

Minutes
Baltimore County Design Review Panel
February 13, 2013

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Baltimore County **Design Review Panel**
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Call to order

Acting Chair, David Martin, called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Baltimore County **Design Review Panel** to order at 6:08 p.m. The following panel members were:

Present

Mr. Ed Hord
Ms. Melanie Moser
Ms. Shannon Comer Dodge

Not Present

Mr. William Monk
Mr. Mitch Kellman
Mr. Richard Jones
Mr. John DiMenna
Ms. Julie Kirsch

County staff present included:
Lynn Lanham, Jenifer Nugent, Krystle Patchak

Minutes of the December 12, 2012 Meeting

Ms. Moser moved the acceptance of the December 12, 2012 draft minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Ms. Comer Dodge and passed by acclamation at 6:10 p.m.

The approved minutes are filed as Appendix B.

ITEM 1**PROJECT NAME:** 908 & 910 Frederick Road**DRP PROJECT #:** 538**PROJECT TYPE:** Commercial, Catonsville**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

Mr. Charlie Marek, of Smith Gildea & Schmidt, introduced the project team to the panel which included Jeff Jacobson of Solstice Development, Shawn Davis of Morris & Ritchie Associates, Inc. and Matt Herbert of Design Collective. Mr. Davis outlined the site details. The proposed project is located in the Catonsville Design Review Panel area at 908 & 910 Frederick Road. The proposed development includes the construction of a 31,508 SF, 3-story medical office building with a basement. The applicant also proposes to restripe the existing parking lot on the site. There is an existing 1-story office building with a partial basement on the site, which is to be razed. The proposed building will be constructed entirely within the existing building's footprint.

The applicant proposes a parking lot expansion, which will include the addition of 22 new parking spaces. The proposed building and a portion of the parking lot will be located on 908 & 910 Frederick Road, which the developer is in the process of purchasing. The remainder of the parking lot expansion is located on land owned by the Catonsville United Methodist Church. The developer will enter into a shared parking agreement with the Church in order to construct the parking spaces and to allow common use of the parking lot.

The Department of Planning prepared a staff report for the project which is filed as Appendix C. The staff report highlighted the need for additional landscaping on the site, as well as a need for lighting in the parking area and a coordination of plans to accurately show pedestrian circulation on the site. The applicants revised some of the plans, due to the staff's comments and presented the changes to the Panel. Proposed parking was reworked to allow the open space area near the church to remain and to allow a new grass area along the front parking area. This will help to increase the green space on the site and reduce impervious. One light pole is also proposed at the interior corner of the parking area to light up the rear parking area. The applicant stated that landscaping the painted parking islands would require them to construct curbs in the parking area, which would only leave a small landscape area that will not be very sufficient for trees and would impede drainage.

Matt Herbert of Design Collective presented the architecture to the Panel. Due to budget constraints a few changes were made to the building. Along the street frontage, the planter wall will be constructed of stone and the stone element along the front will be used as a watertable, with the main façade being primarily brick. The floor to floor height of the building was also reduced. There will be entrances at the front and rear of the building, with an ADA ramp at the front. The building was designed to step back at the 3rd level to maintain the street wall and reflect building materials and massing of nearby structures.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no members of the public in attendance to speak on behalf of the project.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Mr. Hord commented on the changes to the front of the building, he liked the stone watertable element. He suggested adding larger windows to the front of the building, to create more of a

street presence and possibly eliminating the planter element. Mr. Davis noted that the planter was used to hide the ramp from street view. Mr. Hord also liked the way the building was stepped back, not to overpower the street. He suggested possibly adding some articulation to the West façade, which will be prominent when coming up the street.

Ms. Dodge also commented that she liked the changes to the front of the building. She also suggested adding more/larger windows to the front of the building and suggested using glazing to still keep the privacy element. Ms. Dodge liked the full composition of the building and thinks it will be a good addition to the street. It was also noted that the Catonsville Guidelines were not favorable of the metal material being used on the rear. Mr. Herbert stated that this material may also be changed due to budget constraints and a more natural cementitious material will be used.

Ms. Moser also stated that she liked the building as a whole. She had a question about the signage on the site, and it was noted that one sign panel is proposed at the corner of the building. She had many concerns with the landscaping or lack thereof on the site. It was suggested that more trees be added to the site to create a sustainable parking lot. Ms. Moser suggested rearranging the parking islands to get more trees throughout the lots and adding more plants to the open space area. Mr. Davis stated that there are issues with electrical lines, but they are willing to investigate the landscaping further. The location of the ADA parking areas was also an issue. Mr. Davis stated that all ADA spaces could be moved to the rear entry, which would be a safer location. Ms. Moser countered that spaces should be available near the front entry.

Mr. Martin questioned the applicants on the zoning relief that would be needed for the project. Multiple variances will be required for the property including approval of commercial parking in a residential zone (BCZR Sec. 409.8.B, approval of shared parking adjustment between a church and an office (BCZR Sec. 409.6.A.3), and approval of multiple modifications to the landscape design and screening requirements (BCZR Sec. 409.8.A.1). In addition, the applicant may also seek relief from Residential Transition Zone setbacks. To date, the extent of that relief has not been determined. The applicant is also seeking a limited exemption from the development review and approval process as outlined in Section 32-4-106(a)(1)(ii).

DISPOSITION:

Mr. Hord made a motion to approve the project with the following conditions:

1. Revise architectural elevations – add more or larger windows along the street frontage, possibly revise the planter detail
2. Revise landscape plan – provide more trees in parking lot, additional plantings on site
3. Locate sidewalk areas on all plans and note material to be used
4. Clarify building materials on all elevations

All revised plans are to be submitted to the Department of Planning for review and final approval from the Staff and Panel Members in attendance. The motion was seconded by Ms. Moser and approved by acclamation at 7:10 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 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 Department of Planning, the Department of Permits, Approvals and Inspections and the Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability), 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 3/13/13