



SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

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

SPRC Meeting #3

September 30, 2013

Planning Commissioners in Attendance: Nancy Iacomini, Inta Malis, Rosemary Ciotti, Brian Harner, Erik Gutshall

MEETING AGENDA

This was the third meeting of the major site plan amendment submitted for Marymount at Ballston. The agenda of the meeting was the proposed Building Architecture and Transportation. The meeting began with introductions of attendees, and then an overview of the agenda by the SPRC Chair, Nancy Iacomini. Staff then provided a brief update regarding the status of the bonus density request of approximately 110,000 sf of GFA for the academic use in the proposed office building and the proposed mechanism to achieve the density, the provision of open space and other environmental amenities under Zoning Ordinance section 15.6.7.A.1. Commissioner Iacomini then indicated to the civic association representatives that they should consider and review the CIP prior to the next meeting in preparation for the discussion on community benefits of which the open space contribution proposed would be one.

The discussion of the SPRC then proceeded with a presentation by the applicant of revisions to building design and architecture, as well as the proposed open space (landscaped plaza at the corner of Fairfax and Glebe). The applicant incorporated into the discussion a presentation of sample materials that were provided at the meeting for members to review. After discussion on this topic, the applicant then provided a brief presentation on the Transportation elements of the proposal. These elements were further discussed by SPRC and the meeting concluded with a wrap up of comments. Below is a summary reflecting more of the discussion.

SPRC DISCUSSION

Applicant Presentation

- Ralph Kidder, Marymount University, began with a summary of the programming and operations of the University at the Ballston campus. The Ballston location houses the university's Undergraduate and Graduate Business program(s). The primary hours of the campus are Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm with classes on Saturdays, as well.

- The applicant presented revisions to the building's architecture in response to comments heard at previous SPRC meetings.
 - Building Architecture:
 - The overhanging element on the academic office building was added in response to comments regarding the treatment of the top of the building and integrating it into the entire façade.
 - Academic office building penthouse was moved forward with the depth of the overhang reduced.
 - Ground floor corner retail at the Marymount building with the historic preservation provides for 14 foot high ceilings.
 - Residential building was moved back 5 feet and now provides for a 25 foot wide sidewalk on Glebe.
 - Proposing a richer brick color for the residential building.
 - Open Space/Plaza
 - Green space was increased with the berm, and dedicated seating area provided for outdoor seating.
 - Addition of trees.
 - Addition of green strips along the cycle track on Fairfax.
 - It was noted that the interior courtyard will not be restricted but open to the public.

Building Architecture:

- Some concern expressed that the varying patterns/widths of the terrace cotta panels proposed on the academic office building and their offsets is busy/difficult to read visually.
 - The applicant showed precedent images indicating inspiration of this treatment.
- Appreciation expressed that the residential building was pulled back 5 feet on Glebe.
- Generally members liked the treatment of the academic office building, with a question regarding whether the building is to cantilever from Fairfax to Glebe and whether something complimentary could be incorporated into the residential building.
- Questions and comments regarding the blue lighting shown at the penthouse of the academic office building and whether something similar could be considered for the residential building.
- Comments also regarding the relationship between the architecture of the academic office building and the residential building and the applicant's intent in that regard.
 - It was intended that they would relate as cousins but not siblings with some repeating elements between the two buildings.
- Sample of blue spandrel glass provided as banding intended for the academic office building. Clarification was provided regarding where this is proposed to be located on the façade.
- Questions regarding how the mesh vertical element proposed on the corner of the academic office building is affixed.

- Comments and questions about the proposed penthouse on the academic office building with respect to its setback and height. It was noted that it seems to be separate from the rest of the building. The applicant indicated that the use/treatment of the penthouse was intended to give the appearance of additional height for the building.
- Clarification provided regarding the location of the residential building entrance.
- Comment provided that the tops of the two buildings give mixed messages and seem to direct you away from the corner and the center instead of toward it. As designed, makes the gaps between the buildings appear to be a canyon in how they address the corner plaza. Generally interesting elements for the buildings but as composed they give mixed messages regarding their interface with the open space.
- Noted that the south façade of the residential building appears dark and does not have a base.

Additional Comments on Architecture from the Meeting Wrap Up

- In reviewing the base of the academic office building, address from pedestrian perspective. There are blank walls to be addressed.
- Losing verticality and panel patterns and color of the blue goose building is a concern. Consider the Peck Staples building and how historic preservation issues were addressed. Something more can be done than is being proposed.
- Appreciative of the nods currently proposed with respect to the Blue Goose building, but more is needed regarding historic preservation. Need a more creative way to recall the presence of the existing building.
- Community appreciates the residential building being pulled back five feet.
- Proposal is too suburban and not as advanced for Arlington. Lack of excitement for the project. The berm turns its back on the key intersection. A step in the wrong direction.
- Major outstanding concerns with the building design and architecture to include:
 - Lack of articulation of the glass wall on Glebe
 - Penthouse length, height, and prominence on the academic office building
 - Residential needs a setback
 - Questionable whether or not the vertical mesh element added to the office academic building works

Transportation

- The applicant presented the proposed plans for the two-way cycle track and provided an overview of parking/loading and the function of N. Wakefield. Summary provided of the proposed parking ratios for the two buildings.
- Questions and discussion about the location of the shuttle – where you wait, frequency in the routes and distances from the shelter to the bus pick up/drop off location on Wakefield.
- Discussion and questions regarding the sharing of the provision of a shared parking garages for the two buildings – whether there will be one hole dug for the garages, why they cannot be shared. Members generally did not support the proposal to provide the

garages as separate for the buildings indicating that there are examples where shared garages in Arlington have been approved and work. Further that there should be an attempt to make better use of the space and allocation as it relates to parking.

- Marymount maintains that the garages are separate due to operational issues between the two uses of academic and residential. While there will be one hole for both garages they will be separated by demising wall. Also the slabs of the residential garage are offset from the slab of the academic office building garage as a result of the grade change across the site, according to the applicant.
- Discussed that the site will eventually be across the street from the Ballston Metro western entrance with questions regarding the proposed parking ratio for Marymount and whether or not it is certain that the standard used makes sense not just based on the technical calculations but experience and need. Also questions regarding staff opinion regarding the basis for the proposed academic office building parking ratio. Request was made that information regarding the parking ratios for GMU Law School be provided.
- Mode split assumptions for both the residential and academic office buildings were shared with a request for additional information to be provided on this.
- Questions and discussion regarding off-peak parking and whether proposed on Glebe.
- Confusion regarding why the one-block cycle track on Fairfax is proposed and discussion regarding the County's plans for expanding this.

Additional Comment on Transportation from the Meeting Wrap Up:

- Concern regarding ensuring there is no short term parking/delivery, etc in the Cycle Track on Fairfax.

Wrap Up

- What will the benefits be of the increased density to the community? Change in use of benefit space with the Peck Staples site plan building was a bad experience.

NEXT STEPS

The next SPRC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 17, 2013 at 7:00 PM. Proposed topics for discussion include: Open Space, Community Benefits and Construction Issues.

Additional information has been requested as follows:

- Information on parking associated with the GW satellite campus.
- Show the proposed buildings in context to the existing buildings around the block.