




DATE: April 18, 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 April 27, 2022 DAP Meeting

This will be a hybrid meeting, attendees can participate in person or virtually.

## Item #1

### 7126 Wisconsin Avenue

SK&I

Foulger Pratt

Bohler

Parker Rodriguez

- 1<sup>st</sup> Site Plan presentation, focusing on more detailed and developed architectural expression and site design, consistent with the Design Guidelines.
- 7126 Wisconsin Avenue was previously part of the Bethesda Market project to preserve the Farm Women's Cooperative Market and deliver the Sector Planned civic green, which was first heard by the Panel in October of 2018 with a favorable review of the Sketch Plan for two schemes.
- A concept plan for the revised singular design was reviewed by the DAP in July of 2021 ([meeting minutes linked](#)) general takeaways:
  - Consider improving legibility of the tower edges by being consistent with the articulation treatments on each facade, creating an urban doorway to Bethesda and the Farm Women's market across the street
  - Consider increasing setbacks on Wisconsin and Bethesda Avenue by rethinking the setbacks on Miller Ave
  - Not supportive of a drive thru at this location given the urban context and pedestrian oriented circulation around the Site.
- This submittal removes the drive through circulation pattern but keeps garage access off Bethesda Avenue and loading access off Miller Avenue.
- The massing is generally the same from concept with further articulation. Stepbacks were increased along Wisconsin Avenue from 8-10 feet to 10-21 feet. Bethesda Avenue stepbacks primarily remain at 8-10 feet, however the Applicant states that the upper story height variation will result in an average of 19 feet.
- The Applicant seeks 10 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*

## **Item #2 Staff Discussion**

### **The Claiborne**

- Received Sketch and Site Plan approval in 2019, however the project did not meet the deadlines of the Bethesda Overlay Zone, therefore the Site Plan has expired.
- New Applicant wishes to move forward with the same architecture as the original approval, however they will need to restart the Site Plan regulatory process with a new application and is subject to any new regulatory requirements.
- Would the DAP like to review project again?
- [Claiborne DAP submission](#)
- [Claiborne Meeting Notes, October 2018](#)