

SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

1000 N. Glebe Road Marymount University Ballston Center (SP #64)

SPRC Meeting #2

July 18, 2013

Planning Commissioners in Attendance: Nancy Iacomini, Steve Cole, Brian Harner, Jane Siegel, Erik Gutshall

MEETING AGENDA

This was the second meeting of the major site plan amendment submitted for the site of the Blue Goose building – Marymount at Ballston. The agenda of the meeting was the proposed Building Architecture and time permitting to review and discuss Transportation. To set the stage for the meeting discussion, meeting participants met on-site for a walking tour of the property. A handout for the walking tour (have link or say it's on the site some place or something) provided information to meeting participants regarding existing and proposed conditions, setbacks and surrounding and adjacent development. The SPRC meeting itself proceeded with a de-brief from the walking tour and the topic of Building Architecture which began with a presentation by the applicant before SPRC discussion as summarized below.

SPRC DISCUSSION

Applicant Presentation

- With respect to questions raised about how additional density proposed by the applicant could be achieved, the following were indicated by staff: TDRs, bonus provisions, affordable housing, historic preservation, LEED.
- The applicant stated it was their sense that there was general agreement among the SPRC that the site could handle additional density and the capacity of the site is for more.
- The applicant noted the following in their presentation:
 - Gateway nature of the site.
 - Traffic at Fairfax/Glebe.
 - Buildings, street wall and facades along Glebe and Fairfax Drive were discussed.
- Various density options for buildings from 2.5 FAR to what is being proposed were shown in the context of surrounding buildings.
- Prominent views were presented to include: Fairfax Drive/Wakefield and S. Glebe Road.
- Materials indicated as Terra Cotta panels and 2-story pilasters on office building and Brick on the residential building.

- The committee requested that proposed building materials be presented and examples provided at the next meeting.
- Also shown and discussed:
 - Open staircases on office building show internal activity of MU.
 - Visibility of loading/parking garage from Fairfax Drive.
 - Gateway from I-66.
 - Retail along Fairfax Drive – MU associated.
- The applicant noted the following revisions to the proposal in response to previous comments and discussion:
 - Blue Goose Café proposed using metal panels from existing building provided as a response to issue regarding historic preservation.
 - Improving pedestrian activity and uses along Fairfax and Glebe to include providing for a café space at the office building's southeast corner adjacent to the plaza (previous indicated as flex space) and providing for retail along the site's Glebe Road frontage.
 - Garage entrance to the residential building was relocated from Glebe Road to N. Wakefield adjacent to the proposed loading dock and bike path on Fairfax Drive – can they co-exist?

SPRC Comments/Queries to Applicant Regarding Building Architecture

- Question regarding whether the garages for the two proposed buildings would be connected and whether there would be shared parking.
- Question regarding how the elevator core works – 2nd floor access and parking garage access.
- Comment regarding building height and tapers – show on surrounding buildings including FARs.
- Also explain how getting at proposed density and height. Is height and massing acceptable?
- Community benefit – what is available.
- Question regarding how community benefit is determined.
- Concern expressed regarding the elevation of the residential building along Glebe Road.
- Comment about appreciating the way buildings south of Fairfax Drive on Glebe Road take advantage of the street.
- Comment for less beige brick and more glass and setting the building back from the street.
- Preference expressed for a variety of building materials.
- Comment that building alignments need adjusting – issues with plaza/open space that are east-west were noted. It was further indicated that more successful ones have north-south alignments. Request for a shade analysis of open space and question raised regarding how the space will be used.
- Question regarding any plans for parking on Glebe Road and whether there would be drop-off areas along the street? Expressed that this may not be desirable.

- Comment that there is a need to better understand balcony placement – internal layouts.
- Comment regarding the relationship of the proposed buildings to other buildings with a request for façade elevations north and west.

Wrap Up

Wrap up comments have been organized into categories as follows:

Site Design/Urban Design

- Massing of two buildings and how they come together at the ground floor/plaza level needs to be examined. Tangential corner treatment – awkward placement and uncertain how students will use space. A good example of Washington Circle GWU cited. Question raised whether there is enough density to fill urban plaza.
- Building placement at the Fairfax Drive/Glebe Road corner is not being taking advantage of– not a real urban environment – not place making.
- Generally like Glebe Road retail focus building; However, the setback on Glebe Road is too imposing. Would like building closer to Fairfax Drive and wider sidewalks to match the rest of Fairfax east of Glebe.
- Glebe Road setback and relationship of buildings to one another is a concern.
- Building placement and convex shapes, swoop of Glebe is not being addressed.
- Request for more info on open space/plaza activation relationship of café/retail to plaza

Building Architecture

- Noted that buildings without hats equal building materials and balcony treatment.
- Residential floor plan details on Glebe Road need to be improved.
- Provide more information on building materials and lighting.
- Need to do more in recognition of Blue Goose. Would like to see more use of existing blue panels on bldg.
- Brick color of the residential building is an issue.
- Building needs more of a marquee entrance corner feature, it isn't prominent enough.
- Main entrance to building access – Garage ceiling heights to accommodate vans landscaping and paver materials need to be shown.

Transportation

- Need to understand of pick up and drop offs.
- MU is a commuter school not a campus like setting. Question regarding how density/traffic will work.
- Request for more information on bicycle facilities.

Community Benefits

- Request for Dim Sum menu of community benefit on bonus density and what the community gets in return, how is it applied, and what returns are provided.

NEXT STEPS

An SPRC meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 16, 2013 at 7:00 PM. This meeting will begin with any applicant responses and continue with the discussion on Building Architecture before moving forward to Transportation. Additional information has been requested as follows:

- Applicant to provide building material samples, particularly the terra cotta.
- Applicant to provide views of all sides of both buildings and better view of the changes to the Glebe plaza.
- Staff to Provide copy of the full 4.1 at every meeting and make available on the website
- Staff to Provide FAR for surrounding buildings and explanation of how achieved where bonuses may have been approved for density and/or height.