

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE ADVISORY PANEL
MEETING MINUTES

Date: June 18, 2026

Meeting #111

Project: University of Maryland, Baltimore -
West Lexington Street Corridor

Phase: Schematic Design I

Location: University of Maryland

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

Mike Nicolaus and Amelle Schultz with Ayers Saint Gross presented the proposed new construction mixed-use multi-family building that would housing University of Maryland students. The plan includes a south facing courtyard, access to the garage and administration building to the north, and retail space at the ground floor intended to serve both students and the broader community. The development is part of a larger masterplan that UMD is working with private developers to complete around Lexington Street.

DISCUSSION:

Pavlina Ilieva, the Chair of the Panel, thanked the team for their clear and concise presentation and proceeded with questions and comments.

Questions

- *Have you explored what the onsite stormwater management will be met?* We're still working with STV on where we will have above ground and below surface installations.
- *What is involved for the developer's agreement for the streetscape?* The University will complete most of the streetscape work, the developer's agreement will be for connection of the utility services within the ROW.
- *The western edge, the service road, what is the character of that? Is it intended to be a pedestrian connection?* It will be available to pedestrians, but not the main connection point.
- *Can you clarify the entry sequence to the building to the north? There are two separate elevator towers in that building, one that*
- *The programming for the building is residential and retail, correct? With retail on the ground floor only, correct?* Yes.
- *Is the building at the max height allowed?* There is no maximum height, the current height is program driven.
- *Have you looked at setting back the tower above the protruding mass?* We have not, but there is a small setback.
- *Are there balconies proposed for the north facing elevation?* No.
- *Can you clarify the pavilion area to the north, what is pedestrian and what is vehicular?* The southern area is for pedestrians, and the north portion is for vehicles, and it acts a covered drop-off for the office space on the top three floors of the garage.

- Can you detail the entry sequences for the retail space? We think its important that the retail entrances face Lexington Street.
- How do you perceive the lawn area being used? Landed on the lawn to provide relief in the dense urban environment. Isn't intended for heavy use, but rather light use serving the surrounding retail.

Comments

- Not clearly understood as University of Maryland and how it connects to the rest of campus and broader community. Needs to move away from the generic and become specific to the University and the specific retail tenants anticipated.

Site

- At the north connection to the office, how can you get residents a more direct connection to the garage? Seems like they have a more circuitous route and need to make sure it's safe and easy to understand. Is there a more direct and safer path?
 - Consider using the vehicular drop-off as primary drop off for both the existing admin floors at the garage, and the residential.
- Need to make sure you pay attention to the materials of the north elevation so that it isn't an afterthought.
- Appreciate the strong indoor-outdoor relationships at the courtyard, need to make sure this is maintained as the programming is finalized.
- The courtyard is well design to include engaging human scaled spaces that will encourage activation.
 - One concern is that the entry is so far setback, and need to consider the path – will there be additional planting, does it need to a straight shot? Can terracing and grading help improve that experience?
 - Don't stop iterating with the lawn, make sure it's not taking up so much space that everything else becomes a path.
- Need to be careful in the balance in the ratio of hardscape and greenscape, as a good ratio right now, make sure that's maintained.
- The change in elevation is handled well in allowing universal access to all spaces. Appreciate the change in elevation at the southeast corner of the site.
- Hope the stormwater management can be located within portions of the courtyard, specifically at the low points in the site.
- Need to work closely with the University on the streetscape, to make sure the change between the ROW and private space are coordinated.
- Need to anticipate that the service drive will be used by pedestrians and needs to be designed as such.

Building

- Work to shift the massing above the podium on the west side further back to provide relief to the street. Adding further height to the west wing of the building could help mitigate the loss of units and may strengthen the overall massing. This will allow the massing to more clearly illustrate the building uses and limit the looming of the taller mass above the lower podium massing and its relationship to the surrounding context at Pascault Row.

- Commend the study and challenge of the need to use less-expensive materials at this early stage of the project. This is critical is allowing the architecture to be unique while still using the materials discussed.
 - Try to prioritize durable, expensive materials at the ground level.
- As you place residential amenities in the building, consider adding these to the second floor where they can help with the scale.
- Consider activating the roof levels opened by the setbacks, can these be paired with amenities? At the very least consider green roofs.
- Need to hone in on architectural approach either slightly different expressions on each mass or inside vs outside.
- The entry vestibule doesn't feel substantial enough to mark the main entry – could there be an extended lobby that has a spill out, allowing for that indoor-outdoor experience.

Next Steps:

Work with Planning staff to respond to UDAAP comments, potentially returning to UDAAP for a second review.

Attending:

Amelle Schultz – ASG

Mike Nicolaus – ASG

Walt Zawislak - STV

Pavlina Ilieva*, Anthony Osbourne, Sharon Bradley and Kevin Storm -- UDAAP Panel

Caitlin Audette**, Nicholas Chupein – Department of Planning

* UDAAP Chairperson

** Assigned Planning Staff