



Architectural Advisory Board

City Hall Council Chambers, 300 Park Ave. Falls Church VA 22046

February 5, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m.

1. Roll Call: Mr. Bitici, Mrs. Friedlander, Mr. Osburn, Mr. Way, and Mr. Wong were present. Youth Representatives Evan Lankford and Daniel Ng and Planning Commission Liaison Tim Stevens were present as well.
2. Petitions: There were no petitions.
3. Consent Calendar: There were no consent items.
4. Old Business: There was no old business.
5. New Business:
 - a. Feedback and Recommendation to BZA requested on the proposed Signage Package for Founders Row, located at the 900 Block of W Broad Street, RPC #51-222-001 of the Falls Church Real Property Records, zoned B-1, Limited Business. MUNIS#: 2013-1165. Includes presentation from the Applicant.

After comments by city staff and presentation by applicant, the board asked questions related to:

- Mill Creek or Moderna vs. Founders Row naming and signage
- Signage on Park Avenue side
- Parking directional signage
- Movie theater marquis design
- Overall guidance for retail establishment signage
- Tim Stevens stated that the EDA is currently working on a city-wide wayfinding package that will affect the connection of Founders Row with the W&OD and that the applicant should coordinate with that package in the submission of the retail sign package.

Following brief discussion with the applicant, Mr. Wong made a motion to accept the residential signage package as submitted with the understanding that the presented materials only address residential signage and that the retail sign package and guidance to tenants (as discussed in previous reviews with the applicant) will be provided to the Board for review prior to approval. Mr. Osburn seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

- b. Feedback requested on current conceptual architecture for the West Falls Church Economic Development Project, located at 7124 Leesburg Pike, RPC #51-221-001 of the Falls Church Real Property Records, zoned B-2, Central Business. Includes presentation from the Applicant.

Sharon Friedlander opened the discussion with the following statement:

After consultation with the City Attorney, I wish to make the following statement. I am an employee of Clark Construction Group who is likely to be a participant working on the development project on the old George Mason High School property. Therefore, I am a member of a group of three or more persons who may be affected by the Architectural Advisory Board's actions on this matter. I can participate in it fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

Following city staff comments and a presentation by the applicant, the Board offered the following thoughts:

- Overall, the design, layout and architecture of the site are attractive and present a well-conceived overall development plan.
- Don't over-activate the commons. Allow for free use of the space for a variety of purposes.
- Consider the future of signage or another wayfinding monument element at the Rt. 7 entrance to the Commons component.
- When refining the design, carefully consider the corners of the various buildings, especially the corner at Rt. 7 and Haycock. This is a major opportunity to connect with the various vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic at each portion of the development.
- Consider articulation of the various facades throughout the development, especially the portions facing Rt. 7 and Haycock. Not only at the cornice line but with the masonry, what occurs at the grade changes, and other locations.
- Concern was stated over the back-up alarms from delivery trucks in Alley 1 adjacent to residential units. Investigate keeping the back-up areas under cover/within building and with Tenant Rules & Regulations that work for both the Retail establishments while giving consideration to the residential components of the site. (The board acknowledges the challenges that the topography lends to this issue),
- The shadow study (inclusive of topography and adjacent properties), dated 6/7/19, is helpful in understanding the magnitude of the overall massing of the development and its impact on direct sunlight throughout its own development, but also on the adjacent properties. Due to the impact in the morning at Winter Solstice on the Middle and High Schools, consider stepping back the condo building to lessen the impact to the façade and front entry of the High School.
- The applicant's efforts and commitment to break-up the massing by creating variety of materials and architectural language is appreciated. The "inspirational precedents" images are helpful in evaluating the intent at this stage of the design development.
- The variation from one building to the next and breaking up of the larger structures with materials and architectural language is successful at this stage.
 - o A-2 Building comments:
 - Further investigate more articulation of the elements on the brick façade facing Rt 7 and Haycock elevations to give more depth to the elevations (similar to the central image on the "A2 Precedents" page; expressing verticality and also depth of a masonry façade at the openings.)
 - The corner at Haycock and Rt 7 is a prominent gateway to the development, as it will be seen from Rt 7 (southern approach) for some distance (potentially down to the Pedestrian bridge over Rt 7 near West Street). In its current configuration, the entry is too compressed and is sunken below the sidewalk at the corner due to the topography. Consider breaking the thickened masonry band at the corner façade/entry (where "Commons Market" signage is currently shown) to increase the height at the corner to give a more grand appearance from the southern approach.
 - Cornice line of grey portion at the penthouse level is very long and straight. Consider more articulation of this line to be more porous

(similar to central image on “A2 Precedents page; this is not a call for a gratuitous cornice as a cap, but more investigation of methods to break up that line from being in a continuous plane.)

- Perspective from Alley 1 and Rt 7 intersection comments:
 - The variation in building elements at the condo building versus the grocery building is appreciated and we look forward to seeing the materials. Investigate bringing some of the energy seen in the materials and articulation of the protrusions on the perspective looking down the Alley 1 over to the main façade at the grocery store.
 - Try to further break up the elevation at the sidewalk level where the slope/grade races down to the entry at Haycock.
- Stair/walkway connection from Haycock to street A comments:
 - Concern this will be a dark alleyway that becomes a wintertime ice/salt battle due to lack of sunshine in this slot of space. Consider treating this as an ‘arcade/linking’ typology that is activated, with some sort of overhead interest, some overhead shelter from the elements and ‘points of interest’ (hardscape or otherwise) along the way. Provide perspectives of this space for review.
- C1 Civic/Multifamily comments:
 - The depth of the white façade is a nice solution to trying to maintain similar footprint for each unit within, but also lending the façade to depth and shadow with the use of the inset balconies. The proportions of the openings are nicely varied so as not to appear ‘cookie-cutter’ from the exterior experience.
 - This board prefers the use of color as architectural expression in the variation of materials or colored materials, not a painting of imagery applied to a flat facade (see C1 Precedents page: NO to Peerlees & Purvey faux antique advertisement or bird mural on a flat façade, YES to standing seam and use of variety of materials.)
 - Further investigate the proportions of the window openings at the grey standing seam façade, so as not to look institutional or like a penitentiary.

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6. Other Business:

City Staff communicated that city Council would like to meet with the Board to discuss process and procedures related to project development. The Board will plan to meet with City Council at some point in March.

7. Minutes:

- a. Minutes from the January 8, 2020 meeting were reviewed. They will be tabled pending edits from the Board.

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.