



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

February 26, 2015

REQUESTS: Parks Master Plan –Amendment 1

For the purpose of amending the Parks Master Plan to:

- Add a portion of BGE property at 2107 W. Coldspring Lane for expansion of Cold Spring Park and delist a small portion of the southeast corner of 4915 Greenspring Avenue (Camp Small). (Sixth District)
- Delist a portion of McKim Park at 1200 E. Street Baltimore and add 1251 E. Fayette Street for the expansion of McKim Park. (12th District)
- Add a portion of the Pimlico Safety Academy grounds at 3500 W Northern Parkway. (Fifth District)

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Tamara Woods

PETITIONER: Department of Planning

OWNERS: Various (Mayor and City Council and Private)

SITE/GENERAL AREA

General Area: The parcels included are located within four neighborhoods of the City: Coldspring, Woodberry, Jonestown and Glen. The Coldspring and Woodberry neighborhoods are south of W. Northern Parkway, west of the Jones Falls Expressway, north of Druid Hill Park and east of Greenspring Avenue. The area includes the Loyola Athletic Fields and the Northern District Police Station south of West Cold Spring Lane, and Cylburn Arboretum to the north. The Cold Spring Lane Station for the light rail is located at the southwest corner of the West Cold Spring Lane overpass to the Jones Falls Expressway.

The Jonestown neighborhood is situated between Pleasant View Gardens and Little Italy and is within walking distance of Downtown. The neighborhood is a mixed use neighborhood that has both commercial uses, single-family and multi-family residential units. Portions are within a local historic district which includes both the Shot Tower and the Friends Meeting House. The Glen neighborhood is located in Northwest Baltimore with Northern Parkway as its southern boundary and Reisterstown Road to the west. The Mt. Washington neighborhood lies to the east

and Cross Country to the north. It is within walking distance of Pimlico Racetrack and the Cylburn Arboretum.

CONFORMITY TO PLANS

The proposed amendment is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Baltimore City Comprehensive Master Plan, specifically: PLAY Goal 3, Objective 1: Maintain a Well-managed System of Parks & Open Spaces.

HISTORY

- On February 2, 1968, the Plan of Parks & Recreation Facilities: Part of The Master Plan for the City of Baltimore was adopted by the Planning Commission.
- On November 21, 2006, Ordinance #06-019, was approved by the Mayor and City Council for the creation of the Baltimore City Comprehensive Master Plan.

ANALYSIS

The Baltimore City Charter establishes the Department of Planning and the Planning Commission, as well as outlines their powers and duties. The Planning Department is charged with creating and maintaining a Master Plan for the City. Within the Charter, the scope of the Master Plan is to consist of a series of component plans that can address among other things “the extent of publicly owned places of recreation, such as playgrounds, squares, and parks”.

Periodically the Department of Recreation and Parks needs to review and make modifications to its land inventory. These plan amendments must be approved by the Planning Commission as amendments to the Parks Master Plan. In addition to making revisions to the Master Plan, which would include the addition of properties to the plan or delisting of properties from the Plan, the Charter outlines that public improvements, which could include parks and places of recreation, be in conformance with the Master Plan and have first been approved by the Planning Commission. The following three projects are included in Amendment 1:

- 2107 W. Coldspring Lane and 4915 Greenspring Avenue (Camp Small)
The property swap at Coldspring Lane and Camp Small is to create more useable open space while providing for a better site for a nearby development. In addition to this action, there are several other actions that have come before Planning Commission in support of this project: City Council Bill #14-0449/ Urban Renewal - Coldspring Neighborhood Development Program – Amendment, which is being amended to add a new Transit-Oriented Development land use for the proposed Coldspring Transit-Oriented Development site and City Council Bill #14-0456, which calls for the rezoning of several properties on West Cold Spring Lane.
- 1200 E. Baltimore Street and 1251 E Fayette Street
The amendment for McKim Park is in support of a proposed development and to allow for park improvements. Currently, McKim Park is an L-shaped park that fronts both Fayette Street and Baltimore Street. Within the park is the Friends Meeting house, basketball courts and open fields. There is a proposed development that would require the use of the southern portion of the site along Baltimore Street. In addition, there is a

Mayor and City Council lot adjacent to the park along Fayette Street that would be transferred to the Department of Recreation & Parks from Baltimore Housing. This lot will help reduce the impact that the proposed development would have on the footprint of McKim Park.

- 3500 W. Northern Parkway

This property is the location of the Pimlico Public Safety Academy and has existing playfields on a portion of the site. The amendment is to include the portion of the property with the playfields in the Parks Master Plan. The Northwest Community Planning Forum Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP) which was adopted by Planning Commission in March 2005 and updated in December 2012 proposes that the fields at the Public Safety Training Academy at Northern Parkway and Park Heights Avenue be re-purposed for community use. The fields are currently being maintained by the Department of Recreation & Parks and are included in the Local Impact Aid spending plan for FY13/14 (allocated \$115,000) and for the FY15 spending plan (\$50,000). It is also included in the draft FY16 spending plan. The process has been initiated to subdivide that open space and transfer this portion of the site to the Department of Recreation & Parks.

The act of amending the Parks Master Plan is not in lieu of any other development approvals which may be needed. Today's Planning Commission action would authorize the amendments outlined above to take place. Once the specific development proposals, including final subdivision plans, are approved by Planning Commission, the exact lot configurations and resulting acreage will be incorporated into the digital Parks Master Plan inventory.

Notifications:

In advance of a hearing on this matter, all projects have individually been reviewed by the Parks Board and the Board has discussed the Master Plan amendment on January 22, 2015 and February 19, 2015. Also, staff did a citywide notification. In addition to the citywide notification, staff notified the following specific groups: CHAI, Cheswolde Neighborhood Association, Inc., Glen Neighborhood Improvement Association, Fallstaff Improvement Association, Inc., Cross Country Improvement Association, Mt. Washington Improvement Association, Jonestown Planning Council, Coldspring Community Association, Concerned Citizens of Woodberry, Cylburn Arboretum Association, Greenspring Trails Association, and the Urban Forestry Initiative.



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