



Meeting Summary
January 27, 2016

Attendance

Panel Members: Hank Alinger, Chair
Don Taylor, Vice Chair
Phil Engelke
Bob Gorman
Sujit Mishra

DPZ Staff: Kristin O'Connor, Dace Blaumanis, Kate Bolinger, Raj Kudchadkar

Laurel Park Station - #16-02

Owner/Developer: MI Developments (Maryland), Inc.
Architect: Walter E. Lynch, AIA, PLLC
Engineer: Robert H. Vogel Engineering, Inc.

1. **Call to Order** – DAP Chair Hank Alinger opened the meeting at 7:47 pm, calling for introductions of the Panel, staff and Project team.
2. **Review of Laurel Park Station – #16 -02** – Walter Lynch, Architect, began the presentation with an overview of the project, which is a mixed use transit oriented development (TOD). He described how the project first came before the DAP in 2009 in conceptual form. Mr. Lynch described changes to the project since 2009, including changes to the entrance, which the applicant strengthened in response to staff and DAP recommendations. The project team constructed a pump house which serves as an entrance feature. Two historic art deco columns flank the existing entrance, and the project team plans to preserve these columns.

Mr. Lynch noted that the entrance and associated boulevard are main project features. He noted that the width of the boulevard roadway was of concern to the DAP in prior meetings, with the DAP suggesting a narrowed road width. In order to achieve a narrower roadway, the project team has opted to construct the road as a private road. Mr. Lynch described how the narrowed roadway combined with sidewalks will be consistent with a multimodal TOD site. He also noted how the project features landscaped pathways connecting residential areas to the train station and main street.

Mr. Lynch described how the mixed use project will include townhouses, apartments and commercial uses. He noted the commercial component would be the subject of a future presentation, but did describe how the project's main street is designed to be the project's focal point, and features the greatest variety of architectural styles. He described how the residential uses are intended to be distinctive from the main street, with darker colors and brick facades.

The project features two types of residential uses: townhouses and multifamily apartments. Mr. Lynch described how the typical townhouse is proposed as a “two-over-two” townhouse (two, two-story units stacked to create a four-story building). He noted the typical townhouse would feature darker brown brick, standing seam roof, and historically appropriate paint colors. The rear facades of the townhouses would feature brick in addition to the front facades.

Mr. Lynch stated that the multifamily apartment building was the main project component being presented to the DAP. He described the building as an internally parked, five-story residential building where residential units wrap the internal garage (a.k.a. a “donut apartment”). He also noted the building would feature several wings and contain retail uses on the first floor. He described outdoor amenities, including a pool that would be built alongside the building.

Mr. Lynch suggested that the multifamily apartment building would feature art deco stylistic details to reflect the art deco columns near the site entrance (and the building itself would be located near the entrance). He described these features to include towers fronting Route 1 with bronze colored panels.

DAP members asked several clarifying questions to better understand the project in terms of its development program, pedestrian connections, and access points. Mr. Jeff Hayes, Development Manager with Walter E. Lynch, described the development program as comprising 1,000 residential units, 650,000 square feet of office space, and 127,000 square feet of retail space. Mr. Lynch noted the project would include as much ground floor retail along the street as possible. He also noted that across the county boundary 3,000 parking spaces are planned within Anne Arundel County, and a pedestrian connection would allow access from the Laurel Park Station project to these parking spaces. He stated that the project will feature two access points, one to serve Route 1 northbound traffic and the other to serve Route 1 southbound traffic.

Mr. Alinger directed Ms. Dace Blaumanis, planner with DPZ, to give her staff presentation on the project. Ms. Blaumanis noted that the applicant’s presentation included visuals that were not part of the DAP submission package. Ms. Blaumanis described that DPZ has a policy under which the DAP reviews a project’s concept plan and then the project’s site development plan (SDP). She noted that the project had gone through the concept plan review, and was now before the DAP for a more finished review of the site development plan’s residential aspects. She stated that the staff comments requested more information on several elements that were not included in the DAP submission package, including information on the apartment building.

Mr. Alinger commented that the distance between the commercial buildings seemed tight at 15 feet, and that another connection back to the main street may be needed.

DAP Vice Chair Don Taylor wondered whether drivers would visit the main street if they were directed to a parking garage. Mr. Lynch stated that the design intent was to make a user friendly street environment with wide sidewalks and convenient parking, and that main street would feature parallel parking (a small percentage of overall parking).

DAP member Bob Gorman asked if there would be a separated bike lane, to which Mr. Lynch responded that there would be a shared bike/traffic lane (sharrow). Mr. Gorman asked the applicant to identify the locations of stormwater management facilities. Mr. Lynch noted there would be many smaller facilities throughout the project. He noted the main street median would contain stormwater management. He also pointed out there would be a rain garden internal to a public square that would have a pedestrian trail around it, which could accommodate a farmers market.

DAP member Sujit Mishra asked the applicant to describe paving materials. Mr. Lynch stated there would be asphalt, concrete, and brick walkways. He noted a combination of materials would be used on the sidewalks.

Mr. Taylor commented that the architecture of the townhouses and apartments seemed to be more suburban than urban and lacked consistent character. Mr. Lynch stated that the design intent was to break up components so that the project would develop over time with multiple styles of architecture.

DAP members asked the applicant to clarify the extent of the submission under review. Mr. Lynch stated that the townhouses and apartment building were being presented for review, with the focus being on the apartment building. DAP members noted that the submission package did not include the apartment building, and expressed their uncertainty over which project elements were to be included for DAP review and motions.

DAP member Phil Engelke commented that the cornice work appeared heavy and not art deco in style. He further suggested the towers did not seem to represent the art deco style. Mr. Lynch noted that the towers would bring a vertical element to Route 1 that would be distinctive from a typical five-story building.

Mr. Gorman suggested that the applicant consider a green roof atop the parking garage that people could use as green space. Mr. Lynch noted the project's amenity spaces would include a swimming pool as well as a health club that would serve the overall community. Mr. Gorman commented that pool could be in the shadow of the apartment building making the pool area dark most of the time.

DPZ Division Chief Kristin O'Connor stated that DAP members could not make motions on materials not included in the submission package, and that motions should be limited to the townhouses and not reference the apartment building.

DPZ Deputy Director Raj Kudchadkar stated that DAP submission materials must be provided to the panel seven (7) calendar days prior to the meeting and be available for public review during that time.

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 Vice Chair Don Taylor offered the following motion:

1. "That the applicant reconsider the simplicity of the elevations of the townhouses." Seconded by DAP Chair Hank Alinger.

Vote: 5-0 to approve.

DAP member Bob Gorman offered the following motion:

2. "That the developer look at a simple landscape scheme for the pedestrian alleys that doesn't include trees." Seconded by DAP member Phil Engelke.

Vote: 5-0 to approve.

3. Call to Adjourn – Chair Hank Alinger adjourned the meeting at 9:21 pm.