



Meeting Summary
November 18, 2015

Attendance

Panel Members: Phyllis Cook, Chair
Henry Alinger
Phillips Engelke
Rob Hollis
Don Taylor

DPZ Staff: Kristin O'Connor, Dace Blaumanis, Mary Smith

Elkridge Library & Senior Center - #15-19

Owner: Howard County Library System
Developer: Howard County DPW, Bureau of Facilities
Architect: Grimm + Parker
Engineer: Pennoni Associates

1. Call to Order – DAP Chair Phyllis Cook opened the meeting at 7:25 pm, calling for introductions of the Panel, staff and Project team.

2. Review of Elkridge Library & Senior Center - #15-19 – David Oakes, Project Architect at Grimm and Parker, began the presentation with a brief overview of who would be presenting this project.

Pete Stone, Landscape Architect at Pennoni Associates, described the project site as facing Route 1 between Rowanberry Drive to the east and Hunt Club Road to the west. The current accesses to the site from both streets will be maintained. Three-fourths of an acre will be acquired from the adjacent Verizon property to the west in order to expand the parking lot, he explained. The existing storm water facility at the back of the site, which provides for the site itself and for the surrounding neighborhood, will stay, as will the dry pond at the front of the site.

Mr. Stone noted that the current building will not be removed but will be remodeled to incorporate the new structure. An area of wetlands in the north wooded corner will be maintained. A portion of the wooded area will be used for the expanded parking area. All parking will be behind the building in accordance with the Route 1 Manual's design guidelines. The dumpster will be located at the parking area. Some landscaping will be added along the Route 1 frontage and landscape screening will be added at the rear of the site.

Antonio Rebelo, Director of Design at Grimm and Parker, stated that reusing an existing facility is the challenging aspect of this project. The plan enlarges the current 17,000 square foot building to 45,000 square feet. The combined library and senior center building will be located closer to Route 1 to give it an urban edge.

The one-story building's appearance will be more like that of a two-story building, he said. The spine that connects the entrance on the parking lot side to the Route 1 side is 28 feet tall, so the height enhances the architecture as seen from Route 1, he noted.

Mr. Rebelo explained that the library and senior center must have only one main controlled entrance that is closest to the parking lot and drop off. Consequently, the entrance is on the north side of the building. Despite this, he pointed out the building has no back and that the architectural design facing Route 1 is visually prominent to passers-by who will need to go around the building to reach the entrance.

Mr. Stone and Mr. Rebelo said the sidewalk along Route 1 and Rowanberry Drive will lead into the site to the building entrance, while a boardwalk will go around the storm water management pond at the rear of the site. Mr. Rebelo noted that an electronic sign will be located on the Route 1/Rowanberry Drive corner with some signage also on the building. Ms. Esra Soyutun, landscape architect at Bradley Site Design, gave a brief overview of the proposed landscaping.

DAP Chair Phyllis Cook opened the discussion on the proposed project. DAP members Hank Alinger and Phil Engelke discussed the need for the sign's design and materials to reflect the character of the building's architecture. Mr. Engelke said the landscape plan could be bolder.

Mr. Alinger suggested that the Route 1 sidewalk connect more directly to the building, such as a walk along the side of the building. Mr. Rebelo replied saying that idea needs more study.

DAP member Don Taylor advocated for the landscaping to reinforce the spine of the building. DAP member Rob Hollis suggested a garden could terminate the spine on the Route 1 side. Ms. Cook suggested the spine could be further defined out to the pavement, out to the parking lot at the north side of the building.

Mr. Hollis recommended clarification of the building design at the junction between the stone and the glass.

Mr. Alinger said he likes the walk and the bridge at the storm water management pond.

Ms. Cook suggested more landscaping could be added along the patio for the senior center.

Pursuant to each motion duly made and seconded, DAP adopted the following recommendations for the project. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning.

DAP member Rob Hollis offered the following motion:

1. "That the Applicant reinforce the spine by creating a terminus at either end and potentially extending the spine into the pavement of the parking area." Seconded by D. Taylor.

Vote: 5-0 to approve.

DAP member Don Taylor offered the following motion:

2. "That the Applicant also consider the Route 1 terminus of the spine in creating an outdoor space that is perhaps inaccessible and that mimics the canopy roof. Could be hardscape, but should be something that brings the building closer to Route 1." Seconded by H. Alinger.

Vote: 5-0 to approve.

DAP member Phillips Engelke offered the following motion:

3. "That the monument sign, the identifying sign, more closely use the material and the spirit of the building; it should not look like an office building." Seconded by H. Alinger.

Vote: 5-0 to approve.

DAP Chair Phyllis Cook offered the following motion:

4. "That the Applicant consider the patio design at the senior center, perhaps extending it to the east, not necessarily increasing the square footage, but allowing for the building to expand in that direction."
Seconded by R. Hollis.

Vote: 5-0 to approve.

DAP member Henry Alinger offered the following motion:

5. "That the Applicant consider extending a sidewalk along the east side of the senior center towards Route 1, to make a statement and a visual connection to Route 1 for pedestrians."
Seconded by D. Taylor.

Vote; 5-0 to approve.

3. Call to Adjourn – DAP member Don Taylor complimented the architect on the design of the building.

Chair Phyllis Cook adjourned the meeting at 8:25 pm.

On behalf of the DPZ Director, staff member Dace Blaumanis presented the County Executive's Letter of Appreciation and Certificate of Recognition to Ms. Cook and Mr. Hollis, whose terms expire, for their service on the Design Advisory Panel.