



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

THE MARYLAND - NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

**FROM:** Molline Jackson,  
Art Review Panel Coordinator

**PROJECT:** Bainbridge Bethesda and St. Elmo Apartments.  
Site Plans Nos. 82009011B and 820170030

**DATE:** April 12, 2017

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*The Art Review Panel has generated the following meeting minutes based on our discussion of the design concept for the public amenities on March 21, 2017 for Bainbridge Bethesda (Site Plan No. 82009011B) and St. Elmo Apartments (Site Plan No. 820170030). The Panel's recommendations should be incorporated into the Staff Report and strongly considered prior to the certification of the Site Plan and/or prior to the release of the first building permit. Should you have any additional questions and/or comments please feel to contact the Art Review Panel Coordinator.*

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**Attendance:**

Neil Braunstein (Lead Plan Reviewer)  
Elza Hisel-McCoy (Area 1 – Supervisor)  
Molline Jackson (Public Art Coordinator)  
Judy Sutton-Moore (Panelist)  
Mark Kramer (Panelist)  
Ralph Bennett (Panelist)  
Damon Orobona (Panelist)  
Christopher Anderson (Panelist and PATSC Representative)  
Claudia Rousseau (Panelist and PATSC Representative)  
Amina Cooper (Arts & Humanities Council Representative)

Nancy Bassing (Applicant)  
Edward Lenkin (Applicant)  
Steve Robins (Attorney)  
Elizabeth Rogers (Attorney)  
Thomas Rainer (Landscape Architect)  
Joshua Sloan (Landscape Architect & Engineer)  
Craig Williams (Architect)

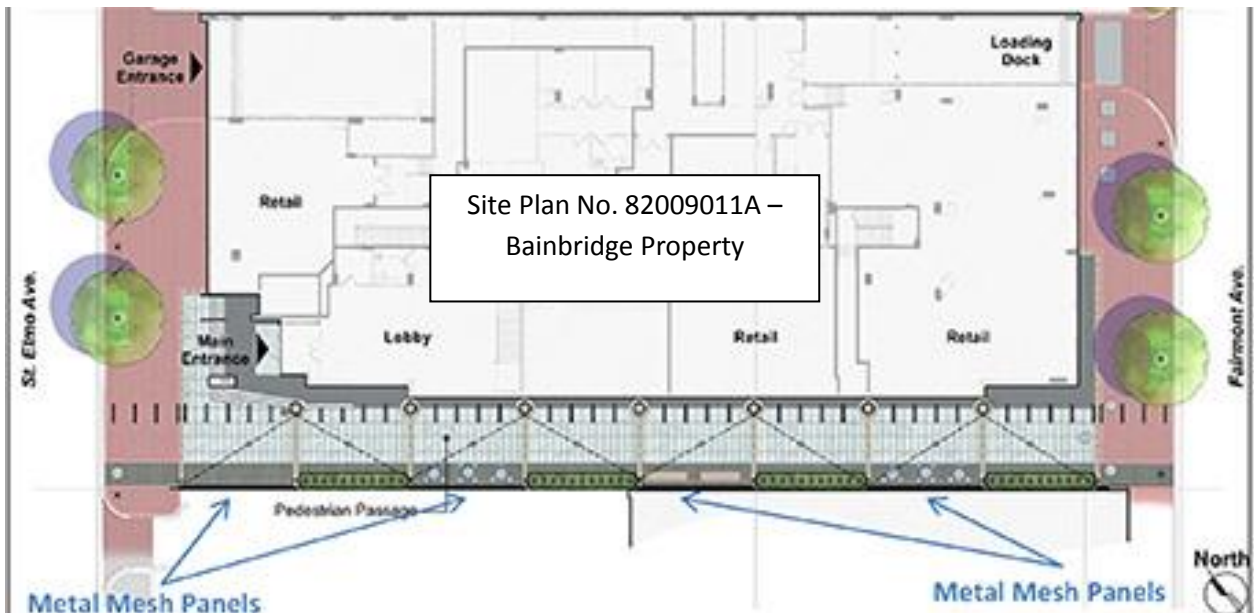
**Meeting Notes:**

- The subject properties are located at 4931 and 4925 Fairmont Avenue, 4920, 4922, 4924, 4926 and 4928 St. Elmo Avenue.
- The property is zoned CR and was approved for 21% public use space.

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- The Applicants are proposing to remove the public artwork (removal of public artwork) approved under Site Plan No. 82009011A for the Bainbridge Bethesda Apartments (formerly known as the “Monty”) as referenced Figure 1 below.
- The St. Elmo Property (Site Plan No. 820170030) includes a 5,336 square feet on-site public use space (roughly 21% of net tract area), 20-foot wide mid-block pedestrian passageway between Fairmont Avenue and St. Elmo Avenue.
- In February 2015, the St. Elmo Property (Sketch Plan No. 320150040) was approved for redevelopment with a maximum of 309,968 square feet of which 263,956 square feet will be used to construct a mix of uses (including 15% MPDUs) on the entire tract area (1.41-acres; including both St. Elmo Property and sending properties).



**Figure 1 – Existing Conditions & Existing Public Artwork**

- In July 2009, the Bainbridge Property (Site Plan No. 820090110) was approved for a maximum of 200 units (including 30 MPDUs) and up to 7,700 square feet of non-residential uses.
- The Site Plan seeks to redevelop the subject property with a 16-story mixed use development, containing office, retail and residential uses. This property is designed to respond to the transit-oriented nature of its location and will enhance the pedestrian environment.
- This mid-block passageway will mirror the passageway on the Bainbridge Property (Site Plan No. 82009011A). The combined passageway is equal to double the size.
- This public space is designed as a standalone connection flanked by retail storefronts and lobby uses on the ground floor.
- The existing public artwork (*reference Figure 2 below*) is located in the passageway (site-specific public artwork) and consists of 4 metal panels (approximately 12-feet by 24-feet), fabricated of 9 gauge, galvanized chain link fencing with 4 different designs and color combinations, set in galvanized steel frames and separated by Bamboo in steel planters; artist Dan Steinhilber.

- This existing artwork was intended to provide screening along the property line, between the two properties. This barrier is no longer needed at this location (*reference Figure 1 above*).



**Figure 2 – Existing Public Artwork**

- Figure 2 above illustrates the existing public artwork, which was appraised at \$25,000 by de Andino Fine Arts as of 2017.
- Given the size and scale of the redesign of the mid-block passageway, the existing artwork would either impede pedestrian circulation or block major views from the glass store fronts on the Bainbridge Property.
- The Applicants is proposing to replace the 4-panels with a landmark sculpture (prominent vertical emphasized) that will attract pedestrians from Fairmont Avenue and St. Elmo Avenue.
- The proposed sculpture will be mounted on a podium and will be “touchable” by pedestrians.
- The Applicant has researched a few artists that are internationally recognized and could possibly fulfill the goal of enhancing the public passageway. After completing research and meeting with the following artists, the Applicant is strongly considering a work of art created by Jaume Plensa. The Applicant has not yet finalized the details of the artwork to be purchased and located onsite.
- Specific site details (e.g. materials, finish, maintenance, structural stability, lighting, etc.) will be provided prior to the certification of the Site Plan.



Figure 3 – Examples by Tony Cragg



Figure 4 – Examples by Ursula van Rydingsvard





**Figure 5 – Examples by Jaume Plensa**

- Considering the scale and size of the examples referenced above, the total cost of installation will exceed the appraised value of the existing metal panels, and will be centrally located within the mid-block passageway to ensure maximum visibility.

**Panel Recommendations:**

1. The Art Review Panel has reviewed the submittal application and supports the removal of the existing public artwork(s). The Applicant will notify the Art Review Panel when a landing location is determined. The Applicant is committed to the search to find a new location that is acceptable to the artist, at least until the building permit has been issued for the St. Elmo Apartment building.
2. The Applicant will come back and present the final design concept, when the artist has been identified and prior to the certification of the Site Plan.
3. The Art Review Panel would like to recommend that the Applicant consider more massing at the top of the artwork and be more narrower toward the base of the sculpture. Similar to a tree structure (as shown in Figure 4), the verticality of the artwork is expressly more represented in this form than as shown in Figure 5.
4. The color of the artwork should also be carefully considered, so as not to blend into the background (as shown in Figure 5), but rather to stay out from the street's edge. Essentially, the color and structure should be emphasized to attract pedestrians, pull them into the mid-block passageway and activate the streetscape.
5. Adequate signage and lighting are also critical to the visibility and character of the public space.

6. The Applicant should provide site details prior to the issuance of the building that clearly indicate the overall dimensions, prescribed materials, necessary lighting fixtures, footers and fasteners to ensure adequate safety and proper inspection of the artworks by the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County (“AHC MC”) and Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (“DPS”). This information will most likely come from the engineered drawings, certified by the structural engineer.
7. The appropriate signage should also be clearly visible, specifically identifying the title of the piece, artist name, materials, completion date, and overall dimensions.
8. Upon the final inspection of the public artwork(s), the Applicant must submit to the Public Art Coordinator with the Maryland – National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) at least three images of the artwork(s) on-site and information regarding the 1) associated project number, 2) title of the piece, 3) date of completion, 4) description of materials used, and 5) address. This information will be added to the existing inventory of the public artworks throughout the County (<http://www.mcatlas.org/art/>).