

The Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC)

October 19, 2011
7:00pm to 9:00pm
Room 2000

Committee Members in Attendance:

Maria Wasowski – Chair
Chris Bellanca
Shawn Glerum
Mike Grinnell
Russell Kopp
Jennifer Taylor

Excused Absences:

Quynn Nguyen
Anthony Dale

City Staff:

Maya Contreras, Planner, P&Z
Dirk Geratz, Principal Planner, P&Z
Katie North, Planner, P&Z
Gary Wagner, Principal Planner, P&Z
Gwen Wright, Division Chief, P&Z
Jon Frederick, Office of Housing
Helen McIlvaine, Office of Housing

Applicant Representatives:

Rohit Anand, KTG
John Begert, MRP
Abed Benzina, SK&I
Brian Dayhoff, SK&I
Steven Liam, Bowman Consulting Group
Sarah Mariska, Walsh Colucci Lubeley Emrich & Walsh
Melody Nobleza, KTG
Cathy Puskar, Walsh Colucci Lubeley Emrich & Walsh
Rich Rowland, Woodfield Investments
Fabiola Sansaloni, SK&I

Community:

none

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Approval of PYDAC Meeting Minutes from January 19, 2011
2. Introduction to Landbay G Block F
3. Review of Landbay L Multifamily Building Concept Plan

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. A quorum for the meeting was established.

DISCUSSION

- Brief introductions of staff, PYDAC members, and applicants were made.
- Ms. Wasowski announced her resignation from the Committee. Ms. Wright noted that there is still one other vacancy that needs to be filled. The Committee suggested reaching out to the people who attended the PYDAC 101 meeting last winter to see if there was any interest in joining the Committee. The question also came up about the current members' term limits and when they were up. Staff agreed to look into this and get back to the Committee with more information.
- On a motion made by Mr. Kopp and seconded by Mr. Grinnell, the PYDAC Meeting Minutes from the January 19, 2011 meeting were approved unanimously.
- The Landbay G, Building F Multifamily Building was introduced to the group by Ms. Puskar representing MRP Realty, as an amendment to a previously approved DSUP from 2008 which had anticipated a two-story commercial building on the site. As part of the November 2010 amendments to CDD #10, Landbay G was permitted to have 120,000 square feet of office use convert to up to 120 residential units. Discussion about this proposed building focused on the following issues:
 - The building is located in Block F with 111 residential units, and shares two levels of underground parking with the adjacent building on Block C. The shared parking analysis is for 1.3 spaces per residential unit.
 - Mr. Dayhoff, the architect for the project, reviewed the architecture for the building, which is generally contemporary and intended to correspond with, but not imitate, the previously approved architecture on Block C.
 - A mezzanine level will be integrated to add an architectural element highlighting the lobby entry on Seaton Street, bringing the total building height to just below 70'. The lobby elements for buildings C and F will mirror one another across a pedestrian mews that runs between them. The building has a masonry frame with a 10-12" reveal, lots of glass, and projecting balconies on the internal courtyard.
 - Additional architectural refinements will include strengthening the corner expressions at Main Line Blvd and Seaton St, incorporating the previously mentioned mezzanine, and including some bold color elements at the corner to contrast with the dark frame of the building.

- The Committee asked how the elevations for Building F and C will compare to one another, and how far apart they would be. Mr. Dayhoff explained that both buildings have recesses and projecting bays, modulations of the facades and loft or mezzanine type units. Building C is more traditional, and Building F is more contemporary in style. Staff will provide elevations for Building C for comparison at the next meeting.
- The Committee asked some clarification questions about how the building was situated on the site, where the main entrance was located, and whether this building would look too modern in comparison to the existing firestation. Ms. Wright provided an overall map of the Yard to show the relationship between the proposed building and the firestation.
- The Committee expressed some concern that, in plan, the building does not have sufficient articulation of the building skin and that the roof lines do not have enough variation. They reiterated that there was a goal to avoid have buildings look “boxy” and that there should be some additional variation. It was asked whether a vertical break could be provided along the Main Line Blvd frontage. Mr. Dayhoff emphasized that there are additional architectural details to be added to the building, and that some of the existing details were not coming out in the current drawings, but would be shown to better effect at the next submittal. Additionally, while the Main Line Blvd frontage appears large when shown without context, this would be, in the end, a rather small building for Potomac Yard.
- The Committee asked about amenities and open space. Ms. Wright and Ms. Puskar discussed the pedestrian mews that will be constructed with Building F. Mr. Dayhoff discussed the amenities that will be shared between the buildings. While no green roofs or roof elements are provided in Building F, it will have a ground level courtyard for tenants, and will be able to access the roof elements provided in Building C.
- PYDAC expressed general support for the proposed Block F building and asked that they applicant work to refine the façade – especially the Main Line Blvd. frontage and to study the roofline to potentially add more variation through this use of architectural elements.
- The Landbay L Multifamily Building was reintroduced to the group by Ms. Puskar representing Woodfield Investments, the applicant for the proposal. She explained that the building will be residential with some retail along Monroe Avenue. A portion of the parking is above grade, and the applicant will be requesting a parking reduction.
 - Mr. Anand, the architect for the project, reviewed the architecture for the building, highlighting the three different architectural styles linked by two hyphens. One of the building styles will incorporate some Art Deco elements to relate to many of the Art Deco buildings in the nearby vicinity.

- The Committee asked about the view through the building and whether this would be open to the public. Mr. Anand clarified that this would be one story and would include the lobby entrances and other amenity space for the building. Ms. Puskar added that this would not be open to the public.
- The Committee asked about the retail parking and the amount of retail that is provided. Ms. Puskar stated that it is on the first level of the garage and is combined with the visitor parking. In addition, there is street parking along Monroe that would be available for the retail patrons. Mr. Grinnell thought the location of the retail could be successful given the proximity to the field across Monroe Avenue.
- Ms. Wright clarified that the parking is one level below grade and five levels above grade, which are wrapped by the building. Mr. Anand added that residents would most likely park on the level their unit is located on.
- Mr. Glerum asked how the rear façade of the building addresses the townhouses that were approved for Landbay L. Ms. Puskar stated that the townhouses are facing this façade. Ms. Wright added that some of these recently-approved units are actually two over two units that will be a little taller than the standard townhouses, which will provide a good transition between the buildings.
- The Committee discussed the staff comment regarding the addition of stoops along the Main Line façade. Ms. Puskar stated that their preference was not to include stoops since it is not consistent with the Art Deco style of the building and the stoops would be fairly tall (~8 steps). Ms. Wright stated that staff was concerned that there would be a 4 foot tall blank wall along this façade and Mr. Wagner added that the stoops would help activate this segment of the street. The Committee felt that given the location of the bridge directly east of the site and the impacts from noise and traffic, stoops are not necessary for this building.
- Ms. Wright asked the Committee how they felt about the three architectural styles for the building. Ms. Wasowski stated that the Committee should be reviewing projects per the Guidelines rather than commenting on their individual preference for the building style. In general, the Guidelines call for differentiation along blocks to shorten block faces, which this building does.
- Since the elevations would be refined to address staff comments, Ms. Wasowski stated that the Committee could review the revised elevations at the next meeting in November and take a vote on the project at that time.

NEXT STEPS

- Ms. Wright stated that the next PYDAC meeting would be on November 9th and the following would be discussed:

- Landbay L Multifamily Building – Final review of project
 - Landbay G Building F – Review of project
 - Landbay I Multifamily Building – Introduction to the project
 - Dog Park – update
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- Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.