


DATE: May 14, 2024

TO: Bethesda Downton Plan Design Advisory Panel (DAP)

FROM: Grace Bogdan, Planner III, Downcounty Planning 
Stephanie Dickel, Regulatory Supervisor, Downcounty Planning
Atul Sharma, Assistant to the Deputy Director, Director's Office
Paul Mortensen, Senior Urban Designer, Director's Office

RE: Staff comments for the May 22, 2024 DAP Meeting

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

Item #1 Lot #44/4702 West Virginia Avenue

Torti Gallas Architects

Parker Rodriguez

- This is the 2nd presentation before the DAP for the Speed to Market Project, which combines the Sketch Plan and Site Plan review. Site Plan review focuses on more detailed and developed architectural expression and site design, consistent with the Design Guidelines and determination of design excellence points.
- The DAP reviewed the first submission at their March meeting and found the major changes from concept review to be an improvement. The DAP requested the Applicant to return with additional detail regarding the landscaping, building materials, and refinements discussed in the meeting notes.
- The revised elevations include details regarding architectural materials for all frontages, and the eastern elevation fronting the Eastern Greenway has been revised to include two 'belvederes' as discussed in the previous meeting. There have been minor refinements to the architectural elevations throughout, for instance on West Virginia Avenue frontage the Applicant has emphasized townhouse lobby entrance and introduced additional inset balconies on the units above on all elevations.
- With this submission, the Applicant has provided landscape planting plan for both the area of the Site to be dedicated to the Eastern Greenway as well as the frontage along West Virginia Avenue. As previously discussed, the Eastern Greenway design and landscaping will be approved by Parks staff based on their framework for the Greenway and other Parks standards.
- The Applicant is requesting 20 points for exceptional design.

Design Excellence Guide:

- *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*