



Catherine E. Pugh
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION
Sean Davis, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

August 2, 2018

REQUEST: Jonestown Vision Plan 2015

RECOMMENDATION: Acceptance with minor modifications

STAFF: Marshella M. Wallace

PETITIONERS: Historic Jonestown, Inc. and Jewish Museum of Maryland – Herbert Bearman Campus

OWNERS: Mayor and City Council, Housing Authority of Baltimore City and Multiple Private Property Owners

GENERAL AREA

The historic Jonestown community is located in southeast Baltimore and bounded by Gay Street, Colvin Street, Fayette Street, Central Avenue, Pratt Street and President Street/Fallsway. This community is neighbor to Oldtown, Pleasant View Gardens, Little Italy, Washington Hill, Downtown and Harbor East. Jonestown, rich in the history of Baltimore, incorporates an array of architectural landmarks that include some of the oldest in the City.

Portions of northern and western Jonestown comprise the Jonestown Historic District. Jonestown was initially developed in 1732 on 10 acres of land. Jonestown's tapestry of significant institutional and religious landmarks are a reflection of its immigrant history. The culturally diverse community supported the growth of a significant portfolio of residential, commercial, institutional and industrial buildings throughout the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

The McKim Free School and the Lloyd Street Synagogue are prime examples of Greek Revival architecture in America. Jonestown's numerous landmarks delight and inspire its residents and visitors alike and include the Flag House, Friends Meeting House and Shot Tower. The Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African-American History and Culture is a more recent landmark.

The demolition of the former Flag House Courts public housing site in 2001 and HOPE VI development of Albemarle Square, a new, contextually sensitive mixed-income, mixed-use community, was a critical marker for the redevelopment of Jonestown. The development spurred renewed interest in Jonestown and welcomed new and returning residents to a revitalized area. The Master Plan for Albemarle Square was awarded the 2001 American Institute of Architects National Honor Award in Urban Design and the 2001 Congress for the New Urbanism Charter Award.

In addition to the core of rowhouses and townhouses located in the central, southwestern sector of the community, other land uses include the main branch of the United States Post Office, iconic Corned Beef Row, the Jewish Museum, several religious institutions, the Helping Up Mission complex and former industrial sites. Several of the projects identified for implementation in the Vision Plan are in progress, such as the multi-family redevelopment of the Hendler Creamery, the construction of the new Ronald McDonald House and planning for a new Helping Up Center for Women and Children.

Jonestown, a walkable community, is graced with convenient access to the Shot Tower – Market Place MetroLink Subway Station and established residential streets such as Albemarle, Granby and High Street. Major vehicular arterials including E. Fayette Street, E. Baltimore Street, Central Avenue and Pratt Street also traverse the community.

CONFORMITY TO PLANS & POLICIES

The request conforms to 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

Objective 2: Strategically Redevelop Vacant Properties Throughout the City

Objective 3: Maintain and Create Safe, Clean, & Healthy Neighborhoods

Goal 2: Elevate the Design and Quality of the City's Built Environment

Objective 1: Improve Design Quality of Baltimore's Built Environment

Objective 3: Promote Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and Mixed-use Development to Reinforce Neighborhood Centers and Main Streets

Objective 4: Protect and Enhance the Preservation of Baltimore's Historic Buildings and Neighborhoods

EARN

Goal 1: Strengthen Identified Growth Sectors Objective 1: Retain and Attract Businesses in all Growth Sectors (See also LEARN, Goal 2, Objective 2)

PLAY

Goal 1: Enhance the Enjoyment, Appreciation, and Stewardship of Baltimore's Historical and Cultural Resources Objective 1: Market, Develop, and Promote Visitor Attractions in Baltimore City

Objective 2: Increase Everyday Historical and Cultural Encounters for Baltimore City Residents Support special events and festivals by improving festival space and infrastructure throughout the City

Objective 4: Strengthen Stewardship of Historical and Cultural Resources • Expand "Authentic Baltimore" program and link to Baltimore City Historic landmark program • Create more

effective management agreements by completing inventory of city-owned historic/cultural sites and attractions.

Goal 3: Increase the Health of Baltimore's Natural Resources and Open Spaces for Recreation and to Improve Water Quality and to Improve Neighborhood Social, Economic, and Environmental Well-Being

Objective 1: Maintain a Well-managed System of Parks & Open Spaces

LEARN

Goal 3: Encourage a Culture of Learning by Enhancing Educational and Vocational Opportunities for all Baltimoreans

Objective 2: Improve and Expand Workforce Development and Job Readiness through Education and Job Training (See EARN, Goal 2, Objective 1)

Objective 3: Improve and Expand Learning Opportunities for all Baltimoreans to Create Active and Well-educated Citizens

- Create a coordinating entity for lifelong learning service providers
- Create opportunities for continuing education programs to locate in Baltimore

The request conforms to the Neighborhood Plans Policy, adopted by the Planning Commission on January 11, 2018. Staff recommends a minor *Vision Plan* modification. Given that this is a community-managed plan, Staff recommends the relocation of the Baltimore Development Corporation, BDC, from the "Lead Implementation Partner" section and table on pages 81 and 88, respectively, to the "Key Partner" sections of the Plan. All other City agencies are listed in the "Key Partner" sections and BDC should be included with all other City agencies.

City of Baltimore agencies have reviewed the *Vision Plan*. The following agency comments are included as clarifications for specific recommendations:

- **Department of Recreation and Parks, BCRP**
 - Shot Tower Park is under the jurisdiction of the Dept. of General Services. As an interested party, BCRP is willing to discuss improvements with DGS and Jonestown (page 70).
- **Department of Public Works, DPW**
 - The green alley model recommended for the connection from South Exeter Street to the parking /service area behind East Lombard Street may pose significant maintenance and budgetary challenges for DPW and may not be a feasible option (page 68).
 - It is unlikely that DPW will be able to provide funding as a partner for maintenance programs listed in the Implementation Matrix (page 89)
- **Housing Authority of Baltimore City, HABC**

Several of the undeveloped parcels identified in the Interim Plan on page 29 and the Long Range Plan on page 30, are under the ownership or jurisdiction of the HABC. HABC will continue to work with Jonestown stakeholders to develop plans for the identified sites.

However, as noted in the *Vision Plan*, recommendations may be modified to reflect market or community conditions that may change over time.

The Jonestown Vision Plan is a community-managed Plan that includes recommendations and strategies, implementation strategies, and a list of anticipated partners and funding strategies. The planning process incorporated key elements of the Policy as listed below:

- Meet with Department of Planning staff to discuss the nature of the plan, proposed boundaries, preliminary stakeholders identified, etc.;
- Host at least three (3) open, public meetings during the process with broad notification;
- Provide documentation of all meeting notifications; and
- Meet with stakeholders who will be affected by the plan's recommendations (property owners, institutions, public agencies, other neighborhoods, etc.).
- Good-faith effort to address any geographic boundary issues or conflicts during the planning process.

Additionally the plan document is:

- Consistent with the City's Comprehensive Master Plan and other City policies;
- Includes standardized topics such as process, existing conditions, background data, goals, strategies, recommended action steps;
- Includes a detailed implementation chart, in a format acceptable to the Planning Department; and
- In a well-designed, easy to read format.

ANALYSIS

Process and Plan Scope

The planning process for the Jonestown Vision Plan commenced in March 2014 and was completed in November 2015. Outreach work for the plan included engagement with 44 stakeholders and interest groups and more than 100 individuals, elected officials and agency representatives.

Mahan Rykiel and Arnett Muldrow undergirded the outreach efforts with robust historical research, physical and market assessments, identification of opportunities and challenges and an intensive three-day charrette. Four focus areas gained consensus:

- Programs and operations
- Community identity
- Development
- Public realm – open space focus

Plan recommendations are organized under the four focus areas. An accompanying Illustrative Vision Plan provides a visual overview of significant physical enhancements planned for the community in the area south of Fayette Street. The Vision Plan describes major development

opportunities through graphic vignettes. The Interim Plan and Long Range Plan are illustrated guides for the phasing of long term redevelopment initiatives and presented in the form of plans.

The governing strategies are as follows:

Strategy I – Programs and Operations – Activate and Engage Residents and Community Anchors

Strategy II – Identity – Define the Community Image

Strategy III – Development – Invest in Identity

Strategy IV – Public Realm – Stimulate and Steward Open Spaces and Streetscapes

Summary of Recommendations

Strategy I – Programs and Operations

Activate and Engage Residents and Community Anchors

Jonestown will activate and cultivate its leadership, both in the residential and institutional communities to help spur neighborhood revitalization, enhance program offerings, and ensure accountability to the implementation of the vision and master plan.

A. Grow Historic Jonestown, Inc.

Expand the capacity of Historic Jonestown, Inc. to operate as the community's implementation arm, collaborating with partners from the public, private and non-profit sectors.

B. Strengthen Neighborhood Web Presence

Continue to develop Jonestown's web presence with a multi-faceted medial strategy that highlights activities, businesses, organizations, and opportunities in the neighborhood.

C. Building Partnerships

Establish Short and Long-term partnerships that strengthen the strategic interests of Jonestown.

D. Hold and Promote Regular Events

Carefully consider new events and build upon existing events to drive traffic to Jonestown and its businesses and attractions.

E. Façade Improvement Program

Develop a façade improvement program for the neighborhood.

F. Maintenance Program

Develop programs, resources and partnerships to address maintenance issues within the neighborhood.

G. Neighborhood Security

Work with partners to enhance security and perceptions of security within the neighborhood.

H. Annual Jonestown Summit

Consider conducting an annual summit to report upon and celebrate implementation progress.

Strategy II Identity

Define the Community Image

Jonestown will embrace its authentic identity as a culturally and economically diverse community – one that is grounded in its heritage and the legacy of its people, fueled by opportunities for engagement, and celebrated for service to the City.

A. Community Brand

The opportunity exists for Jonestown to seize control of its image and identity as an authentic mixed-use neighborhood and create a distinct community brand.

B. Brand System Adoption

The Boards of Historic Jonestown, Inc. and the Jonestown Planning Council should formally vote to adopt the brand system, color palette, tagline, and marketing material for the neighborhood.

C. Brand Extension for Historic Jonestown, Inc.

The Board of Historic Jonestown Inc, should formally adopt the logo for its organization.

D. Promotion of Past Jonestown Accomplishments

Summarize and promote Jonestown's many accomplishments.

E. Brand "Reveal" Event

Deploy the Jonestown community brand at a gathering of neighborhood and City stakeholders in a brand "reveal" event. This action has been completed.

F. Historic Jonestown, Inc.

Collateral Pieces

Historic Jonestown, Inc. should redesign its letterhead, business cards, webpage design, and marketing material using the adopted community brand.

G. Neighborhood Marketing

Historic Jonestown, Inc. should market the neighborhood and highlight what it has to offer.

H. Marketing/Art Production Steward

Retain a graphic design/art production specialist with expertise to implement various facets of the brand system.

I. Promotion of Jonestown at Neighborhood Gateways

Use the new Jonestown logo to promote the neighborhood at its gateways.

J. Jonestown Branded Merchandise

Continue rolling out the Jonestown brand with the creation of collateral material such as shopping bags, shirts, flags and related items.

K. Individual Business Marketing

Historic Jonestown, Inc. should work with local business to launch and deploy the brand in their marketing material through a matching grant program.

L. Community Brand Update

Reevaluate the marketing material and refresh them to reflect future changes in the neighborhood.

Strategy III: Development

Invest in Identity

Development in Jonestown will support the community identity – growing neighborhood wealth not only through market-place projects, but also with projects that support a triple bottom line, incubate social enterprises, strengthen social impact housing, and encourage businesses that promote cultural consumption and production.

- A. Planned Hendler Creamery Residential Development**
Support the planned Hendler Creamery Development. Status - Project is currently under construction.
- B. Planned Ronald McDonald House**
Support the planned Ronald McDonald House. Status - Project is currently under construction.
- C. Potential Jewish Museum of Maryland Expansion Opportunities**
Preserve long-term expansion opportunities for the Jewish Museum of Maryland.
- D. Potential Food Hub/Community Kitchen**
Consider creating a food related venue in Jonestown that supports local economic development and highlights the neighborhood's distinct culinary heritage.
- E. Social Impact Housing**
Explore the possibility of developing social impact housing that can attract active and engaged residents of Jonestown.
- F. Jonestown Gateway Mixed-Use**
Implement a mixed-use development at Jonestown's east gateway, southeast corner of Central Avenue and East Lombard Street (located within the footprint of the Perkins Somerset Oldtown Transformation Plan).
- G. Lombard at Lloyd Mixed-Use**
Implement a focal point mixed-use development at the intersection of Lombard and Lloyd Streets.
- H. Lombard Street Mixed-Use**
Preserve long-term opportunities for additional infill mixed-use development in vacant lots along E. Lombard Street.
- I. Potential Infill Development**
Preserve long-term opportunities for additional infill mixed-use development on surface parking lots along East Lombard Street.
- J. DPW Car Barn Re-use Opportunity**
Redevelop DPW Car Barn as a signature multi-purpose use (Car Barn is owned by Flag House Rental LP and HABC. Status - A Jonestown multi-stakeholder committee has formed to work with HABC on a potential re-use for the site.
- K. Potential Bakery/Business Expansion**
Work with Patisserie Poupon to support potential expansion opportunities.
- L. Potential Carroll Museums Expansion**
Work with Carroll Museums to support potential expansion opportunities.
- M. Pop-Up Retail/Museum Exhibits**
Explore "pop-up" retail and museum venues to activated vacant parcels awaiting development.

N. Specific Façade Improvement Opportunities

Work with specific business and property owners to encourage façade enhancements to their properties/businesses. Sites include:

- **Chess Communications Building - 901 E. Fayette Street** – Newly occupied by National Aquarium Rescue Center – Façade has been activated with lively corner art.
- **Former Yiddish Theater and Jewish Community Center - 1216 East Baltimore Street** - Status – Building will be demolished for the future site of Helping Up Mission's Freedom House (for women and children - 1208 -1226 E. Baltimore Street).

O. Business Support and Recruitment

Support existing and recruit new businesses to Jonestown.

Strategy IV: Public Realm

Stimulate and Steward Open Spaces and Streetscapes

Jonestown will expand and enrich opportunities for outdoor leisure and recreation – creating temporary enhancements, upgrading existing park spaces like McKim Park, providing new play and educational spaces for youth, and enhancing streetscapes for visitors and residents alike.

A. Streetscape and Traffic Calming

Work with the Department of Transportation to enhance aesthetics and pedestrian safety along key streets in Jonestown, particularly East Baltimore, East Lombard and Lloyd Streets.

B. Alley Connection

Continue to work with the City, businesses, and residents to provide an appropriate alley connection from S. Exeter to the parking service area behind E. Lombard Street.

C. Watson Street

Visually enhance Watson Street and occasionally utilize it for special events.

D. St. Vincent de Paul Park Enhancements

Work with St. Vincent de Paul Church to enhance St. Vincent de Paul Park.

E. Shot Tower Park Enhancements and Event Space

Improve and activate Shot Tower Park to serve as a western neighborhood gateway and community event space.

F. Women's Civic League Flexible Use Space

Work with the Women's Civic League to better utilize the existing surface parking lot.

G. Front Street Improvement and Event Space

Enhance the visibility of Front Street and utilize as an event space.

H. McKim Park Enhancements

Continue to work with the City as McKim Park enhancements are designed and implemented. Status - McKim Park expansion will be completed as component of Ronald McDonald House development.

- I. Watson Street Farm Urban Agriculture/Open Space**
Develop a community farm or open space on Watson Street to serve as a productive neighborhood open space.
- J. Lombard Street Pocket Park**
Create a pocket park at the northeast corner of E. Lombard and Lloyd Street.
- K. Lombard Square**
Explore the feasibility of reconfiguring the lands of East Lombard Street to create more useable open space between Albemarle and South High Streets.
- L. Community Playground**
Plan for and construct a centrally-located community playground to serve the residents of Jonestown. Status - HABC is working with Jonestown stakeholders to determine a location for a playground.
- M. Lloyd Street Pocket Park**
Better utilize the “leftover” green space at the southeast corner of E. Lombard and Lloyd Streets as a pocket park.
- N. Public Art Opportunities**
Incorporate public art throughout the neighborhood.
- O. Parking Resources**
Manage parking resources within Jonestown to better accommodate neighborhood businesses and attractions.
- P. Way-Finding Signage**
Expand the wayfinding signage throughout Jonestown.
- Q. Short-Term Enhancements**
Utilize low-budget, high impact enhancements that will provide immediate positive impacts to the streetscapes.

Implementation Plan

The Vision Plan is described as a flexible guide for growth and development in Jonestown over the next 15 years and beyond. The plan may be modified as community and market conditions change. The implementation of the Plan includes City partners, the Jonestown community, Historic Jonestown, Inc. and the Jewish Museum of Maryland at the Herbert Bearman Campus and several other key non-profit, institutional and business partners.

The Implementation Matrix summarizes the recommendation and implementation resources and identifies phases for the recommendations. The “First Steps” Phase included potential work from 2015-2016. The “Next Steps” Phase proposes strategies for implementation from 2016-2020. The “Long Term” phase provides a framework for recommendation from 2020-2030.

NOTIFICATIONS

Staff notified by email the Historic Jonestown Inc, The Jewish Museum of Maryland, Jonestown Planning Council, Albemarle Square Tenants' Council, Albemarle Square Homeowners' Association, and The Car Barn Committee.



Thomas J. Stosur,

Director