

Minutes
Baltimore County **Design Review Panel**
November 9, 2009

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Call to order

Chair, William Monk, called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Baltimore County Design Review Panel to order at 6:04 p.m. The following panel members were:

Present

Mr. William Monk
Mr. Thomas Repsher
Mr. Donald Kann
Ms. Magda Westerhout

Not Present

Ms. Betsy Boykin
Mr. Derrick Burnett
Mr. Christopher Parts
Mr. John DiMenna
Mr. Scott Rykiel

County staff present included:

Lynn Lanham, Jenifer Nugent, Krystle Patchak, Diana Itter

Minutes of the July 8, 2009 meeting

Mr. Monk moved the acceptance of the draft minutes as written and the motion was seconded by Mr. Repsher and passed by acclamation at 6:05 p.m.

The approved minutes are filed as Appendix B.

ITEM 1

PROJECT NAME: 125 Slade Avenue

DRP PROJECT #: 510

PROJECT TYPE: Commercial, Pikesville

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Judy Floam, of Colbert Matz Rosenfelt, Inc. presented the project to the panel. Architect, Hoa Tran, presented the architectural details. The existing property is a former two-story residence that had been converted for office use, most recently for a dental office. At the present time, the building is vacant. The property is located on Slade Avenue in Pikesville, with frontage on both Slade Avenue and Milford Mill Road. The property is .30 acres and is zoned OR-1. It is located within the Pikesville Commercial Revitalization Area, and mapped as the Urban Convenience Area.

The current owner is proposing to construct a one-story addition of approximately 1100 square feet, to be used for general offices, specifically an insurance agency. The existing parking on the site is adequate for the proposed expansion. Variances will be required for building and parking setbacks.

The façade of front entrance is faced with brick, with the remaining facade covered in vinyl siding. The addition will be constructed of HardiePlank siding; wood-grain vinyl shutters, fiberglass trim, and shingled roofing. Faux slate shingles are proposed for the shingle roofing. All materials will be of a color to match the materials of the existing building.

There are currently three large deciduous trees on the site, one of which is to be removed. Evergreen trees exist at the rear of the building, which are to remain. Foundation hedge planting and additional tree plantings are also proposed.

Diana Itter, of the Office of Planning, stated to the panel that a letter of support was submitted from the Pikesville Chamber of Commerce regarding the project. Ms. Itter also stated that variances are requested and there is no hearing date as of yet. She also commented on the 3 signs which are currently on the site. The OR1 zone only allows 2 enterprise signs, one for each road frontage. The third sign appears to be in violation of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations. Reducing sign clutter is in keeping with the Pikesville Revitalization Plan Update and Design Guidelines.

A staff report was prepared for the project by the Office of Planning and is filed as Appendix C.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Mr. Repsher questioned the use of foundation plantings around all sides of the building. The plantings were shown on some drawings but not the actual landscape plan. The applicant stated that foundation plantings on all sides was their intent. Mr. Repsher also commented on the buffer between the neighboring property. Currently there is a wooden curb. Mr. Repsher suggested a possible hedge planting or new fence structure to serve as a buffer and make the property stand out. He also commented on the safety of the access off of Milford Mill Road, since the site sits below grade of heavily trafficked Milford Mill Road. Mr. Repsher suggested possibly closing off the entrance and just using the Slade Avenue entrance as the main entrance. The owner of the

property, Thuylan Nguyen of Mindful LLC, stated that Milford Mill has the most traffic and will give them the most exposure.

Mr. Kann questioned the type of new windows to be installed on the addition. The architect stated that they are planning to use the same double hung windows and possibly the same wood material. Mr. Kann stressed the importance of the new windows matching the height and width of the existing as well as the shutters. He also commented on the HardiePlank siding material. He felt that the material was good quality but it needs to match up more to the existing, with regards to the texture and design as well as the lapping. Mr. Kann also discussed the rear stairwell, which is existing. He suggested adding more detail to it since it is visible from Milford Mill.

Mr. Westerhout also commented on the rear stairwell. The plans that were submitted to the panel show two different designs of the stairwell and the gable/balcony above it. It was also noted that the window size and proportion on the plans were also different. Ms. Westerhout suggested that the addition be moved to line up more with the existing edges of the building. She also suggested revisiting the Milford Mill side of the building, which is considered the main side, and give it more architectural articulation. It was suggested that the steel doors for the storage area be more decorative. Ms. Westerhout also stated that she is ok with keeping the three existing signs on the site, as long as the new signs are also low signs.

Mr. Monk, chair of the panel, informed those present at the meeting that the panel's comments are binding on the hearing officer.

Mr. Monk commented on the Milford Mill entrance and the comment made by Mr. Repsher. He suggested that the entrance remain open, since Milford Mill will receive the most traffic and exposure for the site. He also suggested relocating the existing sign to the east of the driveway so that it is visible from the road. Mr. Monk commented on the hedges, which need to be removed or trimmed to make the property more visible from the road. Mr. Monk also commented on the addition of a sidewalk out to Slade Avenue from the front of the building, which was recommended in the staff report. He feels that this could be a costly effort but it would enhance the site and allow for more pedestrian circulation. Ms. Floam, engineer for the project, feels that there is not enough pedestrian traffic on Slade Avenue to warrant this. Ms. Westerhout suggested possibly adding a sidewalk to run parallel to the parking lot and out to Slade Avenue. This would only require moving some hedging and would connect to the existing brick sidewalk. Mr. Monk also discussed the issue of a dumpster on the site. The owner of the property stated that no dumpsters will be needed on site. Residential trash cans that will be kept inside will be used for trash disposal.

The panel discussed the signage issue and agreed that sign details needed to be provided, with regards to materials and dimensions. The issue of the brick water table, as recommended in the staff report, was also discussed by the panel and it was determined that a brick water table was not necessary. The panel agreed that whatever is planned for the base needs to be shown in detail for review.

DISPOSITION:

A motion was made by Mr. Monk to have the project approved as submitted with the following conditions:

1. Provide detailed sections of the building and proposed addition at grade level

2. Provide sidewalk/pedestrian access to Slade Avenue adjacent to the travel aisle
3. Provide concrete slab/stone outside of storage area at rear of building
4. Revise the location of the addition to line up with the Slade Avenue side of building (Project out 2' instead of the proposed 3.5')
5. Provide calculations of amenity open space and show on landscape and site plans
6. Revise the parking area – Reduce the size of the island on Slade Avenue side and add more to the Milford Mill side to allow for more queuing space. Also re-stripe the parking lot and show all changes on all plans
7. Revise the landscape plan to show specifications and plant materials for existing and proposed plantings. (Limb up the existing white pines, and assess the condition of all existing trees and shrubs)
8. Provide sign details – The panel supports 3 signs on the site but they must be compatible in scale, size and materials with the Pikesville Design Guidelines and the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations
9. Revise elevations – Show the correct window and shutter size and type (dimension existing and proposed), rear detail articulation (doors and stairwell), as well as siding style, lap detailing and trim size
10. Coordinate all plans

The panel is in support of all requested variances as well as the possible modified variance, with regards to setbacks, due to the movement of the addition.

The applicants are to coordinate all revisions with the Planning Office prior to the zoning hearing. All final plans are to be submitted to the Office of Planning for final review and approval.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Westerhout and approved by acclamation at 7:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 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 (1), (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 January 13, 2010