



Meeting Summary
March 9, 2022

Attendance

Panel Members: Robert Gorman, Chair
Ethan Marchant, Vice Chair
Dan Lovette
Larry Quarrick
Vivian Stone

DPZ Staff: Anthony Cataldo, Nicholas Haines and Melissa Maloney

1. **Call to Order** – DAP Chair Robert Gorman opened the meeting at 7:01 p.m.
2. **Review of Plan No. 22-06: 8525 Baltimore National Pike, Ellicott City**
Applicants and Presenters:
Architects: Ron Brasher, Victoria Kraushar-Plantholt (Brasher Design)

Background

The existing commercial retail center, zoned B2, located at 8525 Baltimore National Pike. DAP is reviewing the proposed site renovations and architectural revitalization to the existing building. DAP had previously reviewed the plans on January 12th and requested the applicant return with a revised design based on the panel's motions and comments. The property is 2.57 acres and has direct frontage to Baltimore National Pike along the northern edge of the site. The B-2 District (Business General) zoning permits commercial sales and services. Applicable requirements from the Route 40 Design Manual include architectural and streetscape frontage improvements.

Applicant Presentation

The applicant presented a design for renovation of the existing shopping center to the panel in January and are returning to show the improvements of the exterior design based on the DAP's comments. This existing shopping center has wood siding and asphalt shingle roof on Route 40. The initial design included a 3-tiered façade in an attempt to bring more presence to the shopping center. The comments received from DAP indicated the applicant should try to incorporate the design into the existing building and simplify the design.

The new design includes wood-like fiber cement panels that resemble the wood siding of the existing building and incorporates a more neutral color palette with light tan metal elements. The existing trim of the building will be painted to match these new elements to make the building more cohesive. The design maintains some aluminum, vertical siding and perforated paneling to update the aesthetic of the shopping center and make it look more commercialized. The building is broken into 3 sections and each of the existing bays will be framed.

The design maintains the patio along the central bay and a deck along the western façade. The materials used will be dove gray coated steel, Verisign metal vertical panels and anodized, aluminum perforated metal panel at the signage. Cedar-like Nichiha fiber cement panels will be used to provide texture and add some mass to the columns of the façade. Two existing signs will be re-clad in the same color palette with the wood-like fiber cement panel at the base and the dove gray metal accents. The shopping center name and address will be in tan.

Staff Presentation

The panel saw this project on January 12, 2022 and provided recommendation to the team for evaluation. The applicant has provided new façade updates based on the DAP's comments. The site design layout has not changed. DPZ asks that DAP make additional comments based on the new façade and material updates and advise if the applicant has met the intent of the previous motions.

DAP Questions and Comments

Site Design

Rear of Building

DAP inquired if there will be any renovation to the rear of the building.

The applicant advised that this renovation is focused only on the Route 40 façade.

Pylon Sign

DAP inquired if the pylon sign will say "Edward Jones Investments". They also commented that "Edward Jones Investments" is much larger than the name of the shopping center.

The applicant advised that they are just re-cladding the existing sign and not redesigning it. The name will remain because of a lease agreement with the tenant in the rear of the building. They are the only tenant that will appear on the shopping center pylon and all others will have street frontage.

DAP commented that they liked the cedar wood fiber cement panels on the pylon and shopping center.

DAP inquired if the Papa John sign will remain as shown on the exhibit.

The applicant confirmed that is a requirement for their lease.

Landscape

DAP commented that the applicant needs to look at what material is in the stormwater management system to see if it is gravel and if the trees will survive and also determine the capacity if additional landscaping is added.

The applicant advised that the study of the existing storm water management system has not been completed yet and will be done with the construction investigation.

DAP inquired if there will be landscape planting around the base of the pylon sign.

The applicant confirmed the entire front of the site will be softened with meadow plants and trees as originally presented in January.

DAP inquired if there is an opportunity to add 2 islands, 1 at the center point and 1 at the end to add some planting areas. If there is not room for planting, DAP recommended putting in specialty pavers and large planters to green up and soften the base of the building, especially on the corner of the building.

The applicant responded that the shopping center is tight and there are not any excess spaces that could be removed. There are currently some small planting areas and those will be

maintained if possible and they will investigate adding planters.

Architecture

Overall

DAP feels that this is a big improvement and will elevate it from its current state and give a modern facelift. DAP recommended that the applicant continue to edit and simplify the design more.

Materials

DAP recommended studying the transparency of the perforated metal since it may be exaggerated in the renderings but commented that he liked the use of that material.

DAP commented that they like the use of materials and commented it is a challenge to unify a shopping center with all the different signage and logos.

Lighting

DAP commented that the applicant has a unique opportunity to do something with lighting in the space between the signage band and the building, whether it is for the signage, perforated metal or downlighting.

The applicant advised that they are planning to put a strip light on the perforated metal panel hidden at the top and bottom so that the entire layer will glow at night and be attractive.

Addressing

DAP inquired if the applicant has done any studies on ways to put the address on the building itself.

The applicant advised they looked at having the panel with the address numbers glow with the same lighting they are using for the perforated metal panels, but they wanted to emphasize that corner since that is where the driveway into the shopping center comes in.

DAP inquired if the numbers will be lit up pin numbers or illuminated.

The applicant advised that they are still deciding but may have the numbers internally illuminated.

DAP Motions for Recommendations

No new/additional motions were made at this meeting. The previous landscape motions remain for the project.

Previous DAP Motions:

DAP made the following motions at the January 12, 2022 meeting in reference to the 8525 Baltimore National Pike project.

1. DAP Member Larry Quarrick made the following motion:

The applicant looks at the stormwater facility to determine capacity and how much water it will hold and enhance the area to include native shrubs and street trees such as River Birch.

This study will be completed during the construction investigation.

2. DAP Member Ethan Marchant made the following motion:

The applicant looks at the building façade treatment to simplify the approach to connect to the architecture there and not treat it as a separate, divorced element.

The façade design was simplified and met the approval of the DAP.

3. DAP Chair Fred Marino made the following motion:
The applicant come back for a second review with DAP.
Second DAP meeting 03/09/22.

Review of Plan No. 22-07: Lynn Buff Court Hotel Laurel, MD

Applicants and Presenters:

Architects: Ron Brasher, Victoria Kraushar-Plantholt (Brasher Design)
Engineer: Rob Vogel (Vogel Engineering + Timmons Group)

Background

The 1.88-acre site is comprised of Lot E-2, zoned Corridor Employment (CE-CLI). CE-CLI zoning encourage the development and redevelopment of employment land near U.S. Route 1 to provide for new office, flex, and light industrial uses. Hotels are specifically listed on the list of uses permitted in CE Zoned Properties.

Applicant Presentation

This property is located on Lynn Buff Court in northern Laurel with a powerline tower easement to the north and the Hammond Branch that crosses Route 1 and flows east. There are various industrial uses on Lynn Buff Court including car repair or salvage areas and a small self-storage facility on the southside of Lynn Buff Court. To the northeast is Jail Break Brewing and across Route 1 on the east side are various small automotive uses and down Mayor drive is a Pizza Hut and 7-11. The site, with a proposed 2-story building, is an appreciable distance from Route 1 and the proposed building will be parallel and facing Route 1.

There will be parking for +/-62 cars and internal micro-bio retention facilities that will be built into the project and landscaping. The applicant will be adding foundation landscaping, replacement landscaping around the edges and landscaping adjacent to the power lines. The proposed retaining wall will support the parking lot and level the site as the site slopes significantly west to east. There are wetlands adjacent to the road. The vegetation and wetland buffers will be retained. There will also be some bio retentions facilities below the wall that will enhance the view of the wall. Drainage will run through the wall to the natural wetland system.

The proposed retaining wall will be an interlocking block wall with geo grid and will have a fence on top. There is minimal landscaping included within the parking lot.

The building is proposing clean and industrialized design. The central bay will house the hotel lobby and will be adorned with a canopy to welcome guests. All materials rendered in light brown will be fiber cement panels with a regular grid and will be slightly proud of the rest of the facade. The gray bays will have vertical gray siding. The central bay and other light brown bays will be capped with anodized aluminum coping and corrugated metal on the main entrance. The room type will be the same through the building.

Staff Presentation

This 1.88-acre site is located on Lynn Buff Court in northern Laurel, has limited frontage to Route 1 and falls within the DAP study area. This site is mostly forested and does have some environmental wetland features on-site. The proposed building is a 2 story, 61-room hotel with associated parking. Landscape screening will incorporate existing vegetation as well as some new plantings. DPZ would like DAP to provide comments and recommendations on the layout, orientation, shape and size of the property to ensure the design is best suited for the site. DPZ would also like any comments on edge

treatments and perimeter transitions for the property. The property is part of an industrial park so landscape elements that screen undesirable views would be beneficial. DPZ would also request that the DAP comment on the material and scale of the building and ensure the design is in keeping with the design manual.

DAP Questions and Comments

Site Design

Site Layout\Building Location

DAP questioned the proposed use on this site forested site with topographical challenges and limited visibility from Rt. 1. DAP inquired if there is an opportunity to embrace the site and move the building to the east side and use the building to retain grade thereby tucking the parking behind and enter at an upper level. This would allow the applicant to have some rooms overlook the bio ponds and environmental sustainability could inspire the architecture to make this site something unique and special. Some members commented that since the site is flat that the building could be anywhere while others commented that given the site constraints, the building may be in the correct spot for the site.

The applicant questioned what the view would be for those on the lower level facing the other direction. This proposal would result in a retaining wall on the high side which may require easements, reduce parking, and may limit the site from a usability perspective. The applicant commented that this would increase the building cost for this low budget 2-story wood framed motel and would not be agreeable to the client. The applicant commented that the building itself cannot serve as the retaining wall since it will be a 2-story wood structure and would need 2.5 floors to get all the units in if it is an off-hill building. This is the client's typical prototype.

Pedestrians

DAP commented that there is no pedestrian traffic or sidewalks proposed and recommended adding them to the adjacent property.

Retaining Wall\Grade

DAP inquired how high the retaining wall will be.

The applicant advised it will range in height from 10-20 feet at maximum.

DAP inquired if an entire floor of the hotel will be below grade.

The applicant responded that was an error on the graphic and it will not be below grade.

DAP asked if the parking can be sloped toward the retaining wall to reduce the height.

The applicant confirmed that the parking lot will slope around 4-5% from the building toward the retaining wall.

Bioretention

DAP commented that there is significant bioretention below the wall before it gets to the existing wetland and asked if all the bioretention could be down there and save the small bio retention areas in the parking lot for trees.

The applicant commented they would prefer to leave it all intact and not disturb the adjacent forested and wetland areas. There are limitations on how much drainage can go to a bioretention area. The wetland has been processed through MDE and the Army Corp and the applicant has the permit already. The applicant has also been through the Environmental Concept plan with the county.

DAP commented that the applicant should look at moving the bioretention again since there is so much buffer along the road and it is important. DAP suggested that a larger stone reservoir or bio retention mix can process more water in the same amount of horizontal space. An added benefit would be to have some trees in the parking lot and break up the asphalt consistent with the landscape manual.

Signage

DAP commented that the property shows a long-extended line going to Route 1 and asked if there will be a sign out there for the motel.

The applicant confirmed that the long strip is part of the property and noted that there is a small flood plain area at the bottom of the site adjacent to Route 1 so they were unsure if the area would be conducive to signage. Signage will be proposed in that area, but it will need to be limited.

DAP commented that a sign would be needed since the hotel will be invisible and hotels are sometimes impulse drive in facilities. DAP inquired if this is an extended stay facility and what the intent of the site signage would be. DAP suggested that the applicant place signage along the roadway frontage for the hotel.

The applicant confirmed it was an extended stay facility and that is the reason the signage may not be as important to attract road traffic to the site. The owner/operator will be working with businesses in the area so the site would be the destination for visitors. The applicant has not decided on signage but advised there will be an entrance sign and signage on the building.

Landscape

Regarding the plant palette, DAP commented that the Eastern White Pine should be avoided as it has become problematic due to diseases and pests. A Northern White Cedar (Arborvitae) is a good native solution since it grows tall and narrow and could screen the power lines. The plant palette is about 50% native. An alternative to the Limelight Hydrangea is the Hydrangea arborescens which is a native plant. DAP commented that they are assuming the applicant will be adding plant material to the bioretention area and recommended natives such as Buttonbush, Winterberry and Redosier Dogwood to enhance the area and be a nice foreground to the wetland area.

The applicant responded that they agreed with the comments.

DAP commented that renderings are showing landscaping at the base of the building and inquired if there is room there to plant some trees.

The applicant responded there is an opportunity to get some trees at some key points of they are going to eliminate some bioretention up top or move it a modular GATLIN underground bioretention.

DAP advised that the 2 green islands at drop off could hold specimen trees to enhance the environment of the project. DAP made a comment that the applicant should look at using as many native plants as possible and is especially important with regards to climate change and different insects that are moving north.

The applicant agreed and appreciated the comments.

Architecture

DAP commented that the current design is plain and predictable, and the metal panels provide an industrial aesthetic. It would be beneficial to have more horizontals going across.

DAP Motions for Recommendations

1. DAP Chair Robert Gorman made the following motion:

That the applicant looks at moving some of the bio retention down below the wall in order to add some trees to the parking lot, particularly at the entry and drop off zone.

DAP Member Larry Quarrick seconded.

Vote: 5-0

2. DAP Vice-Chair Ethan Marchant made the following motion:

That the design team look at this site for a site-specific, sustainability oriented, creative solution that addresses a sensitivity to the environment instead of taking out a full side of trees and replacing it with an elevated, retained asphalt parking lot.

DAP Member Vivian Stone seconded.

Vote: 5-0

3. DAP Member Vivian Stone made the following motion:

That the applicant put sidewalks between the professional building on the west side to the hotel.

DAP Chair Robert Gorman seconded.

Vote: 5-0

4. DAP Member Larry Quarrick made the following motion:

That the applicant looks at greening up the retaining wall by adding trailing vines or other plant materials.

DAP Chair Robert Gorman seconded.

Vote: 5-0

5. DAP Member Larry Quarrick made the following motion:

That the applicant looks at the plant palette and incorporate more native plants while looking at the Hydrangeas and substituting the Northern White Cedar for the Eastern White Pine.

DAP Chair Robert Gorman seconded.

Vote: 5-0

3. Other Business and Informational Items

- a. The next DAP meeting will be March 23, 2022.

4. Call to Adjourn

DAP Chair Robert Gorman adjourned the meeting at 8:04 PM