



*Bernard "Jack" Young
Mayor*

**COMMISSION FOR
HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL
PRESERVATION**

Tom Liebel, Chairman



*Chris Reyer
Director*

STAFF REPORT

October 13, 2020

REQUEST: Final Review – Construct Five-Story Building

ADDRESS: 421-31 South Broadway (Fells Point Historic District)

RECOMMENDATION: Approve of Final Design

STAFF: Walter Edward Leon

ARCHITECT: NW2 Engineers

APPLICANT: Brandon Chasen

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT

The site is located near the center of the Fells Point Historic District. Fells Point is significant as one of the original three settlements that merged to form the beginnings of Baltimore City. The area is directly linked to early maritime trade, which in turn was linked to Baltimore's growth and development. Besides the significance of Fells Point in the eighteenth century, the community has been a constantly growing and changing urban place. Many of the earliest houses were added on to in the Victorian era creating a unique blend of pre-Revolutionary War and post-Civil War architectural styles and characteristics. Fells Point has been home to a diverse neighborhood of many ethnic groups, each influencing the growth and development of the area, throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Many of the later buildings are of architectural significance and are consistent with the waterfront character of Fells Point, even if stylistically different.

Site Conditions: The property at 421-431 South Broadway had been the location of several commercial buildings that were demolished prior to the designation of the district in 2007. The site is located along the main commercial north/south corridor of South Broadway. The immediate structures range from two up five story high mix use commercial structures that span the majority of the period of significance for the Fells Point historic district, mainly the late Victorian thru to the mid-twentieth century.

BACKGROUND

The Commission previously reviewed this site in March 2020 and gave concept approval with final details to return to the full Commission. CHAP Staff had previously disapproved a proposal to permanently install a chain link fence along the perimeter of the site.

In March 2020, the Commission, having reviewed the staff report, approved a motion to approve staff recommendation of concept approval of height, massing, and scale with the proposal to return to full commission.

In addition, the commissioners provided the following comments to guide the applicant's final review submission:

- Develop fenestration independent of signage
- Provide additional articulation of windows, using major/minor sticking
- Is a canopy implied?
- Provide a drawing or rendering that places your new design in context with the surrounding streetscape
- The piers vertically separate 1st story storefront windows. Explore revisions to better harmonize these two components
- Window openings look too large. Treat as either big warehouse windows or residential windows.
- Where's the primary residential entrance Redesign to distinguish between retail and residential entrances. Create a hierarchy of entrances.
- View this project as having a positive, transformative impact on this section of Broadway. This building should greatly enhance this section.

PROPOSAL

The applicants propose to construct a five-story residential and commercial building on a vacant lot along the main street corridor of the historic district. The building will have ground floor retail along Broadway, offices on the second story, apartments on the third, fourth and fifth stories. The offices and residences will sit a ground floor garage that is entered thru the rear.

APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES

CHAP Staff applied:

2.1 Guiding Principles for New Design

2.2 Site Design

2.3 Scale and Form

2.4 Building Features

2.4.1 BUILDING ENTRANCES

- Design building entrances to enhance the connection between the street and the building interior.
- Respect the existing pattern of building entrances when locating new entrances.
- Design new storefront entrances that are compatible with surrounding commercial buildings.

The applicants propose to construct a central entry lobby that is centered on the main facade and is flanked by retail spaces that all are directly accessed from the sidewalk along Broadway. These active entry and retail openings and spaces help activate the streetscape along this long dormant section of South Broadway.

2.4.3 GARAGES

- Design and place garage entrances and doors to be compatible with surrounding buildings.
- Do not place garage entrances on front facades where there is no historic precedent.

The applicants propose to have a ground floor garage which is accessed thru a pair of roll up doors in the rear alley.

2.4.5 ROOFS

- Design new roofs to complement the orientation, pitch, complexity, and scale of roofs on surrounding buildings.
- Locate and screen rooftop features to minimize their visibility from the street.
- Design cornices to be compatible with the height, scale, and articulation of existing cornice

The applicants propose to construct a flat roof on the 5th floor and on the 4th floor.

The 4th floor will have a roof deck at the front that will use the cornice as a hidden railing. (The pool that was previously proposed here has been removed.)

2.5 Materials and Detailing

2.5.1 DOORS AND WINDOWS

- Design doors and windows to be compatible with the placement, scale, type, and operation of doors and window and their openings in surrounding buildings.
- Design doors and windows to be compatible with the architectural character of the new facade and the surrounding buildings.

The doors and residential windows are appropriate to the other contemporary surrounding structures found in the Broadway corridor.. The storefront windows are similar to other contemporary windows that have been approved by the Commission in other locations along Broadway, most notably at the new construction project at Bond and South Broadway.

2.5.2 MATERIALS

- Choose building materials that are compatible with the color, size, texture, scale, and quality of building materials used in surrounding buildings. Where a particular material is dominant within an area, utilize that material in the new design.
- Cover and finish exterior walls with quality materials that are compatible with surrounding buildings. Traditional materials existing within the historic district, such as wood, brick, and stone, are preferred.

The front and rear facades will be covered in brick that is similar to other natural brick colors used throughout the district. Some non-visible areas will be sheathed in stucco.

ANALYSIS

The applicant was receptive to revisions to make a successful project and has incorporated the Commission's comments:

- The fenestration pattern is set apart from the proposed signage location down the center of the front facade.
- The window openings have additional articulation set within the planes between the brick pilaster piers.

- Three metal canopies are part of the design that gives coverage to the pedestrians on the sidewalk. A 3D rendering of the street front design has been provided (See Below).
- The piers give better definition and separation to the front elevation storefronts as requested.
- The windows on the upper levels have been selected as requested to give a more residential character to the building.
- The previously designed signage that was placed down the center bay has been removed and the name will now be located above the center canopy entrance. This will help convey the hierarchy of entrances the Commission requested.

Staff believes the project meets the CHAP Guidelines:

- 2.1 Guiding Principles for New Design
- 2.2 Site Design
- 2.3 Scale and Form
- 2.4 Building Features
 - 2.4.1 BUILDING ENTRANCES
 - 2.4.3 GARAGES
 - 2.4.5 ROOFS
- 2.5 Materials and Detailing
 - 2.5.1 DOORS AND WINDOWS
 - 2.5.2 MATERIALS

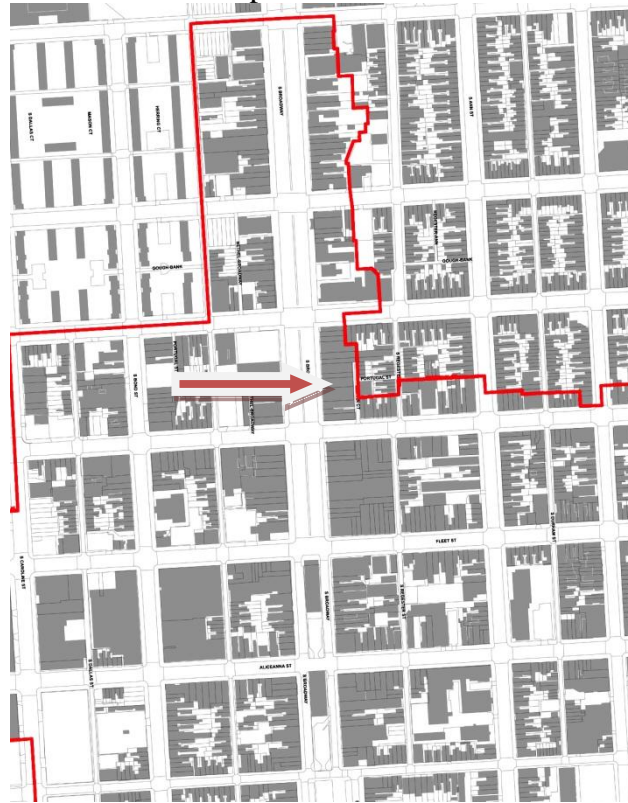
NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

The Fells Point Design Review Committee and the Fells Point Task Force were notified and provided the plans as per the CHAP Rules and Procedures for the proposal. FDRC supports the plans and re-use of the site.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve final design.

Eric L. Holcomb
Executive Director

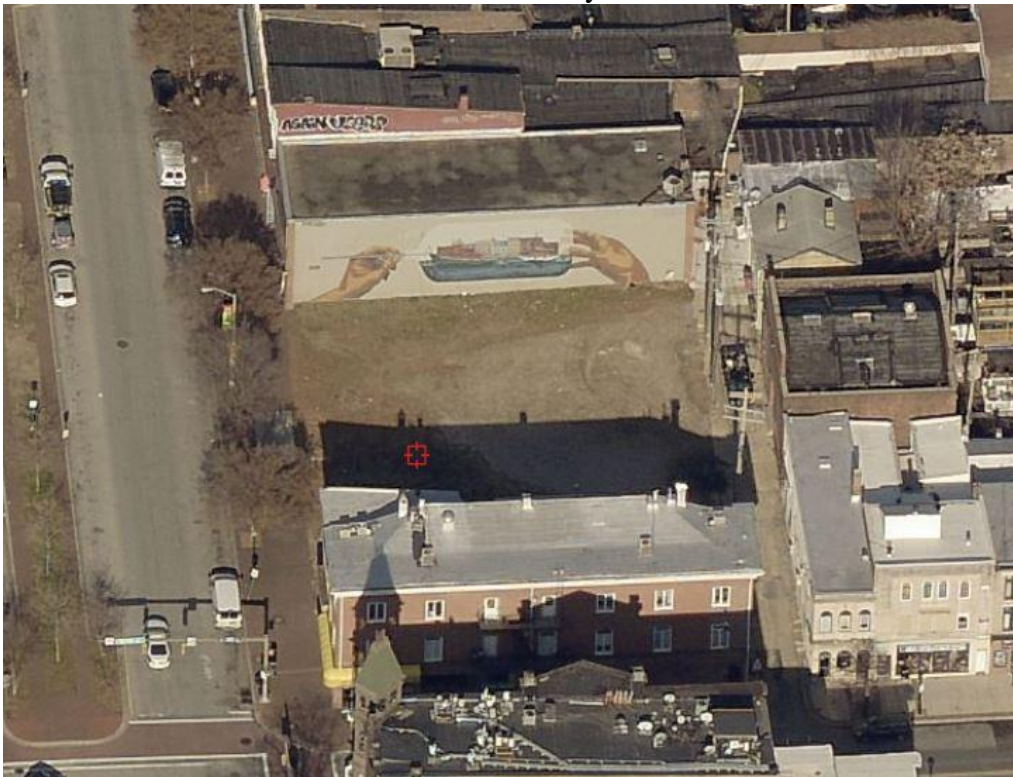
Site Map- Historic District



Aerial View of the site, 421 South Broadway



View of 421 South Broadway from the South



View of 421 South Broadway from the west



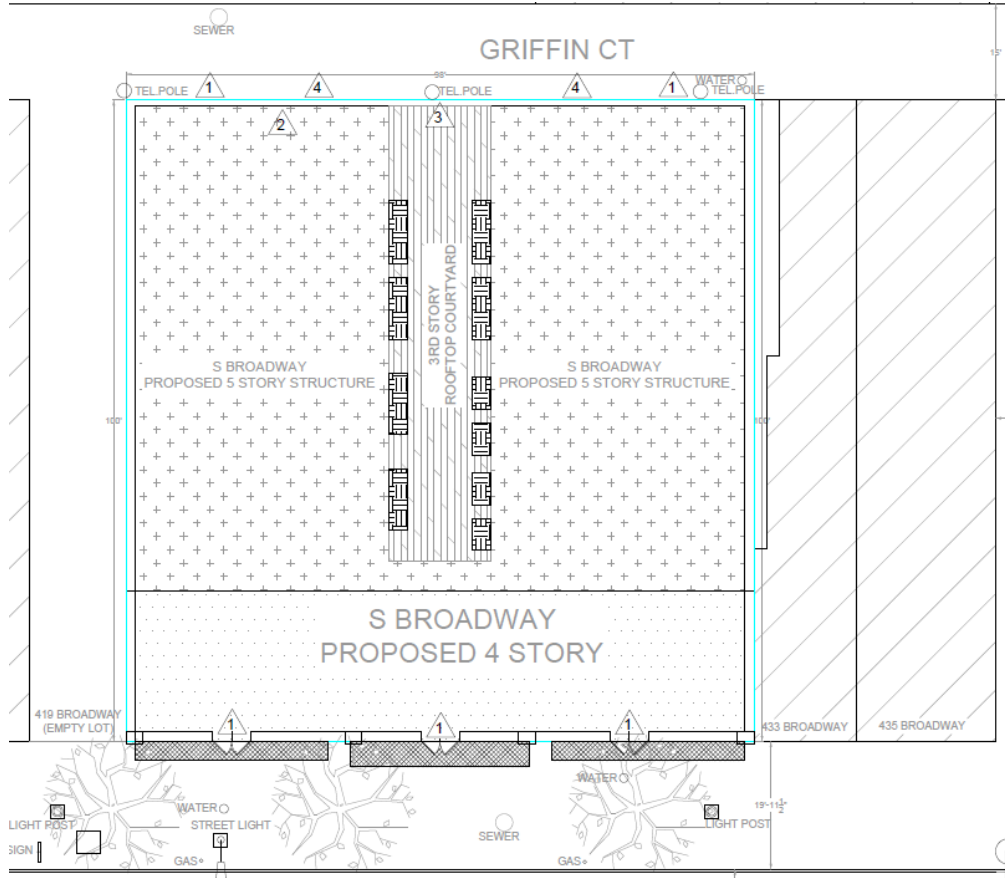
View 421 South Broadway from the north



View 421 South Broadway from the east



Site Plan



Streetscape Rendering



3D from Spring 2020 Presentation



3D Rendering from Spring 2020 Presentation



March 2020 Concept Review Design



October 2020 Final Design Review

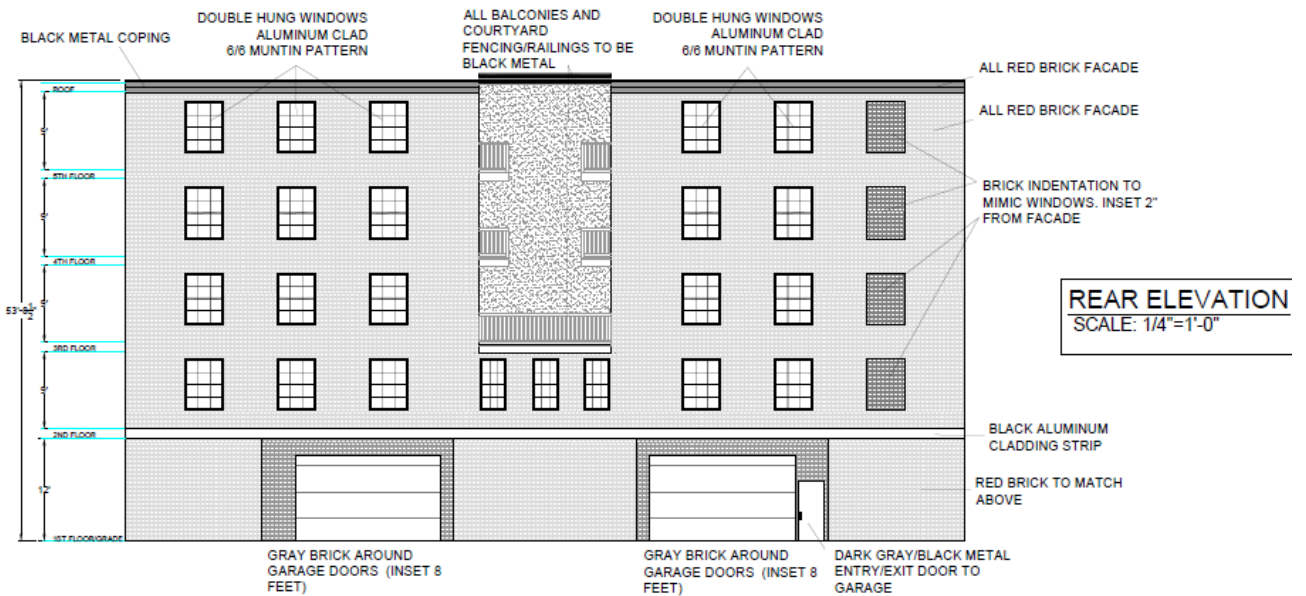
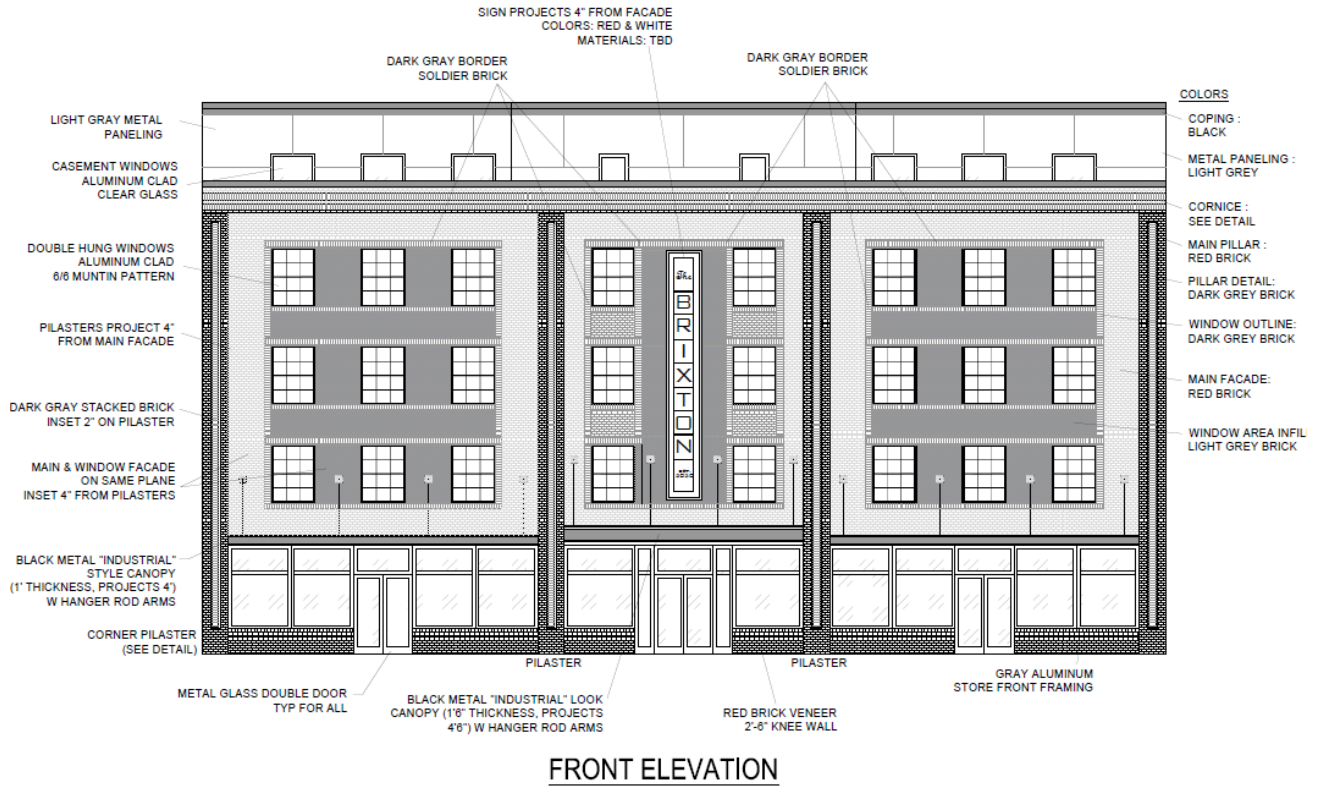


March 2020 Rear Elevation Concept Review



October 2020 Rear Elevation Final Design Review





Side Elevations

