

*******DRAFT MINUTES*******
Board of Architectural Review – Work Session
Wednesday, July 20, 2022
6:00 p.m., Room 2000 City Hall

Members Present: James Spencer, Chair
John Sprinkle
Christine Sennott
Theresa del Ninno
Margaret Miller

Members Absent: Bud Adams, Laurie Ossman

Secretary: Susan Hellman, Historic Preservation Planner

Staff Present: Marina Novaes, Historic Preservation Planner

This special work session was held to discuss the following item:

BAR 2022-00175 PG

Request for concept review at 899 and 999 North Henry Street

Applicant: Samuel Madden Fairstead Developer, LLC and MCRT Old Town LLC

Sherief Elfar, Torti Gallas Architects, presented the revisions to the proposed design.

Mr. Spencer suggested that a breezeway be added to the south end of the north building, providing a connection between the street and the internal courtyard. The applicant indicated that they would be providing the visual connection through the glazed lobby but that the courtyard needs to be physically separated from the sidewalk.

Mr. Spencer noted that the massing for the gateway element seemed to less significant for this location than expected given the prominence of the north end of the site. The applicant agreed and stated that the massing as shown is a placeholder and is meant to demonstrate that the north end of the building would be asymmetrical, justified to the west based on nearby traffic flow.

Ms. del Ninno expressed concern about the extent of public open space on the site. She noted that the courtyard on the north end of the south building will be in shadow much of the time and asked if it could be flipped to the south end of the building. The applicant indicated that the courtyard had been located on this side of the building in order to reinforce the connection between the north and south buildings and to create an active environment on Madison Street.

Mr. Spencer noted that the applicant had located the courtyard in its present position based on Board feedback indicating a preference for exterior space similar in design to the existing buildings.

Ms. Del Ninno asked the applicant about the location and visibility of rooftop equipment that could make the building appear taller. The applicant indicated that the equipment would be centrally located on the roof such that it would not be visible from the street.

Ms. Del Ninno suggested that the gateway element could be something similar to the planted park at the

west end of King Street and does not necessarily need to be a physical tower.

Ms. Miller stated that she felt that the proposed buildings are too large and massive for the location and that she could not think of another building in the historic district that occupies an entire city block the way that these will when completed.

Ms. Miller expressed that in order for the buildings to be successful, they would need to be rendered as a collection of smaller buildings similar in size to those found elsewhere in the historic district. The details of the buildings adjacent to the sidewalk would be critical to the success of the design.

Ms. Miller asked the applicant to include a greater level of porosity to the design, noting that alleys are a critical part of the fabric of the historic district and that the design should incorporate this in some way.

Ms. Miller stated that the gateway element will have to be a welcoming piece that will command a presence.

Ms. Miller was concerned about the proposed density of use on Montgomery Street.

Ms. Miller suggested that the architect look at the portico at the Beatley Library and at the design for the Jefferson Houston School for a contemporary design that is compatible with their surroundings.