




DATE: May 21, 2025

TO: Bethesda Downton Plan Design Advisory Panel (DAP)

FROM: Grace Bogdan, Planner IV, Downcounty Planning   
Atul Sharma, Assistant to the Deputy Director  
Paul Mortensen, Senior Urban Designer, Directors Office

RE: Staff comments for the May 28, 2025 DAP Meeting

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

### Item #1

#### 7025 Strathmore Street

Gelman Properties & Kossow Management Corporation, Developer  
Architects Collaborative

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Site Plan presentation, focusing 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 Site Plan in February of 2025 and asked the Applicant to return with the following:
  1. Update of the ground floor layout showing the sidewalk material up to the building at the corner and removal of plantings.
  2. Additional exterior information on materials with detail of a typical bay with the main material options being considered, options A and B.
  3. An updated landscape plan showing plantings, streets trees and a partial street section showing the relationship between the base of the building, stormwater facilities (Including fence), street trees and the sidewalk.
- The Applicant's resubmission provides two options for materials, EIFS (pages A-6 and A-7) or cementitious panels (pages A-8 and A-9), with renderings and a typical wall section. Side by side comparisons for the previous submission and the two alternative materials are shown on A-10. Staff has requested the Applicant bring samples to the meeting of these material options.
- The updated material options result in a reduction of detail at the top corner of the building at the Strathmore Street and Woodmont Avenue. Additionally, the resubmission renderings show new rooftop structures that increase height towards Strathmore Street and will require further review.

- The updated drawings also replace the previous landscaping with hardscape at the building entrance and provide the sections showing the relationship of the sidewalk and the proposed bioretention planters along Strathmore Street.
- The Applicant has also shown changes to the right-of-way for Strathmore Street, these improvements will need to be finalized with MCDOT and MCDPS during the Site Plan application review.
- The Applicant is requesting 20 points for design excellence.

**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*