

Beauregard Design Advisory Committee (BDAC) – Meeting Summary

July 27, 2020

7:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

Committee Members in Attendance:

Pete Benavage, Chair
Donna Fossum, Vice-Chair
Abed Benzina
Carolyn Griglione
Fatimah Mateen
Bud Jackson

City Staff:

Maya Contreras, Principal Planner, P&Z
Bill Cook, Urban Planner, P&Z

Applicant Team:

Megan Rappolt, Planner, Wire Gill LLP
Ken Wire, Attorney, Wire Gill LLP
Chris Bell, Hekemian & Co.
Matt Renauld, Mahan Rykiel Assoc Inc.
Travis D’Onofrio, Mahan Rykiel Assoc Inc.
Aaron Vinson, Walter L Philips Inc.
Daniel Pietropaoli, Walter L Philips Inc.
Benjamin Briar, NVR Inc.
Chilton MacGregor, NVR Inc.
Jack Chudovan, NVR Inc.

Agenda Items:

1. Call To Order
2. Overview
 - a. Virtual Meeting Statement, Overview and Etiquette
 - b. Roll Call of BDAC Members
 - c. Introductions of Staff and Applicant Team
3. New Business:
 - a. Applicant presentation of Upland Park Phase 1 proposal (DSUP#2019-0017)
 - b. BDAC questions for applicant
 - c. Community questions for the applicant
4. Staff Update on other Projects:
 - a. Church of the Resurrection/The Spire
 - b. Monday Properties
 - c. Newport Village
 - d. Ferdinand T. Day Elementary School
5. Schedule Next Meeting
6. Adjourn

Meeting presentations, materials, and recordings are archived on the BDAC webpage at:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/74981>

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic emergency, the 7:00 p.m. July 27, 2020 meeting of the Beauregard Design Advisory Committee is being held electronically pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3708.2(A)(3), the Continuity of Government ordinance adopted by the City Council on June 20, 2020 or Sections 4-0.00(g) in HB29 and HB30 to undertake essential business. All of the members of the Board, staff, and applicant team are participating from remote locations through a Zoom Meeting. The meeting can be accessed by the public through the Beauregard [Design Advisory Committee](#) website or calling into the meeting. Please see the [BDAC website](#) for links and phone numbers to access the Zoom Meeting. A video recording of the meeting will be available online after the meeting. Public Comment will be received at the meeting during the public comment period or comments can be emailed to staff by emailing william.cook@alexandriava.gov. For reasonable disability accommodation, contact Jackie.Cato@alexandriava.gov or 703.746.3810, Virginia Relay 711.

Welcome and Introductions:

Mr. Benavage called the meeting to order. All currently seated members were present. The virtual meeting statement was read by the chair, and Ms. Contreras gave a brief virtual meeting etiquette overview. As a property owner in the area under discussion, Mr. Benavage recused himself from further discussion and Ms. Fossum assumed chair duties for the remainder of the meeting.

New Business:

Mr. Wire briefly introduced the applicant team and gave a brief overview of the project including phasing. He highlighted differences between the 2013 approved plan and the plan as currently proposed. These include retention of Fairbanks Avenue in its present location, and a shift to townhouses in lieu of multifamily in Phase 1 of the project.

Mr. Chudovan begins an introduction of building architecture, showing precedent images of other NV projects, and noting the operative word for the site context is “transition.” For the Upland Park designs he notes the rear elevations and how the side architectural treatments wrap to the backs of the townhouses per City direction. In response to Mr. Wire, Mr. Chudovan notes that the backs of all the townhouses are inward to the site and not visible from primary rights of way, and reiterates that the Seminary Road transition is important given the nearby single-family homes and shifting contexts towards I-395. He notes the building sides are the same regardless of orientation, and rears have similar strategy. Selected smaller rows of houses are intentionally treated in a more consistent and uniform architectural façade rather than attempting individuality for each unit.

At approximately 7:33 PM Matt Renauld describes the landscape plan, first focusing on Phase 1 of the park space nearest Seminary Road. He notes the connections to open space near Beauregard Street and the possibility of linkages with future Phase 2 park space. Features of the Phase 1 plan include a central promenade through the core, space for playground or other programming to be determined in consultation with the city, and a curbless street on the western side of the park space as an extension of the design. Transition spaces connect to the townhouse blocks.

Mr. Wire gave a brief outline of project timing and approvals, then Ms. Fossum opened the comment and discussion period for the Committee.

Discussion

Mr. Benzina noted his appreciation for the site design, highlighting the building and alley orientation and the softening of the interior “motor court” by landscape islands. In future plans he wants to see how the townhouses and multifamily interact due to differences in scale and how the street is framed. He likes precedent images shown, and the simplified approach to the short-length elevations as presented, indicating a preference for restraint regardless of what the design guidelines might say. The verticality of rear elevations may need some interruption.

Mr. Jackson asks of staff what is being requested by the applicant compared to the requirements of the CDD. Ms. Contreras, referring to Slide 9, notes that a Master Plan Amendment is requested to shift the housing mix from multifamily to more townhouses compared to the Plan, and a Master Plan Amendment and CDD Concept Plan Amendment for the building/block footprints and to retain Fairbanks Avenue at its current alignment. There additionally would be a Transportation Management Plan SUP, the Development Special Use Permit, and any additional modifications or SUP's associated with the DSUP. In response to Jackson's question she confirmed that any requirements for underground parking would be associated with Phase 2.

In response to a question about affordable or workforce housing, Mr. Wire noted that a payment is anticipated, and that a meeting with the Affordable Housing Commission is forthcoming. Ms. Contreras added that general developer contributions associated with the small area plan have an affordable housing component.

Mr. Jackson questions the all-brick side elevations but will retain an open mind. He comments that retail fronting the Landbay D park may be appropriate. In response, Mr. Bell notes that retail is intended in the Phase 2 buildings on Landbays E & F), which would be built to a code standard appropriate for retail, with requisite parking and loading provisions.

Mr. Pietropaoli notes the 16 parking spaces on the private curbless street, and Mr. Vinson adds that 50 on-street parking spaces are on the public streets, plus each townhouse has 2 parking spaces. Slide 14 shows the layout of the on-street spaces.

Mr. Wire clarifies that the alignment of Fairbanks is not changing. Ms. Contreras responds to Mr. Jackson's traffic concerns in the existing condition. The existing retail curb cut on Seminary will eventually change to internal access, access into the park area is right turn only, and the Fairbanks/Seminary intersection is recommended as a 4-way signalized stop. Mr. Bell notes that Wells & Associates is doing the traffic study. Mr. Wire notes that TES and P&Z staff will have comments. He thinks more improvements may be driven by Phase 2 than Phase 1.

Ms. Mateen is glad to hear about the traffic study and asked what impact a light on the opposite side of Seminary, at Heritage Lane might have. Staff notes it could likely be a 4-way stop, Mr. Wire adds that any decision regarding the "ellipse" would lead to further design decisions. Ms. Mateen noted that she appreciates the site plan and open space, thinking it would build a better community and connect surroundings. Mr. Chudovan confirms that the square footage of all houses would be the same and would be fee-simple units. Ms. Mateen voiced concerns with the rooflines and height differential with nearby properties, could there be more angles and pitch to compliment the gable roofs at Seminary Park across the street? Mr. Chudovan clarifies that the roofs are pitched, but low, with 12' deep roof decks, such that the perceived height from the street would be diminished and will transition.

Mr. Wire said future presentations can have a perspective slide shown to scale that shows Seminary Park and better depicts the rooflines and natural topography. Utilities will be undergrounded along the Seminary frontage, and there will be street trees. Pool and amenities

will be described in greater detail in the future for Phase 2, and the parks are planned to have natural grass.

Ms. Griglione notes her appreciation of the site plan, and requests to see a future perspective incorporating the west side of Seminary, and that the applicant work on varying the roof flatness. Mr. Wire explains that the houses on the north side of the project will have their front doors facing the rear yards of houses on Echols Avenue, with a drive lane, street trees, and other landscaping. Existing residents will see the fronts of the new houses, with landscaping. She has concerns regarding how the townhouse ends will look adjacent to the fronts of other units. The applicant will have better views of this condition in the future.

Ms. Fossum, referring to slide 28, finds the ends odd, flat, and too uniform. Referring to the precedent images in slide 18, she expresses a desire for more height variation, color, and less of an “institutional” look. Something friendlier. She questions why the end architecture does not follow the roof pitch.

Mr. Wire states that the facades will change as the grading is developed and more accurately depicted. He confirms the number of units (92), and that condo units are not planned. Ms. Fossum expresses her thinking that the marketplace for condominiums is overlooked. Mr. Wire confirms that guest parking is on-street and not expected to be designated. Her concerns are that the parking will get overused by park users and residents that use garage space for non-vehicle storage, and asks that parking for park users more distant from the housing be considered. Overall she commends the plan and how it has progressed.

Mr. Benzina encourages the applicant to examine the floor plans of the end units, particularly facing Seminary Road, to see if they can be shifted to help the design of the elevations. He also notes that renderings never do justice, so work on more perspective views and integrate grading. This would help with the perception of the roof.

Public Comments

Elliott Waters found the presentation compelling and he plans to review the recording and report to his wife who is a member of the Commission on Aging. Ms. Contreras advised of future meetings and noted that all materials would be on the BDAC website for further review, including materials from the community meeting held by the applicant one month prior.

Lea states that she has been a renter by choice for 46 years and currently lives in Newport Village. She thinks the project is a warehouse look, and prefers individual color schemes and unit identities to give a townhouse look. In response to her questions about elevators and ADA accessibility in Phase 1 and Phase 2, the applicant replied that the unit size and market position of the townhouses doesn't necessitate elevators, the multifamily building will have elevators and ADA accessibility, thus there will be choices within the neighborhood.

Julie Lineberry lives at Goodwin House nearby and agrees with the “warehouse district” characterization made by others, finding this look overtaking all parts of Alexandria. In response to her question, the applicant states the Phase 1 park is about a half-acre, about .85 total for

Phase 1 & 2. A dog run is in the Phase 2 portion. She expresses skepticism of the outdoor patio and rooftop spaces and current residential and development trends in Alexandria.

Randy Rockwitt lives nearby and is concerned about the Seminary road profile and how left turn lanes would work. What is the bus stop provision, is there a pull off going west so that buses can service stops without impeding other traffic? Ms. Contreras replies that these challenges are known and TES is analyzing this further. A lot was predicated on the findings related to the “ellipse” and we will learn more in early 2021.

In response to Ms. Fossum, Mr. Wire says the price range would likely be less than the Craftmark houses on Fillmore. Value is based on market demand, and delivery is likely 3 years out at least.

Ms. Contreras gave updates on surrounding West End projects, and later reminded the group there are 3 vacancies on the Committee. Two positions for professional architects, and one position for a member of the business community who lives in the West End.

September 21 was proposed as the next meeting date. Staff will coordinate by email.

Ms. Griglione stated she thought the Craftmark houses on Fillmore houses were small, and questioned how can these be smaller. Mr. Wire confirmed these are 16ft wide. Next presentation will have floorplans. Ms. Fossum suggested putting this development in context with other projects so the committee can understand them in context.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.