

Minutes
Baltimore County Design Review Panel
May 12, 2021
Approved

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Call to order and announcements

Review of today's agenda

Minutes of the March 10, 2021 meeting

Items for initial or continued discussion

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Adjournment of the Board meeting

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Minutes – March 10, 2021 meeting, as approved

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Call to order

Design Review Panel (DRP) Chair, Mr. John DiMenna, called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Baltimore County DRP to order at 6:02 p.m. The following panel members were:

Present

Mr. John DiMenna
Ms. Cecily Bedwell
Ms. Hyon Rah
Ms. Julie Soss
Ms. Kelly Ennis
Mr. Matt Renauld
Mr. Raj Sharma

Not Present

Mr. Donald Kann
Mr. Joseph Ucciferro

County staff present: Steve Lafferty, Jenifer Nugent, Marta Kulchytska, Laurie Hay, Te-Sheng Huang and Brett M. Williams.

Minutes of the March 10, 2021 Meeting

Mr. Matt Renauld moved the acceptance of the March 10, 2021 draft minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kelly Ennis and passed by acclamation at 6:08 p.m.

The approved minutes are filed as Appendix B.

ITEM 1

PROJECT NAME: 609 Baltimore Avenue, Prologue Outreach Center

DRP PROJECT #: 636

PROJECT TYPE: Towson DT Commercial Review

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The presentation was given by Mr. Brandon Rowe, Associate of Bohler Engineering, Mr. Eric McWilliams, Associate of Bohler Engineering, Mr. Chris Holler, Principal at BCT Design Group, Ms. Skyler Roberts, Architectural Designer at BCT Design Group, Ms. Nikki Connelly, Homeless Outreach Director of Prologue Inc., and Ms. Sindy Rommel, President and CEO of Prologue Inc.

Prologue, a nonprofit community health organization, has provided outreach and case management services to homeless citizens of Baltimore County for over thirty years. It currently operates an outreach site at 609 Baltimore Avenue in Towson (hereinafter referred to as “609”) that is open three days a week for homeless people to seek access to basic services such as a phone, research over the internet and a location to send and receive mail. Prologue initially leased this site from Trinity Church in 1997 until Trinity decided to sell the property and offered Prologue the opportunity to purchase in order to continue its activities of serving homeless citizens of Baltimore County. In December 2017, Prologue was awarded a forgivable loan through the Department of Planning for the purchase of the property. Activities at this site are supported by discretionary funding from PATH and HUD grants.

The 609 Outreach Site will be replaced with a new center that will continue to welcome and serve those in need. The pandemic has reinforced the need for a new facility with ample room for social distancing and a space that will allow an ease of traffic flow as people may enter through the Joppa Road or Courtyard doors and exit through the Baltimore Avenue doors. The building will be constructed using a combination of wood, aluminum, and cement, and the design includes casement windows and a painted metal accent door. There will be an outdoor waiting area that people will be able to use while waiting to enter the building. A wooden fence will surround the outdoor waiting area. Native trees will be included in the landscaping around the complex.

SPEAKERS:

There were no members of the community signed up to speak.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Ms. Kulchyska provided an overview of the staff report and presented the staff’s proposed conditions to the panel.

Mr. DiMenna opened the floor to discussion amongst the panel members.

Ms. Ennis indicated that the Department of Planning’s staff report addressed all of her questions.

Ms. Rah stated that the plan proposal was aesthetically pleasing. She questioned if the project met LEED standards and stated that a green roof should be considered. She also asked how sustainability will be addressed. Ms. Rah questioned if solar panels have been considered. She asked the applicant to indicate how the usage and saving of water will be addressed and if any materials from the existing building to be razed will be reused in the construction of the proposed building.

Mr. Chris Holler indicated that LEED standards are not required but will be considered in the proposal. He stated that they would only reuse the foundation walls of the existing building to be razed in the construction of the proposed facility. Mr. Holler noted that the existing utilities will be reused and water, gas, and electric services will be upgraded.

Mr. Renauld agreed with the recommendations outlined in the Department of Planning's staff report. He expressed concerns with the pedestrian striped area. He indicated that the pedestrian crossing should be removed or improved to provide safer pedestrian circulation. Mr. Renauld stated that the lighting near the entrance to the courtyard should be better illuminated. He inquired about the surface material for the courtyard.

Mr. Holler indicated that the corner at Baltimore Avenue was not well lit but that efforts to improve lighting on the site are being made. He stated that at the moment, most of the illumination is being proposed through wall pack building lights. He indicated that the courtyard surface material is scored concrete. Mr. Holler stated that they would explore options of enhancing the pedestrian crosswalk, but they are attempting to minimize the limit of disturbance on the site to avoid addressing stormwater management.

Ms. Soss agreed with the recommendations in the Department of Planning's staff report. She stated that the parking lot layout should be reconfigured to provide a more pedestrian friendly site.

Ms. Bedwell recommended providing some vegetative screening along the street side of the parking area to reduce the visual impacts of pedestrians who walk by. She asked that the applicant indicate the location of the bike racks. Ms. Bedwell stated that the sidewalk should be pulled back from the street and more street trees should be provided.

Mr. Holler stated that providing screening along the street would present a safety hazard and adversely impact crime prevention. He indicated that they would be providing American dogwood planting materials, which are smaller ornamental planting. This would reduce the impact upon BGE utilities.

Mr. Sharma agreed with the Department of Planning's staff report recommendations. He also echoed the statements of Ms. Rah that the site should be as eco-friendly as possible.

Mr. Renauld asked if the applicants had met with the Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability to address any environmental issues and stormwater management.

Mr. Holler indicated that they had a preliminary meeting with the Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability, and they have plans to disturb less than 5,000 square feet, which means they will be exempt from addressing stormwater management.

DISPOSITION:

Mr. Matt Renauld made a motion to approve the plan as presented with the condition to address the Department of Planning's staff report recommendations and that the approval of the resubmittal be

coordinated and reviewed administratively by planning staff. The recommended conditions are as follows:

1. Indicate on the plan how stormwater management will be achieved.
2. Provide details for the dumpster enclosure. The enclosure should match building materials.
3. Clarify the purpose of the hatched area in the parking lot along W. Joppa Road.
4. Provide a screen wall or decorative fence along Joppa Road to screen parking. All surface parking shall meet Class B Standards of the Baltimore County Landscape Manual.
5. Provide bike racks.
6. Clearly indicate on the plan that the provided open space meets the DT requirement (5% of gross acreage of the development).
7. Provide details and dimensions for the sidewalk ~~and tree pits~~ to show that the DT Towson District's streetscape guidelines are met.
8. Provide trash receptacles and label them on the plan.
9. Provide maintenance plan for the fence.
10. Provide an accurate building elevation for the east façade and correct the labeling of materials on page 22.
11. Clarify if any light fixtures are proposed for the building. If so, provide details. All proposed lighting should be labeled on the building elevations.
12. Provide and label street lights and parking lights on the plan. The placement of lighting should provide adequate illumination for safety and convenience for the project's tenants and users. Provide the details for the street lights, per DT Towson light standards.
13. Clarify if the proposed signage has illumination.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Bedwell and approved by acclamation at 7:03 p.m.

ITEM 2

PROJECT NAME: 1610 East Joppa Road, Arby's Restaurant

DRP PROJECT #: 637

PROJECT TYPE: Loch Raven-Baynesville Commercial Review

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The presentation was given by Mr. Stu Darley, Principal at Colbert Matz Rosenfelt, Ms. Carla Ryon, Planner at Colbert Matz Rosenfelt, Mr. Ed Baksh, Director of Construction of the Parikh Network and Mr. Robert Grimaldi, Architect at G 141 Architecture, LLC.

The project proposes redevelopment of the property located at 1610 E. Joppa Road in Towson, MD. The site is approximately 1.5 acres with a Pizza Hut restaurant located on the premises. The Pizza Hut building will be demolished and a new Arby's Restaurant with a drive through will be constructed. The surface parking will be modified to accommodate the new building with a drive through lane. The rear portion of the site will remain unchanged. The proposed materials for the restaurant include brick, EIFS, aluminum storefront windows and doors.

SPEAKERS:

There were no members of the community signed up to speak.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Ms. Kulchytska provided an overview of the staff report and presented the staff's proposed conditions to the panel.

Mr. DiMenna opened up the floor to Panel members for discussion.

Ms. Bedwell expressed concerns with the angled parking and stated that the parking configuration could create dumpster access approach issues. She asked that the applicant indicate outdoor seating and bike rack locations. Ms. Bedwell also inquired if the EFIS paneling was consistent throughout the elevations.

Ms. Jenifer Nugent indicated that there was no paved sidewalk in front of the building and could present a safety hazard for pedestrians accessing and exiting from the restaurant.

Ms. Kelly Ennis deferred to the other panel members to make review comments.

Ms. Rah indicated that she agreed with the recommendations in the Department of Planning's staff report. She expressed concerns with the amount of impervious surfaces and inquired how stormwater management and water runoff will be addressed. She asked if parking requirements were being met and if spaces could be sacrificed to widen the landscape island located at the southeast portion of the site to help enhance the pedestrian circulation and experience.

Mr. Darley indicated that they met with the Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability to address all environmental issues. He stated that they have one additional parking space that could be sacrificed and still allow them to meet parking requirements. He indicated that the additional parking in the rear of the lot is designated for parking of oversized vehicles and is restricted for use by Arby's.

Mr. Renauld stated that the proposal does not achieve the objectives outlined in the Joppa Road Corridors Plan, which promotes a walkable, pedestrian-friendly design. He indicated that there were no site amenities proposed and there are parking deficiencies. Mr. Renauld stated that the applicant should be cautious with the signage location and consider retaining the trees along Joppa Road.

Ms. Soss stated that the proposed ADA parking space location should be relocated for safety reasons. The parking spaces, as proposed, would present potential pedestrian hazards for ADA users when attempting to enter and exit and restaurant.

Mr. Sharma stated that there were deficiencies in the internal site circulation. He questioned if the Joppa Road ingress/egress access point would be limited to right in, right out due to potential safety hazards of a left turn while exiting the site during peak hours. He also expressed concerns about the lack of visibility for motorists and pedestrians presented by the landscaping along the property frontage.

Mr. DiMenna asked how much indoor seating is proposed for the restaurant and how many parking spaces are required. He questioned whether there were any plans to rent five parking spaces from the adjacent property to alleviate on-site parking deficiencies. He indicated that the site design as presented creates potential pedestrian circulation safety hazards, especially due to the lack of sidewalk at the building entrance. Mr. DiMenna suggested that the applicant remove one row of diagonal parking, which

will create more space for outdoor amenities, allow for better motorist and pedestrian circulation, and allow for a sidewalk at the building front entrance.

DISPOSITION:

Ms. Bedwell made a motion that the current submission **NOT** be approved and the applicant resubmits plans for review before the Design Review Panel addressing the following:

1. Remove a row of diagonal parking at the rear of the building, shifting the building to create an entrance area in the front of the building that addresses both the safety issue at the front door and the introduction of outdoor seating.
2. Limit the height of the shrubs along the frontage sidewalk of East Joppa Road to help increase visibility for motorists and pedestrians.
3. Relocate the ADA parking spaces so that users do not have to cross the main entrance to the drive-thru.
4. Widen the landscape island at the ingress/egress access point off Joppa Road to create a better connection and enhance the pedestrian experience.
5. Confirm with the Department of Public Works if the proposed vehicular entry/exit off of E. Joppa Road should be a right turn only for safety and circulation reasons. If so, wayfinding signage should be provided to discourage left turn vehicular entry from E. Joppa Road.
6. Provide a diagram explaining vehicular circulation throughout the site. Consider a better layout for the proposed parking. The angled parking proposed at the rear adjacent to the drive thru does not seem feasible.
7. Clarify if physical separation is proposed between the subject property and the property adjacent to the east.
8. Replace parking facing Joppa Road with an enhanced landscape buffer, outdoor seating, and amenities and utilize the rear parking space for parking.
9. Indicate on the plan how stormwater management will be achieved.
10. Incorporate landscape islands in the proposed parking along the east side of the property.
11. Provide outdoor seating areas.
12. Provide details for a landscaped strip along the east side of the property.
13. Provide details for the existing sidewalk and how it will be improved.
14. Clearly label all proposed types of light fixtures on the building's elevations.
15. Provide lighting along E. Joppa Road and throughout the site. All proposed lighting shall be labeled on the site and landscape plans.
16. Provide a detailed plan for all directional signage.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Rah and approved by a by acclamation at 8:16 p.m.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. DiMenna and was seconded by Ms. Bedwell. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.