The Edgemont Bethesda II**
Sketch Plan No. 320180030

DATE: November 29, 2017

*The **Edgemont Bethesda II** project was reviewed by the Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel on **November 29, 2017**. The following meeting notes summarize the Panel's discussion, and recommendations regarding design excellence and the exceptional design public benefits points. The Panel's recommendations should be incorporated into the Staff Report and strongly considered by Staff prior to the certification of the Site Plan. Should you have any additional questions and/or comments please feel free to contact the Design Advisory Panel Liaison.*

Attendance:

Karl Du Puy (Panelist)
George Dove (Panelist)
Damon Orobona (Panelist)
Rod Henderer (Panelist)
Qiaojue Yu (Panelist)
Paul Mortensen (Panelist, Senior Urban Designer in the Director's Office)

Laura Shipman (Design Advisory Panel Liaison)
Stephanie Dickel (Lead Plan Reviewer)
Gwen Wright (Planning Department Director)
Michael Brown (Area 1 Master Plan Supervisor)
Margaret Rifkin (Director's Office)
Neil Sullivan (Area 1 Planner Coordinator)

Pat Harris (Attorney, Applicant Team)
Federico Olivera-Sala (Architect, Applicant Team)
Ben Stoll (Applicant Team)



Discussion Points:

- Response to Woodmont Avenue is very strong, should be congratulated for defining curve and making a street people will want to walk along.
- What is happening in the space between building and the building to north? That is also an important corner to see how it is articulated.
- How are you designing the ground floor?
 - *Applicant response:* Not fully determined, likely amenity spaces with programming to support 275 units. Will likely be a resident lounge or event room with some engagement and activity as people walk along the street. Ground floor retail is unlikely.
- What are the materials going to be? The elevations cause concern because there are too many materials and there should be restraint. Have an accent material and restraint on others because there is so much articulation.
- Happy to see the project is sensitive to orientation and shadows.
- There does not appear to be much correlation of exterior articulation to the floor plans.
- The form of the building is very nice and contributes to the context well.
- This building is presented as soldier building, but corners should be reinforced and calm down other moves. Address north of building and corners. Northeast corner is opportunity to look at because it is most visible to traffic on Woodmont. Should study in 3D.
- Off-site public art is a great idea.
- The double-height treatment on Woodmont is good. Could the double-height treatment be helpful on south façade to simplify the amount of moves in the design? It could get to “pancakey” and horizontal. Maybe the double-height treatment is currently too two-dimensional rather than integral. Integrate moves and quiet the whole building.
- Is the first floor above the sidewalk? Though the ground floor is likely not going to be retail, could the ground floor uses potentially be opened up to the street in the spring/summer, and have people sitting there. This could create an indoor/outdoor relationship to the sidewalk and potential relationship to a midblock connection if it is provided. Part of façade could be residential unit entries to have activated uses in addition to amenity space.
 - *Applicant response:* The applicant is considering opportunities for individual unit entries in addition to ground floor amenity space.
- Is the sidewalk along Woodmont Avenue being increased? The streetscape design will be very important.
 - *Applicant response:* yes.
- Any rooftop amenity?
 - *Applicant response:* yes, pulled to southeast corner to respect the adjacent condo building.
- Where is the entrance?
 - *Applicant response:* the building’s southeast corner.
- Any public utilities above ground?
 - *Applicant response:* will underground utilities.
- Trying to do too much, may benefit the building more to just do glass as a contrast to the existing building rather than brick. Is it important that brick is used? The brick may not work as well in the new building, may instead want a horizontal connection of the brick material or less



materials. The building can be a building unto itself and does not need to relate to too many things. Let it be simplified since the building is so much taller than the existing building.

- *Applicant response:* wanted to make buildings feel connected, but will explore further.
- How close is the proposed building to the existing Edgemont building?
 - *Applicant response:* approx. 30 ft.
- Adjust the proportions of the corner element at Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor Lane and make it either taller or shorter.
- How are you addressing the driveway and screening?
 - *Applicant response:* providing landscape treatment along western side of new building to help screen the loading dock.
- North arrows on graphics should be corrected.
- Develop the design of the surrounding landscape and public realm generally. Consider a through-block connection east-west to connect to ZOM Bethesda's proposed north south connection.
 - *Applicant response:* exploring landscape design and connection options with the other team.
- Have you developed the ground plane to the north?
 - *Applicant response:* the landscape is tapered to meet grade.
- Where is the parking entrance?
 - *Applicant response:* the new parking connects underground to the existing parking garage.

Panel Recommendations:

The following recommendations should be incorporated into the Staff Report.

1. Exceptional Design Points: The design could get to the requested 20 points at Site Plan, though it is not there yet and should incorporate the following recommendations.
2. Simplify the design to quiet the whole building.
 - a. Reinforce the corners and calm down other moves. Ensure moves are integral to the building and not two-dimensional or "stuck on".
 - b. Provide one accent material and show restraint on other materials because there is so much articulation.
3. Provide more indoor/outdoor relationship from the ground floor uses to the sidewalk. Part of the Woodmont Avenue façade could be residential unit entries to activate the sidewalk in addition to the amenity spaces.
4. Adjust the proportions of the corner element at Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor Lane and make it either taller or shorter.
5. Develop the design of the surrounding and public realm and landscape generally.
 - a. Consider a through-block connection east-west to connect to ZOM Bethesda's proposed north south connection.
 - b. Improve the pedestrian experience along Edgemoor Lane.
6. Continue to explore the off-site public art opportunities.

