



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake  
Mayor

## PLANNING COMMISSION

*Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman*

### STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur  
Director

**April 9, 2015**

#### **REQUESTS:**

- City Council Bill #14-0497/ Urban Renewal –Jonestown- Amendment

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

**STAFF:** Tamara Woods

**PETITIONER:** The Administration

**OWNERS:** Mayor and City Council

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

Site Conditions: The urban renewal plan boundaries are roughly President Street on the west, Pratt Street on the south, Central Avenue on the east and Fayette Street on the north, with a portion extending to Orleans Street. This amendment only impacts 1200 East Baltimore Street. It is bounded by Fayette Street to the north, Baltimore Street to the south, Aisquith Street to the west, and a private property to the east.

General Area: The general project area lies within the Jonestown neighborhood, situated between Pleasant View Gardens and Little Italy, and is within walking distance from Downtown. The neighborhood is a mixed use neighborhood that has both commercial uses, and both single-family and multi-family residential units. The neighborhood has seen a lot of redevelopment through the years with the redevelopment of Flag House Courts into Albemarle Square, as well as a new hotel along President Street. In addition, Jonestown is a historic neighborhood featuring the Old Baltimore Shot Tower, which is a National Historic Landmark. The Shot Tower metro stop is adjacent to this landmark and serves the neighborhood on the east side of President Street. Portions of Jonestown are a designated local historic district.

#### **CONFORMITY TO PLANS**

The proposed amendment is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Baltimore City Comprehensive Master Plan, specifically: LIVE Goal 1: Build Human and Social Capital by Strengthening Neighborhoods; Objective 1: Expand Housing Choices for all Residents; Goal 2: Elevate the Design and Quality of the City's Built Environment.

#### **HISTORY**

##### Urban Renewal Plan

- Ordinance #78-939, approved December 14, 1978, established the Jonestown Urban Renewal Plan.

- Amendment No. 6, approved by Mayor and City Council of Baltimore by Ordinance No. 01-275 on December 19, 2001 for the provision of Planned Unit Development standards and controls; authorizing the acquisition and disposition of certain lots.
- Amendment No. 7, approved by Mayor and City Council of Baltimore by Ordinance No. 02-363 on June 17, 2002 for adding and revising the land use categories.
- Amendment No. 8, approved by Mayor and City Council of Baltimore by Ordinance No. 04-797 on July 23, 2004 in order to authorize the acquisition of certain properties.
- Amendment No. 9, dated April 7, 2014, approved by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore by Ordinance No. 14-257, dated June 18, 2014 for the creation of certain disposition lots.

#### Historic District

- Ordinance # 03-489, approved by the Mayor and City Council on February 6, 2003, for the establishment of the Jonestown Historic District.

#### **ANALYSIS**

This Urban Renewal Plan amendment is needed to support the redevelopment of 1200 East Baltimore Street. This parcel is currently McKim Park, a City- owned park. The park is currently an L-shaped lot that fronts both Baltimore Street and Fayette Streets. The proposed redevelopment is for the reuse of the southern portion of the park that fronts Baltimore Street for the creation of a new Ronald McDonald House. The Ronald McDonald House is seeking to build a new location that would replace the existing facility currently located at 635 West Lexington Street. Ronald McDonald House provides lodging and support for critically ill children and their families while the children receive treatment at area hospitals. The current location has 36 rooms. In 2013, 1473 families were served and 550 families were turned away. At that time, it was determined that a larger facility was needed. The new facility is expected to be approximately 58,000 square feet and have 56 rooms and 65 parking spaces. They are expected to serve approximately 2,200 families annually.

Currently, the existing underlying zoning of B-3-3 does allow for mixed use redevelopment, but the Urban Renewal Plan allows for only a parks land use on the site. City Council Bill #15-0497 is required legislation to amend the land use within the Urban Renewal Plan and to allow for the disposition of the property to the developer. Though the final design must be approved by the Commission on Historic & Architectural Preservation (CHAP), both City staff and the developer have agreed to cap the allowable height of the development parcel at 85 feet, including permitted appurtenances. The following are more specific bill provisions:

- Amend text to add a 85 foot height limit for the new construction on the entire new disposition lot 60.
- Amend Exhibit 1: Land Use to change the land use of a portion of 1200 East Baltimore Street from Public-Park to Community Commercial.
- Amend Exhibit 3: Land Disposition to create disposition lot number 60 for Commercial land use with a square footage of +/- 21000 square feet.

This is a complex project that requires several approvals before it can move forward: disposition of a City-owned parcel, CHAP approval, subdivision, delisting from the Parks Master Plan, and an Urban Renewal Plan amendment. The CHAP Commission gave the developers design

concept approval in January 2015 and the redevelopment site was delisted from the Parks Master Plan in February 2015. The project will have to return to CHAP for final design approval. The City's Real Estate Department has begun the surplus process to prepare for disposition, and the subdivision process has begun, as well. The Baltimore Development Corporation is currently working with the developer and the Department of Recreation & Parks to negotiate a long-term lease of the development parcel. This Urban Renewal Plan amendment is a required step for the redevelopment of this parcel.

**Notifications:**

In advance of a hearing on this matter, staff notified the Jonestown Planning Council, Inc., Ronald McDonald House and the Department of Recreation & Parks of this item.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas J. Stosur". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "S".

**Thomas J. Stosur**  
**Director**