Friends of McMillan Park

October 28, 2013

Here are some specific issues with the Gray Administration’s updated development plan for McMillan Park to note in your testimony for the DC Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) hearing on October 31, 2013:

- There has been only marginal improvement since the previous iteration was so bad; the changes are essentially "lipstick on a pig".
- The plans create no sense of a campus.
- The Olmsted walk has been eliminated and changed to private front yards.
- There has been notable destruction of historic fabric:
  - Demolition of the underground caverns is unacceptable
  - Demolition of the walls framing the courts is unacceptable
- The plan lacks the tri-partite organization required by HPRB’s approved design principles for the site. This plan is divided into four sections.
- The supermarket and the retail should be adaptively inserted into preserved sand filtration chambers, which could easily be entered from the sidewalk at North Capitol Street.
- The scale of buildings remains too large and disproportionate.
- The faux-historic cookie-cutter row houses are barely disguised by their color scheme.
- The buildings to the north are very massive and out of scale with the whole site and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- The office buildings should be divided into smaller volumes and would be much more appropriate located on the north side of Michigan Avenue in the hospital complex, rather than in a historic park.
- The apartment building above the supermarket is too massive.
- The supermarket wall next to the north service court dominates the street.
- The shared color scheme fails to unify the disparate scales of the buildings across the quad-partite plan.
- The community center is too small.