


DATE: May 19, 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 May 25, 2022 DAP Meeting

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

Item #1

7340 Wisconsin Avenue

SK+I

- 1st Site Plan presentation (with Sketch Plan Amendment), focusing on more detailed and developed architectural expression and site design, consistent with the Design Guidelines.
- 7340 Wisconsin Avenue Sketch Plan 320200010 was previously reviewed by the DAP in September of 2019 and February of 2020. The Sketch Plan proposed a 250' tall building for up Senior Living and ground floor retail.
- The Applicant and Architect has changed from the original approval and now proposes to change the use from Senior living to a market rate multi family with ground floor retail and residential amenities. The change in program will remain within the previously approved maximum height and density (315,500 sf).
- A key component of the previously approved massing was the tower separation in the rear, adjacent to Hampden East which was recently reviewed by the DAP and ultimately received Site Plan approval from the Planning Board. Both Hampden East and the massing for 7340 Wisconsin anticipated an average tower setback of 22.5 feet from the shared property line to achieve the Sector Plan recommended 45' tower separation. The tower separation will be maintained with the revised proposal.
- The previous discussions at the DAP focused on emphases of the northeast corner of the building and verticality of the tower, as well as a splayed western façade.
- The building will provide a 6-story base and upper tower and proposes a slightly different shape and form of the corner tower, similar to a pin-wheel design, to create a dynamic and unique building form enhanced by glazing and balconies.
- This property is located approximately 1000 feet north of 7126 Wisconsin Avenue, which was reviewed by the DAP in April. This Property similarly proposes a corner tower and this design should differentiate itself from the 7126 Wisconsin proposal.
- The Applicant seeks 20 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*
- Previous Submission and DAP notes available in link.

Item #2

4405 East West Highway

SK+I

Parker Rodriguez

Perseus TDC

- 1st Sketch Plan presentation, focusing on high-level conformance of building massing and urban design.
- Located on the north side of East West Highway, within the Pearl District, just west of the Bethesda Chevy-Chase High School. Gateway location into downtown Bethesda.
- The Sector Plan recommends a 100' maximum height along East West Highway with decreased height towards the rear (50').
- The Applicant proposes an L-shaped massing with a stepdown towards the rear. The building will allow for multifamily development and ground floor retail along the western portion of East-West Highway.
- The recommended build to line (curb to building face) per the Sector Plan is 25-30 feet and the Applicant proposes 40 feet. The greater setback will allow a shared use path and other streetscape enhancements to achieve the canopy corridor.
- East-West Highway is considered an Urban Boulevard and recommends a base of 3-6 stories and a stepback of 10-15 feet. The Applicant states there will be a stepback of 12' at the 5th floor and 12' at the 7th floor on the north side of the building. The Applicant proposes to reduce the bulk through a variety of methods including unique geometry, varying tower heights, modulation and articulation of the facades, and limiting apparent face.
- The Sector Plan recommends an open space in this general area at the rear of the properties facing East West Highway near Montgomery Avenue, however it was determined that this Site is not required to provide that as part of this development.
- The Applicant is requesting 20 points for exceptional design, however points are not approved at the time of Sketch Plan.