

Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel

FROM: Matthew Folden
Area 1 Regulatory Team

PROJECT: 7340 Wisconsin Avenue
Application Number TBD

DATE: Wednesday, September 25, 2019; 10:30 AM

The 7340 Wisconsin Avenue project was reviewed by the Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel on Wednesday, September 25, 2019. 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)

Qiaojue Yu (Panelist)
Paul Mortensen (Panelist, Senior Urban Designer in the Director's Office)

Robert Kronenberg (Deputy Director)
Elza Hisel-McCoy (Area 1 Division Chief)
Stephanie Dickel (Area 1 Regulatory Supervisor)
Matthew Folden (Area 1 Regulatory Reviewer)

Bob Harris, Lerch, Early & Brewer (Applicant)
Scott Strusinew Lamb Properties, LLC (Applicant)
Joel Sherman, South Bay Partners (Applicant)
James Hamilton, CRTKL (Applicant)
Tom Brink, CRTKL (Applicant)
Sylke Knuppel, VIKa (Applicant)

Amanda Farber



Naomi Spinrad
Gary Modjeska
Jim Troy

Project Name: Bethesda Senior Living (formerly 7340 Wisconsin Avenue); Presenting DAP application, dated 9.11.19, for an anticipated Sketch Plan Application. The current approval is valid through 2023.

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Discussion Points:

- Massing:
 - Relatively narrow block with three street frontages lends itself to a more iconic massing than strict adherence to design guidelines would yield.
 - Need a diagram showing how the building massing compares with strict adherence to guidelines.
 - The Panel generally supports the horizontal zoning of the massing, but the team should explore methods to introduce more vertical continuity.
 - Planning staff suggested that further development of the skin materials and openings should respect the overall massing diagram, which breaks down the bulk of the building in an iconic and interesting fashion.
 - **Applicant response:**
 - The building form is dictated by the use and broken down by typology of care within the building as follows: higher floors house independent senior units while lower floors house assisted living and memory care residents who need to be closer to exits during emergencies.
 - The Applicant believes that the Project has responded to the Design Guidelines by meeting the additional setback recommendations for buildings that do not include a tower step-back, based on the massing approach on an “important” corner, and by responding to adjacent buildings through the use of horizontal and vertical breaks in the façade.
 - The Applicant will explore these issues further as the design develops.



- *Access:*
 - The Panel expressed concern about passenger drop-off on Wisconsin Avenue due to the negative impacts that type of operation would have on traffic.
 - **Applicant response:**
 - MD SHA would not permit a drop-off/ loading zone on Wisconsin Avenue and one is not being requested as part of the application.
 - The Lobby/ drop-off design on Hampden Lane is intended to pull the drop-off zone off of Wisconsin Avenue.
- Streetscape/ Ground Floor:
 - The Panel had some concern about having the lobby, rather than retail, on the prominent southwestern corner.
 - **Applicant response:**
 - Applicant feels that the lobby location and design helps blend the residents into the community.
 - Applicant wants the lobby to be in an oasis of green; panel is supportive of the landscape concept.

Panel Recommendations:

The following recommendations should be incorporated into the Staff Report.

- The applicant should submit diagrams showing what strict conformance to the design guidelines would look like and how the proposal differs from strict conformance with the Sketch Plan submittal.
 - Panel supports the “rotational” expression of the façade, but cautions not to “over do it.” Continue to emphasize the northeast corner
 - Panel is supportive of the landscape/ streetscape concept., including the open space along Wisconsin.
 - Panel supports rooftop amenity, which will contribute to the building as viewed from a distance.
 - Vertical treatment of the tower could be emphasized to improve visual continuity
 - Panel supports the use in this location.
1. Public Benefit Points: The project is on track to achieve at least the minimum 10 Exceptional Design points required in the Bethesda Overlay Zone.
 2. Straw vote: 0 in support, 5 in support but with conditions, 0 do not support



Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel

FROM: Elza Hisel-McCoy
Area 1 Chief

PROJECT: 7800 Wisconsin Avenue
No pending application

DATE: September 25, 2019

*The 7800 Wisconsin Avenue project was reviewed by the Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel on **Wednesday, November 18, 2018**. The design was presented by the architect for Donohoe Development, a prospective purchaser of the site. The Panel provided written meeting notes summarizing the Panel's discussion, and recommendations regarding design excellence and conformance with the Design Guidelines, which were posted online. The Panel did not hold a vote as there is no pending application. The Panel reviewed the identical design a second time on **Wednesday, September 25, 2019**. The design was presented by the same architect, but this time representing the property owner directly. The following written meeting notes summarize the Panel's discussion, and recommendations regarding design excellence and conformance with the Design Guidelines. The Panel did not hold a vote as there is no pending application. 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)
Qiaojue Yu (Panelist)
Paul Mortensen (Panelist, Senior Urban Designer in the Director's Office)

Robert Kronenberg (Deputy Director of Regulatory Development)
Elza Hisel-McCoy (Area 1 Division Chief)
Stephanie Dickel (Area 1 Regulatory Supervisor)
Grace Bogdan (Area 1)

Applicant Team

Francoise M. Carrier, Applicant Attorney
David Goldberg, Owner Representative (Union Hardware)
Dennis Connors, Architect (SK&I)

Amanda Farber (Member of the Public)



Naomi Spinrad (Member of the Public)
Jim Troy (Member of the Public)

Discussion Points:

- What size park would the design leave?
 - *Applicant Response:* Sector Plan provided four scenarios and this is one of them.
- Disappointed that there is not a clear size of the parcel to the west. Would like to know size and if development is actually viable, since this site is already difficult to develop due to size.
 - *Applicant Response:* There are two properties to the west. Draft of the Sector Plan did allow a height increase if the properties were to consolidate, but the Council removed the incentive and focused on affordable housing and this is where we are. Union Hardware has already moved and is ready to sell to another developer or to Parks.
 - Need about an ½ an acre for a programmable urban park, any smaller would be a pocket park similar to Veterans park
- What happens with the wall fenestration if a park is constructed on the neighboring lot?
 - *Applicant Response:* If it were to be a park, unlimited fenestration is possible but with no park there is a setback requirement for limited fenestration.
- Understanding the constraints of this site, particularly the narrow width of the north side, it seems a zero lot line on the north side is acceptable. Articulation of building along Wisconsin seems sensible, but Norfolk needs to be wider, six feet seems acceptable on the west side given the constraints, but the addition of a connection to Cheltenham Park would be very beneficial to this area of Bethesda.
- The connection from Norfolk to Cheltenham Park is very important and should be a wider street/sidewalk/streetscape to encourage crossing Wisconsin to the east
 - *Applicant Response:* It is possible to shift the base back slightly more on Norfolk, but a bumpout/cantilever above would remain.
- Bumpouts defeat the intent of requiring tower setbacks to allow light and air and they also preclude the planting of street trees and impact the pedestrian realm. Buildings with bumpouts/cantilevers have been strongly discouraged by staff, and no part of the building can overhang into the right of way.
 - *Applicant Response:* Pushing the entire building back without bumpouts may not be possible because of the dedication.
- Incumbent on the owner to show the highest and best use given its minimum size. The project is flawed as currently shown and cannot vote in support of this.



- The building proposed doesn't really achieve the intent of the Design Guidelines and would not be able to really achieve any of the scenarios in the Design Guidelines, except for option 3. There could be a design where there is a linear park that provides the connection.
- Believe there is a design solution to get there, but this project is not there yet. Too many 'waivers' of the Design Guidelines without meeting the overall intent
- Have we set a precedent of a compromised tower separation?
 - *Staff:* Case by case based on size, design and existing conditions.
- Loading is on Norfolk which makes sense due to the surrounding streets but it precludes the ability to have a linear green connection and is not ideal
 - *Applicant Response:* Perhaps there is a paved limited use treatment similar to the Wharf.
- *Public Comment:* Significant concerns, mostly already voiced by the Panel. A cantilever over Norfolk with Marriott on the other side will significantly impact pedestrian experience. DC is able to provide wide sidewalks and Bethesda development should be able to as well. Loading on Norfolk is currently a disaster and is not getting better anytime soon and is also supposed to have a bike lane. As an entrance from east and west Bethesda, good flow for the pedestrian environment is important. Existing 20-foot sidewalk with a two story building is nice, but a 25 foot sidewalk with a 225' building, is that proportional? Appreciate the challenges with this site.

Panel Recommendations:

Design Team will review the recommendations from this meeting and the previous DAP meeting minutes from November 28, 2018. If the Team decides to pursue submitting an application, will return to the DAP for an additional presentation and straw vote.



Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel

FROM: Stephanie Dickel
Acting Supervisor, Area 1

PROJECT: Bethesda Market
Sketch Plan No. 320190030

DATE: Wednesday, September 25, 2019

*The **Bethesda Market project** was reviewed by the Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel on **Wednesday, September 25, 2019**. 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)
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Robert Kronenberg (Deputy Director)
Elza Hisel-McCoy (Area 1 Chief)
Stephanie Dickel (Acting Regulatory Supervisor, Lead Reviewer)

McLean Quinn (Applicant Team)
Jason Sereno (Applicant Team)
Chuck Hathway (Applicant Team)
Chris Ruhlen (Applicant Team)
Heather Dhopolsky (Applicant Team)
Tade Willger (Applicant Team)
Maria Casarella (Applicant Team)
Joe Piekiewicz (Applicant Team)

Gary Modjeska (Member of the Public)
Amanda Farber (Member of the Public)
Jim Troy (Member of the Public)



Discussion Points:

- The 10' datum line for the proposed addition to the Farm Women's Cooperative Market maybe too short to function as a great market building.
 - *Applicant response:* They will continue to work with the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and would like the form to read on the exterior of the building but take advantage of the interior volume in the middle.
- Shed dormers may work better for the building addition, getting rid of the intermediate truss may provide flexibility on the inside of the structure.
- The Panel would like to see all of the elevations for the addition to the Farm Women's Cooperative Market.
 - *Applicant response:* They will continue to work with the Historic Preservation Commission on design options and suggestions from the Panel.
- The Site Plan has improved greatly, the single loaded corridor that faces the proposed park on Parking Lot 24 is a much better design, the ground plane has improved.
- A hyphen between the existing Farm Women's Cooperative Market Building and the new addition will help differentiate and expand what is usable.
 - *Applicant response:* Feedback from the Panel will be conveyed to the HPC.
- The garage access points and paving details are shown differently on the overall plan.
 - *Applicant response:* That was an oversight. We are also trying to figure out how to make the garage ramp from Willow disappear or blend into the landscape, while provide options to get in and out of the site.
- With the expansion of the garage to the north/east, how will it be possible to get large trees. The new park needs the trees to be big.
 - *Applicant response:* There is significant grade change, so there will be a soil depth to allow large trees.
- The symmetrical elevation of confronting residential tower is too predictable, consider making asymmetrical to emphasize the base wrapping around the corner onto Wisconsin, and emphasize the transition back to park.
- The corner of the new building facing the Market and the park needs to be greatly improved, to bring the public around to it, establish the corner all the way down to the ground.
 - *Applicant response:* Agreed, we are starting to think about the Panel's design concept already and how it relates to the Market. Looking at pedestrian scale retail, base, tower expression, and will revisit the design when we come back to the Panel.



Looking into two story penthouse units on the single loaded corridor bar facing the park.

- Put off by the open glass modern elevation of the Market's addition, the idea that the hip continues, less modern, bring the hip roof back down, even be a glass roof, hip roof it instead of gable roof.
 - *Applicant response:* The steel frame building addition could be wood, the HPC wants the Market building to translate to the new market building.
- What stage is the public open space in, will the Panel and Planning/Parks be involved in the design?
 - *Staff response:* This is Sketch Plan, and we will all be heavily involved as this Project moves forward.
 - Staff mentioned the two development options that are going to the Planning Board.
- Do you need the woonerf, with the option that includes the Park, or can it be closed it off to cars, this design will need to be looked at closer at the time of Site Plan?
 - *Applicant response:* The woonerf is needed at this time for fire access, especially with the residential lobby is at the back, drop off may be needed, market may need it for service, may be closed to cars, will need to be looked at site plan.
- What is proposed in the park?
 - *Applicant response:* Lot 24-active, splash park, lawn, amphitheater, spaces for movies/concerts, closing woonerf for special events, could lawn accommodate skating rink in winter, Lot 10-nature play, dog park, lawn.
- Can the circulation of Willow be discussed the next time the Panel sees this Project? Show access to parking, one-way or two-way on Willow, the bike facilities, provide cleaner diagrams for flow around the site.

Panel Recommendations:

The following recommendations should be incorporated into the Staff Report.

1. Shed dormers may work better for the building addition, consider getting rid of the intermediate truss to provide flexibility on the inside of the structure.
2. Provide all elevations of the Market addition for review.
3. The symmetrical elevation of tower is too predictable, consider making asymmetrical to emphasize the base wrapping around the corner onto Wisconsin, and emphasize the transition back to park.
4. The corner of the new building facing the Market and the park needs to be greatly improved, to bring the public around to it, establish the corner all the way down to the ground.
5. Consider less modern for the addition to the Market, bring the hip roof back down, even be a glass roof, hip roof it instead of gable roof....more hip less modern.



6. With the development option that includes the park, consider removing the woonerf.
7. Provide circulation diagrams for the entire site, specifically addressing access to parking, Willow Lane, bike facilities, the woonerf, and the general flow around the site.
8. Public Benefit Points: The project is on track to achieve at least the minimum 10 Exceptional Design points required in the Bethesda Overlay Zone.
9. Straw vote: 0 in support, 4 in support but with conditions, 0 do not support

