

Minutes
Baltimore County Design Review Panel
January 9, 2008

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Minutes of the December 12, 2007 Meeting

Minutes
Baltimore County **Design Review Panel**
January 9, 2008

Call to order

Chairman, Geoffrey Glazer, called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Baltimore County **Design Review Panel** to order at 6:10 p.m. The following panel members were:

Present

Mr. Geoffrey Glazer
Mr. Donald Kann
Ms. Magda Westerhout
Mr. Christopher Parts
Mr. Scott Rykiel
Mr. Dean Hoover
Mr. Francis Anderson (Resident Member – RRLR)

Not Present

Ms. Betsy Boykin
Mr. Thomas Repsher
Mr. Derrick Burnett

County staff present included:

Pat Keller, Director, Lynn Lanham, Jenifer German, Krystle Patchak

Minutes of the January 9, 2008 meeting

Ms. Westerhout moved the acceptance of the draft minutes and the motion was seconded by Mr. Parts and passed by acclamation at 6:15 p.m.

The approved minutes are filed as Appendix B.

ITEM 1

PROJECT NAME: 1210 Berwick Avenue

DRP PROJECT #: 485

PROJECT TYPE: Residential, Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The applicant, Kevin Michels of West Wind LLC, is proposing a single family, 3100 square foot single family home with a connected two car garage, deck, and finished basement.

Stuart Ortel of Stone Hill Designs presented the proposal to the panel. The site is comprised of a little under .5 acres, with an asphalt driveway access off of Berwick Avenue. The materials for the project include a primarily brick exterior along with divided Pella windows and hardi-plank, white siding. Workable black shutters are proposed for the front elevation of the home. There is also a privacy fence proposed facing 1214 Berwick Avenue.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Mr. Glazer questioned the height of the home. Mr. Michels explained that the highest peak sits at 41ft. Mr. Glazer also commented on the proportions of the home and how they fit within the other homes in the neighborhood.

Mr. Parts questioned the location of the deck on the site plan. Mr. Michels noted that this element was not shown on the site plan. He stated that the deck would project approximately 13-14ft. into the rear yard.

Mr. Kann questioned the location of sidewalks and their location on the site plan. He was also concerned with grading issues facing the adjacent property, 1214 Berwick Avenue. He feels that it needs to be softened.

Mr. Anderson, resident member for the Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland area, questioned the involvement of the applicant with adjacent property owners. He also questioned the use of a privacy fence instead of landscaping. Mr. Anderson stressed the importance of working with the adjacent neighbors. He also commented on the well laid out site.

Mr. Hoover suggested moving the home closer to the front of the lot, approximately 10ft, to minimize impacts to the adjacent neighbor. He feels that this will also allow for more privacy in the rear yard.

SPEAKERS COMMENTS:

Felicia Scrivener, of 1214 Berwick Avenue, stressed her concerns to the panel in regards to runoff due to grading on the property. She stated that the area is very prone to runoff problems. Mrs. Scrivener was also concerned with health issues due to the fact that the proposed garage sits very close to the kitchen on her property. Mr. Glazer stated that the Planning Office can offer assistance in explaining the grading on the site, if needed.

Liza Ebeling, of 1217 Boyce Avenue, which is located directly behind the proposed home, is concerned with screening. She explained that she would like to see evergreens along the rear of the property to screen due to the fact that the property sits lower than her property and privacy is

a concern. Runoff was also a concern of Ms. Ebeling. Ms. Westerhout explained that the proposed landscaping along the area of concern calls for evergreen.

Mr. Anderson noted to the panel that there was written correspondence received from the community in regards to the project.

DISPOSITION:

A motion was made by Mr. Anderson to have the project revised and resubmitted at a later date to address the issues discussed by the panel including:

1. Revise site plan – show sidewalks, drive-lanes, deck
2. Revise Landscape plan – Show caliper sizes of trees
3. Meet with community to gain feedback on proposal and address concerns

The motion was seconded by Mr. Kann. Opposed were Mr. Rykiel and Mr. Hoover. The motion passed at 6:40 p.m.

ITEM 2

PROJECT NAME: 100 Estes Road (Addition)

DRP PROJECT #: 489

PROJECT TYPE: Residential, Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Dusky Holman, of Gildea & Schmidt, explained the overall proposal to the panel. The proposal calls for the renovation and addition to the existing structure located at 100 Estes Road. The existing structure is dilapidated in nature and the applicant intends to removal all interior sheetrock and insulation in order to inspect the structural integrity of the structure and update the HVAC, electrical, and plumbing systems.

Ms. Sara Schweitzer, architect for the project, presented the site proposal to the panel. The existing structure is constructed of primarily stucco along with siding and some exposed stone. The existing garage is accessed from Buchanan Road and is adjacent to an existing retaining wall that runs along the drive-lane.

The proposal calls for minimal grading on the site. The applicant intends to raise the roof on the south elevation along with the porch and replacing it with a smaller scale porch. A new garage will also be added next to the existing. Materials for the project include hardi-plank siding on the exterior along with cedar shingles, fieldstone, bluestone, and stucco. The existing siding and shutters will be repainted.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Mr. Anderson, resident member for Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland, commented on the existing landscaping that will be removed and questioned the proposed landscaping. Mr. Holman explained that they are planning to meet with adjacent neighbors this weekend to discuss landscaping issues. Mr. Anderson was also concerned with the grading issues on the driveway. He was concerned with drainage problems at the garage doors. Ms. Schweitzer explained that trench drains will be used at the base of the drive along with underground leaders.

Mr. Kann commented on the quality of the whole project and he voiced his concerns in regards to the proportions on the front elevation, specifically the front door and the arched window.

Ms. Westerhout agreed with the previous comments and also commented on landscaping being used in the rear. The driveway width was also a concern. She suggested possibly moving the two garage doors closer together. Ms. Schweitzer stated that the door placement and driveway width was done as planned to allow cars to access and exit with ease.

Mr. Glazer commented on the runoff concerns from the community and he stated that the new structure will help with some of the existing runoff problems. He stated that the Planning Office can assist in reducing impacts.

Mr. Hoover questioned the availability of public water and sewer on the site as well as the disturbed area. Mr. Holman stated that the site is zoned D.R. 2 and it runs on a septic system with public water. He also stated that they intend to take care of runoff problems on the site.

SPEAKERS COMMENTS:

Stephen Allen, of 7 Buchanan Road, owns a home located directly across the street from the proposed addition. Mr. Allen was concerned with storm water management, which he stated is a major problem in the community. He was also concerned with the width of the paved driveway.

Vanessa Ford, of 20 Buchanan Road, agreed with the previous comments made with Mr. Allen. She was concerned with the fact that her home sits very low in relation to the proposed addition and she is concerned with runoff problems. Ms. Ford also stated to the applicant that she would like to be included with the upcoming meetings involving the community.

DISPOSITION:

A motion was made by Mr. Parts to have the project revised and resubmitted at a later date to address the issues discussed by the panel including:

1. Revise driveway width
2. Revise elevations – (Proportions of front door, arched windows)
3. Landscape plan – Show plans for proposed landscaping
4. Meet with community to gain feedback on proposal and address concerns

The motion was seconded by Mr. Kann. Opposed was Ms. Westerhout. The motion passed at 7:15 p.m.

ITEM 3

PROJECT NAME: Commerce Bank

DRP PROJECT #: 490

PROJECT TYPE: Commercial, Towson

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Rob Worley, the Maryland Marketing Manager for Commerce Bank, along with Eric McWilliams of Bohler Engineering, explained the overall proposal to the panel. The proposal calls for a 3,327 s.f. single-story, branch bank along with a two-bay drive thru banking facility located at the back of the building. The site is zoned BR and is .8 acres. There will be two access points to the site with one at Carver School Road and the other off of York Road.

Currently the site is developed with a used car dealership and a car wash. The drainage will remain the same on the site, with impervious surface being reduced by 20%. The applicant will also keep the existing Towson Streetscape elements along the sidewalk at the front of the site. In regards to the landscaping the applicant is proposing a variety of crepe myrtle trees along the site along with a juniper hedge to buffer the parking from York Road. At the rear of the site, white pines will be used to serve as a buffer.

Douglas Cohen, architect for the project from Burgman Associates, presented the elevations to the panel. He explained that the structure is very open and unique with the use of spandrel glass and brick masonry. The building remains fully lit 24 hours a day with no visible light fixtures. He explained that Commerce is currently working on pedestrian access plans as well as signage details.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Mr. Parts questioned the parking requirements for the site. David Karceski, of Venable LLP, explained to the panel that there are 3.3 spaces per 1,000 s.f. required but the applicant is proposing 34 spaces due to the high volume of customers to Commerce.

Mr. Glazer questioned the brick color to be used on the project and its relation to the Carver School, located directly behind the site. He feels that this project serves as a gateway into the school. Mr. Glazer suggested using a joint monument sign with Carver School.

Mr. Hoover commented on the grading shown at Carver Road. The applicant stated that the applicant is planning on adding another lane on Carver Road and will meet with the School Board to discuss the issue on January 22, 2008. Mr. Hoover also suggested to Mr. Keller, Director of the Baltimore County Planning Office, that a landscaping plan be completed for the overall areas to give new projects more of a streetscape feel along York Road.

Mr. Rykiel stated that he would like to see more street trees used down Carver Road. He also suggested using a dark green hedge instead of the proposed juniper, which will appear gold in color. Mr. Rykiel also stressed the importance of pedestrian connectivity.

Mr. Parts also suggested moving the building closer to York Road and removing the parking along the front of the site. The applicant explained that they would like to keep adequate parking on the site. Mr. Parts suggested reviewing the Fidelity Investments building at the traffic circle.

Mr. Karceski, of Venable LLP, explained to the panel that this property is not within Towson's core.

Ms. Westerhout agreed with Mr. Part's comments and questioned trash on the site. The applicant explained that all trash is removed nightly from the site so no dumpsters are needed. Ms. Westerhout also commented on using the corner of the intersection. The architect, Mr. Cohen explained that the applicant is considering using the corner of the site at the intersection for open space.

SPEAKERS COMMENTS:

Larry Schmidt, of the Greater Towson Committee (GTC), stated that the GTC is in support of the project. He also stated his concerns with pedestrian safety both in the front and rear of the building if the building is moved forward on the site.

Michael McCommas, owner of the adjacent Carpet Land property, stated his concerns with additional traffic on York Road as well as visibility issues due to the pylon signs.

DISPOSITION:

A motion was made by Mr. Parts to have the project revised and resubmitted at a later date to address the issues discussed by the panel including:

1. Revise site plan – consider moving building closer to York Road
2. Provide pedestrian access points
3. Revise landscaping
4. Provide signage plans – consider working with Carver school.

Mr. Glazer explained to the panel members his concerns about moving the building closer to the road, due to the small mass of the building. Mr. Hoover suggested cutting down the width of the drive lanes.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Westerhout. Opposed were Mr. Hoover and Mr. Glazer. The motion passed at 8:10 p.m.

The review of this project was chaired by Mr. Kann due to a conflict with Mr. Glazer.

*** NOTE: Subsequent to the meeting Pat Keller talked to Bob Haines, Deputy Superintendent of the Schools. It was noted that the Board of Education does not hold this project as a priority and it was suggested that Commerce Bank should provide an alternate plan without the access onto Carver School Road. In addition the following issues should be addressed:**

- 1. Provide a 6 foot sidewalk along access drive.**
- 2. Provide pedestrian lighting (Towson, York Road Streetscape light fixture) along access drive.**
- 3. Remove existing cobra head light pole (it is currently shown in the middle of the sidewalk).**
- 4. Provide a more substantial monument sign for Carver School closer to York Road.**
- 5. Provide larger street trees along access drive to York Road.**

ITEM 4

PROJECT NAME: SunTrust Bank (Second Review)

DRP PROJECT #: 488

PROJECT TYPE: Commercial, Towson

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The SunTrust Bank Corporation is proposing a bank at the corner of Washington Avenue and York Road, in Towson, Md. The proposal calls for a one story branch bank of approximately 3,700 square foot in size with drive-thru lanes, on a 1.74 acre parcel of land, which is zoned BMCT.

This project was previously presented to the panel at the December 12, 2007 meeting. At that time the panel asked the applicant to revise the plans and building elevations to address the overall site layout and site circulation.

Adam Morman, of Daft McCune and Walker along with Geoff Kimmel of Ward Hall Associates, presented the changes to the proposal to the panel. The building will now sit several feet above grade with approximately 1-1.5 ft. above the existing road. A 3ft. EIFS banding fascia was placed along the top of the building to give it more height along with additional glass at the entrance. Gable end roofing was also placed on the sited of the building. The façade was also raised along with the overall massing, by 5-6 ft. There was also a semi-circular trellis element used to hide the drive-thru lanes. The applicant feels that this could be used as a potential unifying element along York Road.

The site circulation was revised to minimize vehicular circulation. The applicant also explained the idea presented by the Planning Office, which suggested sharing access to the site off of York Road with the property at 619 York Road. The applicant spoke with SHA and the idea was not supported. The parking on the site was also reduced to accommodate 11 spaces, including 2 handicapped spaces.

The building placement was also revised and the building was moved closer to the corner, which gives room for further development on the site in the future. There will also still be room at the corner for a unique community element or monument.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Mr. Glazer commented on the building massing. He feels that while site planning issues have been improved, the building does not give the feel of a 2-story building. He commented on moving the building and addressing the prominent corner of the property. Mr. Kimmel explained that they are working with a prototype building and do not want to change the common SunTrust design.

Mr. Parts agreed with Mr. Glazer and he also suggested providing drawings to the panel which show the proposed building in conjunction with its surrounding neighbors.

Mr. Kann commented on the progress of the proposal. He feels that more time needs to be spent on the building and the corner element. Mr. Kann also suggested using a low wall instead of the trellis element.

Mr. Rykiel commented on the arched trellis. He feels that if it was straight, it would work better.

SPEAKERS COMMENTS:

Larry Schmidt, of the GTC, stressed the importance of the property and its future developments. He stated that the GTC is neither for or against the project.

Thomas Repsher, of Daft McCune Walker, expressed his comments on the concept sketches presented by the Planning Office. He asked for the support of the County to work with SHA to achieve the shared access off of York Road into the site. Mr. Repsher also stated that the applicant is trying to have the building open at the end of 2008 and is trying to move through the process and gain approval. Mr. Glazer stated that he would like the applicant along with the help of the Planning Office and interested panel members to work out a solution for this project so that an agreeable point can be reached. A possible work session was suggested.

DISPOSITION:

A motion was made by Mr. Parts to have the applicant participate in a work session to work out the project. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kann and passed by acclamation at 8:45 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:47 p.m.

Code Statement: Section 32 – 4 – 203 (i) (2) of the Baltimore County Code states, *The Panel's recommendation is binding on the Hearing Officer, and on the agencies under subsection (l), (Directors of the Office of Planning, the Department of Permits and Development Management and the Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management), unless the Hearing Officer or agencies find that the Panel's actions constitute an abuse of its discretion or are unsupported by the documentation and evidence presented.*

Approved as of March 12, 2008