

Minutes
Baltimore County Design Review Panel
January 8, 2025
Approved

Contents

Call to order and announcements

Review of today's agenda

Minutes of the November 13, 2024 Meeting

Items for initial or continued discussion

1. 611 Cylburn Road, Sudbrook Park Residential Review
2. 112-116 Slade Avenue, Pikesville Amory, Pikesville Commercial Review.

Adjournment of the Board meeting

Appendices

Appendix A
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Agenda
Minutes – November 13, 2024 meeting, as approved

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Call to order

Design Review Panel (DRP) Chair Joe Ucciferro, called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Baltimore County DRP to order at 6:00 p.m.

The following panel members were:

Present

Mr. Joseph Ucciferro
Ms. Julie Soss
Mr. Donald Kann
Mr. Scott Walters
Mr. Om Khurjekar
Mr. Raj Sharma
Mr. Tarek Saleh

Not Present

Ms. Kelly Ennis
Mr. James Stevens

Residential Reviewer present: Ms. Denise Watkins

County Staff present: Jenifer Nugent, Marta Kulchytska, Shawn Frankton, Brett M. Williams, Sydnie Cooper.

Minutes of the November 13, 2024 Meeting

Mr. Donald Kann moved to the acceptance of the November 13, 2024 draft minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Om Khurjekar and passed by acclamation at 6:08 p.m.

The approved minutes are filed as Appendix B.

ITEM 1

PROJECT NAME: 611 Cylburn Road

DRP PROJECT #: 672

PROJECT TYPE: Sudbrook Park Residential Review

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The presentation was given by Mr. Greg Rice, Vice President of Ameri-Star Homes.

Ameri-Star Homes, Inc., proposes to construct a new single-family home at 611 Cylburn Road in the Sudbrook Park neighborhood of Pikesville. The traditional style four bedroom, 2.5 bath, two-story home will include a 1,915 square foot finished area on the 1st and 2nd floors, as well as an additional 752 square foot finished basement. The home has a 6' x 8' front porch and a 393 square foot two-car garage.

Access to the two-car garage is provided by a 12' wide x 57' long driveway, that includes a 20' x 20' two-car parking pad. When completed, the property will have all disturbed areas sodded and landscaped with shrubbery and trees.

SPEAKERS:

There were no community attendees registered to speak.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Mr. Joseph Ucciferro opened the floor to panel members for discussion.

Ms. Denise Watkins stated that the project involves a series of three houses under construction. She recommended including site plans that show all three lots together, along with associated streetscaping and landscaping. Ms. Watkins noted that the driveway was too wide for the narrow lot, which is not characteristic of the Sudbrook neighborhood. She suggested narrowing the driveway to reduce paving and adding landscaping in its place. Ms. Watkins complimented the farmhouse style of the house, including the aesthetic proportions and the detailing around the windows with wider frames. However, she expressed concern about the prominence of the two-car garage door and the narrow front porch. She recommended a one-car garage door allowing for a wider, more proportionate front porch.

She also suggested using wood or masonry siding to mimic the typical wood siding found in the Sudbrook community, instead of the proposed vinyl siding. Ms. Watkins appreciated the window placement on the house's sides and supported adding shutters. She acknowledged the difficulty of achieving properly sized and detailed wood shutters. Additionally, Ms. Watkins commended the use of native planting materials in the landscaping plans.

Mr. Ucciferro commented on the driveway's width, noting that while it began as wide as the two-car garage, it narrowed to a single-car width further along the driveway.

Mr. Donald Kann agreed with Ms. Watkins' comments, particularly regarding the front porch proportions. He recommended visually enhancing the porch entrance and minimizing the overall mass of the garage door in the design. He also noted inconsistencies between two sets of drawings, where the roof extending over the front porch was not proportionate and did not match. He stated that the architectural drawing was more successful than the rendering.

Mr. Tarek Saleh preferred the horizontal and vertical siding combination shown on the second level of the home renderings over the entirely vertical siding in the architectural drawings. He reiterated the suggestion for a carriage or craftsman-style garage door to reduce the garage's visual mass.

Mr. Saleh expressed concern about the differing setbacks between the house and adjacent properties, stating that greater alignment with neighboring houses would reflect the area's character.

Mr. Raj Sharma stated he had no additional comments.

Mrs. Julie Soss suggested upsizing the evergreen plants by about 2 feet and increasing the shrub size from three to five gallons. She stated that larger plant materials could help offset the house's alignment and provide backyard privacy.

Mr. Om Khurjekar agreed with Ms. Watkins about reducing the driveway width. He noted the need to accommodate two cars but felt the driveway could still be effectively reduced. He also expressed concern about tree removal and suggested adding more trees and plants along the driveway and front yard. He noted that the Japanese holly and Golden Spirea in the landscape plan are not native and recommended replacing them with native evergreen species.

Mr. Scott Walters agreed with Mr. Saleh regarding the setback alignment of the houses. He noted the consistent alignment of other houses on the street and questioned the need to pull this house 20 feet forward. He also inquired whether the optional windows shown in the plans would be included in the finished home.

Mr. Joseph Ucciferro addressed the setback concerns, explaining that zoning provisions would ultimately determine the front setbacks, allowing for front averaging based on adjacent homes. He added that the project was not yet far enough along to finalize setbacks.

Ms. Denise Watkins emphasized the importance of including side windows in the final build to improve the aesthetic of the visible sidewall. She cited community meeting notes that expressed a preference for a one-car garage and a wider porch consistent with the community's architectural style.

Ms. Watkins reiterated the recommendations to use a carriage or craftsman-style garage door and to reduce driveway paving.

Mr. Joseph Ucciferro had no further comments.

DISPOSITION:

Ms. Denise Watkins made a motion to approve the project with the following conditions to be reviewed and approved administratively by the Department of Planning:

1. Provide a one-car garage instead of the proposed two-car garage, and use a carriage or craftsman style garage door.
2. Narrow the driveway to reduce the amount of impervious surface.
3. Create a larger front porch with proportions consistent with the front roof illustrated in the architectural drawings.
4. Ensure the front porch roof proportions in the rendering match those in the architectural drawings.
5. Include the optional side windows in the construction drawings.
6. Provide additional and larger native plantings, including trees and shrubs.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Tarek Salah and approved at 6:54 pm.

ITEM 2

PROJECT NAME: 112-116 Slade Avenue, Pikesville Amory.

DRP PROJECT #: 673

PROJECT TYPE: Pikesville Commercial Review

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The presentation was given by Mr. Peter DiPrinzio of Seawall Development, Christopher Mudd of Venable, Douglas Bothner, Christopher Brown and Dustin Page of Zigler/Snead Architects, Nick Glase and Saeed Pirachia of Unknown Studio, and Anthony Cortea and Kristen Gedeon of MK Engineering.

The Pikesville Armory, a former military campus used by the National Guard for over a century, was decommissioned in 2016. Following a Governor’s Commission to explore community uses for the site, over 1,500 residents, neighborhood groups, and officials contributed to a shared vision for its future. This led to the formation of the Pikesville Armory Foundation (PAF) in 2021, a nonprofit tasked with leading a public-private partnership to transform the 14-acre property into a multi-use venue for recreation, arts, and community programming.

In 2023, the site was officially transferred to PAF, which brought on development partners Seawall and Onyx who engaged the services of design partners Ziger|Snead Architects, Unknown Studio, and MK Engineering to re-imagine the property, which includes an area that lies within the Pikesville Design Review Area (DRP) and will require a DRP review.

The area of the project that will require a DRP review includes acquiring adjacent parcels at 116 and 122 Slade Avenue to improve access, creating a tree-lined boulevard for vehicles and pedestrians, and constructing a centralized parking garage.

The proposed garage at 116-122 Slade Avenue project entails the demolition of two existing buildings and the construction of a new, 135,000-square-foot, four-level precast parking garage structure designed to accommodate approximately 400 vehicles. The garage will feature a modern perforated metal fin screening system. The facility is engineered to enhance the user experience with ample parking, efficient traffic flow, clear sightlines for pedestrian safety and durable materials that ensure long-term performance and sustainability.

In addition to the garage, the project includes site improvements with the development of a welcoming tree-lined entrance boulevard that integrates with the surrounding environment.

SPEAKERS:

Ms. Denise Watkins, a Sudbrook Park resident, noted her desire for more pedestrian-friendly access along the entry lane to the armory. She recommended adding wayfinding signage to help direct traffic from the nearby metro station to the site.

Ms. Montgomery Pace inquired about the location of the senior center during the presentation. She added that her question was addressed during the presentation and thanked the presenter for the information.

Ms. Susan Williams, a member of the Pine Ridge Association, noted that their former Association President, Mr. Howard Needle, played a significant role in initiating this project. She requested that the community be provided with paper copies of the presentation. Ms. Williams expressed interest in enhancing pedestrian and bicycle access to the site, emphasizing the community's preference for walking. She recommended adding robust pedestrian connections to the site from within the community.

Ms. Williams also inquired about the stormwater management plans for the site. She suggested reducing street parking and paving to create a larger green area that could accommodate stormwater management. Additionally, she expressed concern about potential traffic conflicts at the Milford Mill Road entrance. She recommended designing the garage façade with a mesh or similar material that could serve as a canvas for displaying artwork.

Mr. Tom Fekete, representing the Pikesville Revitalization Committee, stated that he has been involved with this project from the beginning and fully supports Ms. Williams' earlier comments. He emphasized the importance of using the garage façade to display artwork, murals, and announcements of

community events in the Pikesville area. Mr. Fekete also expressed concerns about traffic flow and potential congestion during events and peak times at the armory.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Mr. Joseph Ucciferro opened the floor to panel members for discussion.

Mr. Scott Walters commented on the garage placement and site alignment. He noted the placement of the parking garage is slightly off-axis with the event lawn and the overall axis established by the site plan. Mr. Walters suggested shifting the garage to the right or moving the event lawn to the left to strengthen this alignment and enhance the coherence of the overall site plan.

Mr. Walters referred to the metal panels or fins in the façade of the garage having varying densities, with denser patterns at the corners and wider spacing in the middle. He pointed out that from an oblique angle, the fins are prominent, but from a one-point perspective, the precast concrete and the thin edges of the perforated fins dominate. He proposed angling the fins in the middle section to better hide the precast concrete, reduce the porosity, and emphasize the fins to mask the parking garage more effectively.

Mr. Walters emphasized the east and west elevation patterns of the garage facade. He stated the denser pattern of the corners works well on the west elevation, particularly where the ramp changes elevation in the center. As to the east elevation, Mr. Walters recommended relating the pattern density to the landscaping, particularly on the southern edge. He suggested that the density of the façade fins could reflect the changes in tree density as one moves north, creating a stronger relationship between the façade and the landscape.

Mr. Om Khurjekar agreed with Mr. Walters' comments about aligning the garage and event lawn for better coherence. He also commented on the tree planting and landscaping. He acknowledged that the number of trees being planted will significantly buffer the garage from neighbors and surrounding sites. He suggested strengthening the pedestrian connection to Milford Mill Road by extending the landscaping southward to create a more robust community link.

Mr. Khurjekar recommended eliminating the eastern parking bay to turn it into a landscaped median, which would strengthen the eastern side of the project. He recognized the parking requirement challenges but emphasized the benefits of converting the bay into a green space. Mr. Khurjekar praised the material changes in the median that delineates pedestrian and vehicle pathways but expressed concerns about pedestrian safety in this area. He suggested the median could be closed off and repurposed as a food truck or event space, with a permeable barrier to protect pedestrians.

Mr. Khurjekar requested more detailed landscape plans, including the species of trees and planting strategies, and appreciated the precedent images presented. He sought further elaboration on the stormwater management strategies for the site.

Mr. Joseph Ucciferro inquired about the 14 or 16 surface parking spaces and asked if the intent would be to assign the spaces to the senior center, or would they just be a typical space that any resident, or customer could use.

Ms. Julie Soss recommended the use of more permeable paving options. She encouraged the use of the permeable paving, to align with environmental stewardship and stormwater management goals, noting that current examples do not appear to incorporate this feature. She also commented on pedestrian connectivity and green space. Ms. Soss suggested replacing wide sidewalks adjacent to the surface parking spaces with more green space for trees in parking islands.

Ms. Soss highlighted the need for a buffer between pedestrians and parking areas to improve safety and comfort. She recommended that these changes align with pedestrian connections to Milford Mill Road to potentially open up additional design options. Overall, she emphasized that the design would continue to evolve, and hoped it would evolve to better insulate pedestrians, and integrate the panel's recommendations.

Mr. Raj Sharma raised concerns about traffic circulation on the east side, noting that the two openings at Slade Avenue and Milford Mill Road are in close proximity and could create safety issues. He suggested a traffic study and review by the proper county and state traffic administrator. Mr. Sharma also advised against planting bushes on the center island, as they could obstruct motorists' views and create safety hazards.

Mr. Sharma observed that the alignment of the garage with the bike lane and pedestrian traffic appears complicated and recommended simplifying the design.

Mr. Tarek Saleh commented on the traffic circulation and access to the site. He suggested simplifying site access by allowing entry from McHenry and exit through Milford Mill Road to improve circulation and user engagement with the buildings. He expressed concern about the short access point off Milford Mill Road, noting it could lead to traffic congestion during vehicle entry.

Mr. Saleh commented on the garage façade design. He highlighted the challenge of balancing natural ventilation with effective screening for the garage. Mr. Saleh recommended addressing light spillover at night, especially near residences on Irving Place, possibly by incorporating motion-sensor lighting and adding solidity to the façade near the garage elevators for shielding.

Mr. Saleh supported the idea of exploring alternative screening materials, like those that allow for large-scale graphics, to enhance the visual appeal of the garage façade along the main boulevard. He acknowledged and concurred with Mr. Walters' earlier comments about garage fins and their potential design improvements.

Mr. Joseph Ucciferro commented on the surface parking configuration. He suggested reconsidering the design of the surface parking spaces, proposing parallel parking as a potential alternative to the current layout. He highlighted that the existing configuration might confuse drivers entering the site, as it's unclear whether to proceed straight or make a hard right. Mr. Ucciferro raised concerns about how traffic flow would function if the parking spaces were full, recommending further thought and redesign.

DISPOSITION:

Mr. Scott Walters made a motion to approve the project with conditions to be reviewed and approved administratively by the Department of Planning. The conditions were as follows:

1. To consider the alignment of the parking garage with the event lawn to the north.
2. To consider the articulation of the fins in the less dense center portion of the eastern façade.
3. To consider garage façade with screening and to mitigate light spillover near residential areas.
4. To consider permeable pavers as a stormwater mitigation technique.
5. To carefully consider landscaping in the center island that does not obstruct motorists' views.
6. To look at strengthening the bike and pedestrian paths to the south towards Slade Avenue.
7. To strengthen pedestrian connections, particularly to Milford Mill Road, and add buffers between parking and walkways.
8. To consider a more pedestrian-friendly approach in consolidating the angled parking of the on-grade angle parking south of arrival boulevard.
9. The panel agrees with the recommendations put forth by the Planning Department staff.
10. The panel generally agrees with the placement of the parking garage in relation to Slade Avenue.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Om Khurjekar and approved at 8:18 pm.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Om Khurjekar and was seconded by Mr. Scott Walters at 8:18 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 pm.