


DATE: February 15, 2022

TO: Bethesda Downton Plan Design Advisory Panel (DAP)

FROM: Grace Bogdan, Planner Coordinator, DownCounty Planning 
Stephanie Dickel, Regulatory Supervisor, DownCounty Planning

RE: Staff comments for the February 23, 2022 DAP Meeting

We have one item for discussion at this month's meeting which will occur virtually.

Item #1
4901 Battery Lane

SK&I
WC Smith

Parker Rodriguez

- 1st Site Plan presentation
- The DAP voted unanimously at their September 2021 meeting that the Sketch Plan was on track to receive design excellence points with the following comments to be incorporated at Site Plan:
 - a. Strengthen relationship of the rear of the building with the proposed east/west connection at the northern portion of the Property.
 - b. Provide consistent pavement material and design pedestrian connections recognizable as the public realm not private pathways.
 - c. Further identify style of the building with a base, middle, and top that clearly relate to one another.
- In response to the previous comments, the Site Plan includes two building entrances to the rear with ground floor amenities such as an elevated terrace with dog run overlooking the rear pedestrian connection, access to bike storage, and a dog wash.
- The Applicant proposes the pedestrian connections to be an asphalt material, and the design proposes two circular 'nodes' in the rear which will provide a seating area with distinct hardscape from the asphalt.
- The Applicant has evolved the massing into an architectural style in response to the DAP's last comment to enhance the base, middle, and top. The Applicant describes the style as traditional-modern, utilizing traditional masonry materials at the base, middle, and top, and providing expansive glass windows and stepbacks throughout to blend a modern style.
- Sheet 19 of the submittal shows the refined massing compared to the Bethesda Design Guidelines. The building will provide a 10' stepback above the 3rd floor base and another 6' stepback above the 8th floor corners of the building. At the 10th floor, the middle of the building will include a 2' stepback. The Design Guidelines call for a stepback of 15-20' for this street

type (Neighborhood Collector). The Applicant requests alternative treatment for the reduced setback based on the distinct building footprint and variation of setbacks along all four sides of the proposed building.

- The Applicant currently seeks 15 points for design excellence.
 - 10 Points: Generally consistent with the Design Guidelines and meets four of the CR Guideline Criteria
 - 20 Points: Superlative design that in a uniquely compelling way meets the Design Guidelines or overcomes a significant site or similar constraint; a top example of design within Montgomery County
 - 30 Points: Singular design that exemplifies the highest intent of the Design Guidelines and may be considered a top example of design within the Mid-Atlantic region