



*Stephanie Rawlings-Blake*  
Mayor

## PLANNING COMMISSION

*Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman*

### STAFF REPORT



*Thomas J. Stosur*  
Director

January 15, 2015

**REQUEST:** City Council Bill #15-0470/ Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion of a Single-Family Dwelling Unit to a 15-Family Dwelling Unit in the R-7 Zoning District – 3110 Crittenton Place

For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the conversion of a single-family dwelling unit to a 15-family dwelling unit in the R-7 Zoning District on the property known as 3110 Crittenton Place, as outlined in red on the accompanying plat.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

**STAFF:** Martin French

**PETITIONER:** Crittenton Hill LLC

**OWNER:** Petitioner

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

**Site Conditions:** 3110-3130 Crittenton Place is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Elm Avenue and 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. 3110 Crittenton Place is being created by subdivision, previously approved by the Planning Commission, of 3110-3130 Crittenton Place. 3110 Crittenton Place is the address being given to the original structure on this property, an historic dwelling of the owner of mill properties situated along the Jones Falls. This structure and its grounds are subject to an historic easement limiting and controlling renovation of it.

**General Area:** This property is located in the southern portion of Hampden, a National Register Historic District. Land use to the north and east of this property is predominantly residential, with some religious institutional, public school, and small commercial uses mixed in. Land use to the west and south of this property is predominantly commercial with some continuing industrial use.

#### **HISTORY**

There are no previous legislative actions regarding this site. The Planning Commission approved the Major Subdivision Final Plans for the entire site on November 6, 2014. The subdivision creates 19 new building lots for single-family attached dwellings on Elm Avenue and 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, and a 20<sup>th</sup> lot which is the subject of this legislation.

This property was originally the home of David Carroll, the owner of the Mount Vernon Mills. It is one of only two mill owners' homes left in Hampden, constructed in several stages in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In 1925, the building became Florence Crittenton Home, which had been established in Baltimore in 1895. The property was designated as a Baltimore City Landmark in 2013. The current owner purchased the property in 2013.

Rehabilitation of the mansion house now addressed as 3110 Crittenton Place was considered and approved by the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) on April 9, 2014. Following that hearing, the applicant applied for and was issued a CHAP Notice to Proceed permit for stabilization and repair work on the mansion, after learning of that Commission's concerns about the building's current state.

The applicant also received a CHAP Notice to Proceed permit for the demolition of the dormitory building in the northwest portion of the property. This dormitory was determined at the time of landmark designation to not contribute to the landmark designation.

### **CONFORMITY TO PLANS**

The proposed action is consistent with LIVE EARN PLAY LEARN, the Comprehensive Master Plan for Baltimore, Live Goal 1: Build Human and Social Capital by Strengthening Neighborhoods, Objective 1: Expand Housing Choices for all Residents; and with Objective 2: Strategically Redevelop Vacant Properties Throughout the City; and Live Goal 2: Elevate the Design and Quality of the City's Built Environment, Objective 4: Protect and Enhance the Preservation of Baltimore's Historic Buildings and Neighborhoods.

### **ANALYSIS**

Project: The structure dominates the lot on which it sits. This legislation would allow the petitioner to renovate the existing vacant historic structure into fifteen dwelling units. Re-use as a 15-unit multiple-family detached dwelling would allow preservation of a significant element of Baltimore's historic architecture while offering more affordable housing alternatives to persons living in the Hampden area of North Baltimore.

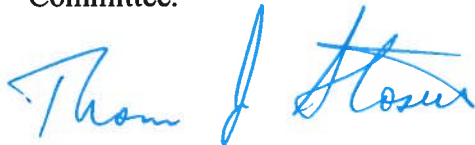
Zoning Analysis: The Zoning Code requires, for a property in a R-7 District, 1,100 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit (§ 4-1006.a.). A lot area of 15,950 square feet is required for 15 dwelling units. Before subdivision, the original lot contained 110,619 square feet, and the 20<sup>th</sup> lot being created for this address of 3110 Crittenton Place contains over 71,800 square feet, thus meeting this Zoning Code requirement. Floor plans for internal division of the mansion house into 15 dwelling units have been approved by the Maryland Historical Trust and CHAP as part of granting property tax credits for the proposed conversion. Off-street parking will continue to be provided on site, subject to standards provided in the easement now on the property. The necessary variances for the subdivision and construction of townhomes were granted by the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA) on May 20, 2014 in BMZA appeal no. 2014-00154, also reducing the rear yard setback requirement for the mansion house (this property) from 25 feet to 5 feet.

Conditional Use – Required findings: In accordance with §16-304 of the Zoning Code of Baltimore City, the Planning Commission must base its recommendation to the City Council to approve a conditional use on these considerations required by Title 14 {“Conditional Uses”} of the Zoning Code:

1. the establishment, location, construction, maintenance, and operation of the conditional use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, security, general welfare, or morals;
2. the use is not in any way precluded by any other law, including an applicable Urban Renewal Plan;
3. the authorization is not otherwise in any way contrary to the public interest; and
4. the authorization is in harmony with the purpose and intent of this article (§14-204).

The proposed use as a 15-family dwelling would be consistent with residential use in the area, and would enable continuing use of an important historic contributing structure in one of Baltimore’s most important historic districts. This proposed use would satisfy the Conditional Use considerations stated in the Zoning Code.

Notifications: The following community organizations have been notified of this action: Crittenton Neighbors, Hampden Community Council, and Hampden Land Use and Zoning Committee.



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