



Meeting Summary
April 26, 2017

Attendance

Panel Members: Hank Alinger, Chair
Don Taylor, Vice Chair
Bob Gorman
Weiwei Jia
Fred Marino (excused)
Sujit Mishra (excused)
Julie Wilson (excused)

DPZ Staff: Val Lazdins, Kristin O'Connor, George Saliba, Yvette Zhou

Plan #17-06: The Young School – Ellicott City

Owner/Developer: The Young School/JJY LLC

Architect: Ammon Heisler Sachs Architects

1. Call to Order – DAP Chair Hank Alinger opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Mr. Alinger asked the DAP, staff, and project team to introduce themselves.

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2. Review of The Young School – Ellicott City

Background

The project site is located at 3240 Bethany Lane in Ellicott City, just north of Route 40. The parcel is 1.59 acres, zoned B-1, and is currently undeveloped. The site will share an access drive off Bethany Lane with the adjacent Race Pace Bicycle site. The applicant proposes a 12,500 square foot, single story, daycare center.

Applicant Presentation

The applicant gave a multimedia presentation overview on project. The proposed building is designed as a one-story, educational daycare facility with a capacity of approximately 150 children. Each childcare classroom will have direct access to the exterior. A covered deck area is proposed on the elevated building side for direct access to the play area. The building elevations are based on the Young School's prototype constructed in Carroll County that features a tower element for architectural presence, a covered entrance, and windows designed towards a more residential scale.

The site is currently a semi-wooded lot that was used as a contractor's yard. The topography drops steeply into a wetland area and creek at the rear. There is a shared entry drive off Bethany Lane that connects to the Young School parking lot as well as to the adjacent Race Pace bicycle site.

The front entrance is facing the side parking lot as opposed to Bethany Lane. The orientation of the building and entrance were designed to be accessible for parents dropping off their children and to better allow for required ADA access. The front entrance is on the side of the building, facing the main parking lot so parents and children do not need to cross the dead-end drive aisle where staff will park. This orientation also allows for dedicated drop off/pick up spaces with ADA access. A tower element was included to create architectural presence along Bethany Lane despite the main entrance facing to the side. An outdoor playground will be wrapped around the side of the building with stormwater management and plantings along the rear of the building.

The site design features an outdoor play area. The outdoor play area is sloped and it will be accessible from the side and front of the building with accessible ramps. The bioretention areas are intended to be utilized as educational opportunities for the children. The site will have cross walks and sidewalk connections to the Bethany Lane sidewalk. Due to the overhead BGE power lines along Bethany Lane, any proposed street trees cannot be large canopy trees. The design team will select street trees from the approved BGE tree palette.

Staff Presentation

The project is subject to the *Route 40 Design Manual*. The Manual focuses primarily on the Traditional Neighborhood Center (TNC) zoning district whereas this project is zoned B-1 and follows less restrictive requirements from the manual. DPZ questioned the site's shared access easement, the project's parking allotment, and the building's obstructed entrance zone. The applicant responded that a use in-common easement with the Race Pace site was finalized when the property was subdivided. Regarding the site being overparked, the applicant responded that the parking is on target per the zoning regulations. Staff recommended the accessible parking spots be moved closer to the entrance as these spots are not used as often. Moving the ADA spaces, would provide a wider path from the parking area to the building entrance. The applicant responded that grade issues might make it difficult to shift these spaces closer to the building entrance.

DAP Questions and Comments

Site Design

The DAP asked for exhibits that shows topography, particularly the slopes in the play area. The applicant responded that the play area will have a landing area linking the slopes together with a ramp on the side.

The DAP questioned why the building was so close to the parking lot on multiple sides and wondered if the building could be shifted back a few feet. The applicant responded that due to the steep slopes and environmental features, the site was very constrained and the building could not be shifted.

The DAP recommended shifting the ADA parking space from the door allowing just paving around the front door so parents/children will not have to walk through the parking spaces. The DAP recommended that the wheel stops be removed from the plans as they are difficult to maintain and can be tripping hazards. There are also wheel stops with the ADA spaces but they may be prone to

people tripping hazards. The applicant responded said the owner was concern about cars driving into the building as has happened at other facilities. The DAP asked the applicant if bollards could be used instead of wheel stops.

The DAP recommended landscaping in the footprint of the playground. The applicant responded that the surface of the playground is still to be determined and that they are considering including trees in addition to the trees that will be left around the perimeter of the play area. The DAP recommended keeping the existing large trees on the site where possible.

The DAP asked whether the stormwater management feature at the north-east end of the site was a micro-bioretenion facility. The applicant responded that it had previously been a buried gravel trench and the project team was still determining whether it would be a micro-bioretenion facility or a gravel trench.

Architecture

The DAP felt that the tower element and glazing were appropriate design features. The DAP did not feel the proportions of the elevated roof at the north elevation was an appropriate scale and that the columns were not strong enough. The DAP recommended this roof should not be elevated as it was unnecessary and detracted from the architecture. The DAP questioned the need for the widows walk decorative rail feature on the roof. The applicant responded that this rail surrounded a well where the building mechanical units are located.

The DAP recommended double columns at the front entrance as opposed to the single columns shown on the design. The DAP expressed concern about the elevation along the rear of the building where there is an elevated deck. The DAP recommended cross-bracing on the support columns for support and for aesthetic. The DAP recommended lattice work or other similar feature to block areas where there would be access to the space under the elevated deck to keep children from crawling under that space.

DAP Motions for Recommendations

DAP member Bob Gorman made the following motion:

1. The applicant consider moving the handicap parking spaces to the front door to create more of an entry way since handicap spaces are not used as often and consider using bollards instead of wheel stops. Seconded by Vice Chair Don Taylor.

Vote: 4-0 to approve

DAP Vice Chair Don Taylor made the following motion:

2. The applicant consider the scale and proportion of the entry way porch roof and the northeast extended roof on the corner of the building. Seconded by DAP member Bob Gorman.

Vote: 4-0 to approve

DAP member Bob Gorman made the following motion:

3. The applicant add a crosswalk across the entry drive along Bethany Lane to connect the public sidewalk. Seconded by Vice Chair Don Taylor.

Vote: 4-0 to approve

DAP Chair Hank Alinger made the following motion:

4. The applicant consider additional landscaping within and along the edges of the play area to create shading and interest. Seconded by DAP member Bob Gorman.

Vote: 4-0 to approve

3. Other Business

The elections of DAP officers was postponed until next meeting.

DAP Chair Hank Alinger made the following motion:

- 1) The election of DAP officers to be postponed until the next meeting. Seconded by DAP member Bob Gorman.

Vote: 4-0 to approve

The panel was notified there will not be a meeting on May 10, 2017.

4. Call to Adjourn

DAP Chair Hank Alinger adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.