

# OLD GOUCHE in charles village



Urban Design and Architectural Review Panel  
Baltimore City Department of Planning  
417 E. Fayette Street, 8th Floor  
Baltimore, MD 21202

Attention: Anthony Cataldo

September 24, 2013

Dear Mr. Cataldo & the Review Panel:

Please accept this statement on behalf of Baltimore's Old Goucher community in regards to proposed designs for the 25th Street Station Planned Unit Development. While the developer has informed us that we will not be able to see a copy of the revised site plans ahead of Thursday's meeting, the Old Goucher Community Association and Old Goucher Business Alliance insist that proposed designs and revisions submitted before the Urban Design and Architectural Review Panel reflect our community's priorities.

In addition, we insist that any revised designs take into account the many changes to the surrounding neighborhoods' demographics and built environment that have occurred in the three years since the PUD was initially approved. Hundreds of new residences have been constructed in Old Goucher and Remington, welcoming many new families to the neighborhood. Similarly, major new development and infrastructure projects are in progress in the blocks immediately surrounding the 25th Street Station site. Any design revisions should respond to these recent and planned changes.

There are several community priorities that we will expect to see addressed:

- The 25<sup>th</sup> Street Station project is directly bounded on three sides by the Charles/25th Urban Renewal Plan, and it will effectively be completing a missing area within these boundaries. As such, project designs and modifications should conform to the Design Standards required by the URP. The following comments are consistent with both the Standards and the intent of the URP.
- The revised site plan and architectural design should reflect contemporary urban—rather than suburban—shopping center designs that will attract the type of tenants that will make the project successful in the long-term. A smart, urban, and forward-looking design is critical for generating jobs, economic growth, and improved quality of life for the neighborhood.
- This revised design should take into account recent, current, and planned infrastructure and development projects occurring nearby. (See attached list)
- The neighborhood insists that the design enhance the pedestrian-friendly character of Old Goucher by placing main, front-facing facades adjacent to public sidewalks. Old Goucher is one of Baltimore's most urban and walkable neighborhoods with a Walk Score of 98 (out of 100) and Transit Score of 70, and the design should not degrade this character.\*

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- Additionally, we are concerned about the safety of the many residents who will be visiting the development on foot. The design should not expect or encourage shoppers to walk through busy parking lots to reach store entrances. Street-fronting facades and street entrances will improve pedestrian safety.
- We recommend placing the Wal-Mart parking lot and loading docks to the northwest of the building, adjacent to the railroad tracks. This will allow for a more pedestrian-oriented design with entrances on 24th Street and/or Howard and 25th.
- The design should mitigate traffic and direct it away from residential areas. Main vehicle and delivery entrances to parking and truck loading areas must be placed away from residential blocks. Preferred vehicular entrances are on Sisson St., Howard St., and the blocks of 24th St. closest to Howard St.
- We expect that the revised design will have a high standard (LEED or equivalent) storm water management plan to mitigate runoff of the parking areas. Preferences include enhanced greenscaping, permeable pavers, bioswales, creation of micro wetlands or other features to reduce runoff.
- Landscaping and trees on or adjacent to the project should conform to the specifications of the Charles/25<sup>th</sup> Urban Renewal Plan: parking lots must include at least one large shade tree per 2,500 square feet of parking area; public sidewalks must include street trees at least every 15 feet; all trees should be planted in pits with a minimum of 50 sq. ft. of unpaved surface.

These priorities are consistent with those expressed by the community throughout the process and evolution of the 25th Street Station project.

Sincerely,

Bruce Willen and Philip Lacombe  
on behalf of the Old Goucher Community Association and Old Goucher Business Alliance

Jeanne Knight  
President, Old Goucher Community Association

Ken Abrams  
President, Old Goucher Business Alliance

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## *Notes & Appendices*

### **Partial List of Major Development and Infrastructure Projects within 2 blocks:**

Maryland Avenue Cycle Track  
Charles Street Reconstruction  
Millers Square  
Single Carrot Theater  
Remington Row  
Millers Court  
Autograph Playhouse  
2300 Maryland Ave. RFP  
Anderson Honda Redevelopment (2500 N. Howard)  
Study to convert Saint Paul and Calvert Streets to two-way traffic

### **Additional Major Projects located within .5 miles:**

Barclay / Telesia / North Calvert Green Development  
North Avenue Public Realm (street redesign)  
North Avenue Market  
MICA Studio Center and Graduate Center  
Parkway/Maryland Film Festival Theater  
10 E. North Avenue  
Mill No. 1 (Falls Road)

\* Source: Live Baltimore, <http://livebaltimore.com/neighborhoods/old-goucher/#.UkDsuRZU5Os>