



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

May 10, 2012

REQUEST: Minor Amendment & Final Design Approval/Gateway South PUD – Greyhound Bus Terminal

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Natasha Becker

PETITIONER: Department of Transportation

OWNER: Mayor & City Council

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: The Gateway South Planned Unit Development comprises roughly 15.15 acres on the east side of Russell Street within the Carroll Camden Industrial Area. The site is zoned B-2-3 and includes a mix of vacant and industrial parcels, as well as a Greyhound bus terminal. The site is adjacent to a natural open space area on the west bank of the Middle Branch. The specific area in question is 2110 Haines Street, which is a roughly three acre parcel currently improved with Greyhound's temporary facilities.

General Area: The site is located along the Russell Street Corridor in South Baltimore, to the south of the stadiums and the Ridgely's Delight and Washington Village neighborhoods. This stretch of Russell Street serves as a link between the downtown and Interstate 95 and Maryland 295 to the south. While this area is generally perceived as industrial in character, several gasoline stations have opened or been renovated in recent years, creating a highway commercial strip feel. This has been further reinforced by the renovation of a motel and relocation of the Greyhound bus terminal to the site.

HISTORY

- Ordinance No. 02-296, approved March 6, 2002, established the Carroll Camden Urban Renewal Plan.
- Ordinance No. 08-09, approved May 12, 2008, rezoned the subject properties to the B-2-3 zoning district.
- Ordinance No. 08-10, approved May 12, 2008, established the Gateway South Planned Business Planned Unit Development.
- Ordinance No. 09-196, approved June 23, 2009, amended the Baltimore City Zoning Code to make video lottery facilities a permitted use in the B-2 and M-2 districts.

- Ordinance No. 09-253, approved December 4, 2009 is the last amendment to the Carroll Camden Urban Renewal plan.
- On March 22, 2012, the Planning Commission recommended approval of City Council Bill #12-0034, to repeal the Gateway South Planned Unit Development. That legislation has not been enacted yet.

ANALYSIS

A bill to repeal the Gateway South PUD was recently put forward by the Baltimore Development Corporation and acted upon by the Planning Commission, but has not yet been enacted. As discussions were taking place concerning repeal, the Department of Transportation (DoT) was simultaneously preparing plans for a replacement Greyhound facility within the PUD at 2110 Haines Street. Greyhound has been operating a temporary facility on the site for a number of years. DoT has contracted with Greyhound to construct a new permanent facility on the same site, which Greyhound will continue to operate. Bus stations and terminals are a permitted use within the Gateway South PUD, subject to Planning Commission Final Design Approval. In the underlying B-2-3 zoning district, bus stations and terminals are a conditional use, approvable by the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA).

Until the PUD is repealed, approval by the Planning Commission is required. Another option would be to wait until after repeal, then request conditional use approval from the BMZA. However, DoT had concerns about being able to fulfill contractual obligations to Greyhound if they did not get land use authorizations right away. So a decision was made that Planning Commission approval was the most appropriate path for the project, and plans have been submitted in furtherance of that goal. In its consideration of the current, staff has reviewed the following:

- Minor Amendment: A minor amendment to the PUD is needed in order to reflect the change in location for the facility. Originally, an intermodal station was proposed in the first floor of a building to be constructed along Russell Street. As the future development plans for the PUD as a whole are unknown at this time, it was decided to retain the existing 2110 Haines site for this use.
- Site Plan: The project was reviewed and approved with conditions by the Site Plan Review Committee on September 28, 2011. Those conditions have been met and plans revised accordingly. The existing Greyhound facility is 11,450 square feet in size oriented the shortest side of the building facing the water. In the new plan, the building rotates 180 degrees and is reduced in size to approximately 9,500 square feet. Since the existing facility must remain in operation while the new facility is being developed, construction will proceed in phases. In phase one, the existing terminal will still be used while a new temporary road and new concrete paved area are built. In phase two, the old terminal will still be used while the new terminal is under construction (transit services only). In phase three, Greyhound will use the new terminal, demolish the existing structure, and construct road and parking improvements. In the fourth and final phase, a food service bay will be added to the terminal structure, and a fuel tank and dumpster will be added to the site.
- Landscaping: The entire site lies within the Critical Area, and a portion lies within the 100' buffer. The site adjoins City-owned open space along the west bank of the Middle

Branch, which is designated as Habitat Protection Area. A portion of this City-owned open space will be disturbed for the temporary access road described above, so that the bus terminal can operate continuously. A landscape plan has been submitted that fulfills Critical Area requirements generated by both on- and off-site disturbance.

- Elevations: Architectural elevations have been reviewed and approved by a staff architect. The building will be approximately 23' in height, with tower elements that reach a height of approximately 35'. It will be constructed of metal panel and glass, following the Greyhound national prototype. There will be a freestanding pole sign, as well as building signage for Greyhound and Pizza Hut.

The following groups have been notified of this action: Westport Improvement Association, Inc., Southwest Community Council, Inc., and Carroll/Camden Industrial Business Association.

Thomas J. Stosur
Director