



Catherine E. Pugh  
Mayor

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

### STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur  
Director

February 16, 2017

**REQUEST:** Multiple Principal Structures on a Residential Lot/ 1400 East Monument Street

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

**STAFF:** Tamara Woods

**PETITIONER:** The Woda Group, Inc.

**OWNER:** Baltimore Housing (Housing Authority of Baltimore City)

#### **SITE/GENERAL AREA**

**Site Conditions:** The subject property is all residential units located within the Gay Street neighborhood, but is most associated with the Oldtown neighborhood, which is centrally located between downtown Baltimore and the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions.

**General Area:** The area is located directly to the east of Downtown. This area includes the Oldtown Mall, site of the former Somerset Homes, Dunbar High School, and the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions

#### **HISTORY**

There are no prior Planning Commission actions for this site.

#### **CONFORMITY TO PLANS**

The request conforms to the goals and objectives of the Baltimore City Comprehensive Master Plan, specifically:

- LIVE Goal 2: Elevate the Design and Quality of the City's Built Environment (Objective 1: Improve Design Quality of Baltimore's Built Environment)

#### **ANALYSIS**

The proposal for the rehabilitation of the existing Somerset Extension residential development. The site is zone R-8 and is approximately 2.665 acres. The site is currently improved with a garden style apartment complex. There are currently 60 units on site comprised in 12 buildings and range from three-bedroom units to six- bedroom units.

This site is currently under the ownership of the Housing Authority of Baltimore City. The development is included in the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program that allows

private entities to acquire the site from HUD. The site is currently public housing, but once the acquisition is complete, the complex will convert to Section 8 with a long-term contract that will preserve permanently affordable housing to low-income households.

**Multiple Principal Structures on a Residential Lot:**

Per §3-301 of the Baltimore City Zoning Code, “(1) no more than one principal detached structure may be located on (i) any residential lot, or (ii) any office-residential, business, or industrial lot that is adjacent to a residential lot...,” unless it would otherwise conform to this article and its design approved by the Planning Commission (BCZC §3-301.b).

Design approval includes the site plan and building elevations. All uses, height, and F.A.R for the project are governed by the zoning of the property. Below is staff’s analysis of the development Project:

- **Site Plan:** The existing site plans consists of four central apartment buildings surrounded by eight bars of apartment buildings. The homes all front an interior parking lot with the back of the homes facing the streets. The proposed site plan includes the demolition of the twelve units in the four interior buildings. The units will be relocated to perimeter apartment buildings as infill units. In addition, a new community center and playground is proposed within the site. In addition, the site will feature substantial landscape improvements, including new front yards, street trees, repaired and new sidewalks and lighting.

The site plan had its final review by the Site Plan Review Committee on December 7, 2016.

- **Elevations:** The current buildings are townhouse style and constructed of concrete block. The fronts of the buildings are interior to the site and the exterior yards that face the major streets have site privacy walls for the backyards. The site walls will be removed and the homes will be redesigned to have front entrances facing the streets, as well as new front porches with awnings. The proposed infill units will be constructed of a cementitious material..

The elevations were reviewed by design staff of the Planning Department. All design concerns have been resolved.

**COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION**

Staff has notified the following: Change4Real, Housing Authority of Baltimore City Resident Advisory Board, the Dunbar Coalition and the 12th District City Councilman Robert Stokes.



**Thomas J. Stosur  
Director**