



Meeting Summary
January 26, 2022

Attendance

Panel Members: Robert Gorman, Chair
Fred Marino (*recused from Project discussion*)
Vivian Stone
Larry Quarrick
Dan Lovette

DPZ Staff: Anthony Cataldo and Nick Haines

1. **Call to Order** – DAP Chair Bob Gorman opened the meeting at 7:06 p.m.
2. **Review of Plan No. 22-04 Deerpath Apartments, Elkridge MD**
Applicants and Presenters:
Architect: Henneman Architects
Engineer: Benchmark Engineers
Designer: Design Collective

Background

The existing Commercial building site, zoned B2, is located at 6800 Deerpath Road. DAP is reviewing the proposed architectural renovations to the existing building. The property is 4.31-acre site is comprised of Lot A, Parcel 634, and sits in between Route 100 and has direct access via Deerpath Road. The TOD (Transit Oriented Development) zone allows for the development of multi-use centers, office, and high-density residential development that are located and designed for safe and convenient pedestrian access by commuters using the MARC Trains and other public transit links. Applicable requirements from the Route 1 Design Manual include streetscape frontage improvements and pedestrian connections.

Applicant Presentation

The site is located across from the proposed Dorsey Apartments south of Deerpath Road that should begin construction in the near future. The Deerpath Apartments is currently a 1 story office, warehouse, and church commercial building that is approximately a half mile from the Dorsey MARC station. The proposed apartment building will consist of 250 units with a 450 stall internal parking garage. The property is mostly flat with two access points along Deerpath Road. Due to some grade changes into the site the proposed building will sit at a higher elevation than the roadway.

The applicant has been working with the county since the previous DAP meeting for the Dorsey Apartments to delineate in greater detail better pedestrian and bicycle access from this site to the MARC station. There is currently bike lane striping along Deerpath road and plans are being negotiated with the County to provide the additional striping and pedestrian access. The applicant has also been communicating with Fire and Rescue to ensure that there is adequate room with the design to provide a loop road around the building for emergency access.

The proposed building will be constructed in place of the commercial building. There are several entrances to the building with the first being a terrace level into the main lobby. The second will be into the parking garage and the 3rd will be into a lobby and service entrance at the southern end of the site. The main entrance to the building is located adjacent to the courtyard at the center of the site. The 250-unit apartment building will be a 4-story wood frame that is approximately 350,000 square feet. The proposed façade will predominately be masonry with vinyl siding and a stone base around the entire building.

The site has two access points from Deerpath Road that will be utilized in the new design. The Garage entry is on the eastern end of the site and a vehicular court leads off of the western entrance which leads to the center amenity courtyard and main entrance. The pedestrian walkway will also connect to the proposed dog park on the adjacent parcel to be constructed with the neighboring Dorsey Apartments project. The site layout includes proposed landscaping which consist of street trees along Deerpath road. The Amenity courtyard was designed with softer geometry to create a relaxing outdoor area adjacent to the clubhouse which runs along the eastern, interior side of the courtyard adjacent the main entrance. Landscaping provided in the courtyard accentuates the outdoor uses and provides necessary shade around the pool area. There is also a grass paver fire access lane that wraps around the building for emergency use but also incorporates a pedestrian walking path for residents to stroll around the perimeter of the site. Shade trees and landscape plantings are provided around the property boundaries for screening and visual interest.

Staff Presentation

Staff complimented the applicant on explaining the proposal for the 250-unit apartment building. DPZ would like the panel to make recommendations on the proposed project layout and frontage design, and how the project is meeting the intent of the Route 1 Guidelines. DPZ would also like DAP to comment and make recommendations to enhance the connections to the surrounding properties and MARC station. DPZ also requested recommendations on the provided amenities and landscaping.

DAP Questions and Comments

Site Design

Overall

DAP commented that they liked the overall project.

DAP asked about residents who live in the westernmost apartment and how far they are from the nearest elevator. The DAP expressed concern about the long distances potential tenants may have to walk from the garage to some of the units.

The applicant responded that nearest elevator would be adjacent to the service area at the end of the wing. DAP suggested that an elevator be installed at the intersection of the main walkways from the pan handle and the parking garage.

DAP asked about using recycled materials and the possibility of incorporating solar panels into the building design.

The applicant responded that the project will be recycling some of the materials for construction and aren't currently adding solar panels to the design but are considering them.

DAP liked the proposed green fire lane, and how the meandering walking path was incorporated into the site.

Sidewalks

DAP inquired if there will be a sidewalk along the road in the front of the property.

The applicant advised that sidewalk was being provided along Deerpath Road and the walking path would tie into it to complete the walking loop.

DAP advised there is no sidewalk from the project to the MARC station and none is shown on the plans.

The applicant responded that there are discussions with the county about installing the necessary sidewalk as more residential projects are proposed and created in the area.

Parking

DAP asked where the guest parking for the project was and if there was any in the parking garage.

The applicant responded that guest parking would be provided for in the garage.

DAP asked about how package deliveries would be handled for the building and if there would be a drop off area or a temporary parking area along the street.

The applicant explained that there are a couple spaces near the main entrance that were being considered and marked as temporary parking. There was also discussion about a package room and potential for lockers.

Architecture

DAP commented that the architecture was appealing especially on the front façade of the building and how it relates to the courtyard area. DAP noted the window paint and decorative window frames give the project a more residential feel. DAP also noted similarities in the architecture and design to the nearby Refinery residential project.

DAP asked about the elevation facing Route 100 and if it was also going to have the same brick façade along the front of the building and asked if it would be visible from the roadway.

The applicant advised that that elevation will be primarily siding and the building would be visible from Route 100. There is a lot of vegetation along Route 100 however, and only the third and fourth floor could be visible over the tree-line.

DAP asked about the individual short awnings across the main building entrance façade and suggested combining them into 1 or 2 larger ones.

DAP asked about on the Route 100 façade regarding the coloring and the content of the building elements.

The applicant advised that the bottom white band is white stone base, there is red brick and the cream-colored band shown on the exhibit will be earthy tone colored siding.

DAP asked about the building complying with the TOD requirements in the Route 1 Manual with only building across 50% of the property.

The applicant responded that the land use goals in the TOD Section allow for residential development on up to 50% of the TOD land.

Landscape

DAP liked and noted the incorporation of native plant materials into the landscape design but suggested that there was an opportunity to take the vegetated area along the property and Route 100 and bring some of the native trees into the site to soften the transition into the property landscaping. DAP recommended using plant materials that would be growing in the woods such as sycamore, red maple, willow, service berry and redbuds to soften the transition.

Amenities

DAP liked the courtyard amenities and asked if the pool was able to be used year-round.

The applicant responded that the pool wasn't heated and will only be used during the warmer months.

DAP also inquired about the lack of outdoor play areas or play structures for children and asked if they could be incorporated into the design.

The applicant responded that it was likely that some of the tenants would have children and they would look into incorporating some into the design.

DAP Motions for Recommendations

1. DAP Member Larry Quarrick made the following motion:

The applicant take a look at the recreational facilities, and see if they can incorporate a children's play area and seating along the loop trail

DAP Chair Bob Gorman seconded.

Vote: 3-0

2. DAP Chair Bob Gorman made the following motion:

The applicant considers relocating at least 1 of the elevators in the garage to the angled area in the panhandle to be more convenient to the farther apartments.

DAP Member Vivian Stone seconded.

Vote: 3-0

DAP made the following recommendation:

That the utilities be checked in the front of the site before planting any trees. There seems to be an electric box, water main, storm or sewer structure located in the front of the site.

DAP confirmed that the applicant does not need to return to DAP but will work with DPZ regarding the motions.

3. Other Business and Informational Items

DPZ Staff Nick Haines noted that there is a meeting scheduled for February 9th.

4. Call to Adjourn

DAP Chair Bob Gorman adjourned the meeting at 8:24 PM