



Catherine E. Pugh
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Sean D. Davis, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

December 21, 2017

REQUESTS:

- Minor Change-Final Design Approval (Buildings and Signage Package on East Side)/5601 Eastern Avenue PUD #157

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Tamara Woods

OWNER/PETITIONER: MCB Real Estate LLC

SITE/GENERAL AREA

General Area:

The proposed 5601 Eastern Avenue Planned Unit Development (PUD) is located in the Pulaski Industrial Area, which is adjacent to the Greektown and Bayview neighborhoods of southeast Baltimore. The site is situated on the south side of Eastern Avenue, across from the Johns Hopkins Bayview Hospital and is bounded by Bonsal Street to the east, Umbra Street to the west and I-95 bounds the site to the south.

Site Conditions:

The subject parcel, 5601 Eastern Avenue, is approximately 20 acres (871,751 square feet) and improved with several warehouse buildings that are currently unoccupied. Within the 20 acres there are significant grade changes, most notably from an upper section fronting Bonsal Street that is roughly 19 feet higher in elevation than that fronting Eastern Avenue. There is also a significant slope from Eastern Avenue to the rear of the site. In addition to the physical characteristics of the site, there are also environmental challenges.

For many years, the Pemco Corporation, as well as other corporations, held this site to manufacture glass and porcelain. Throughout the time it was used for heavy manufacturing waste porcelain and glass, known as "frit," was disposed of in the western portion of the site. The owner has been working with the Maryland Department of the Environment to do proper mitigation and now is pursuing the first phase of development.

HISTORY

- On July 20, 2015, Ordinance #15-380 was enacted for the designation of the 5601 Eastern Avenue Planned Unit Development.

- On July 20, 2015, Ordinance # 15-379 was enacted to rezone 5601 Eastern Avenue from M-3 to B-2-3.
- On May 4, 2017 Planning Commission approved the revised Low Density Development Plan and Final Design of the LA Fitness

CONFORMITY TO PLANS

This project is consistent with the Baltimore City Comprehensive Master Plan: LIVE Section, Goal 1, Objective 1: Expand Housing Choice for all Residents; Objective 2: Strategically Redevelop Vacant Properties Throughout the City; Objective 5: Increase the City's Population by 10,000 Households in 6 years; and Goal 2, Objective 3: Promote TOD and Mixed-Use Development to Reinforce Neighborhood Centers and Main Streets.

ANALYSIS

Project Overview: The 5601 Eastern Avenue Planned Unit Development (PUD) is a mixed-use commercial and residential development. The development plan within the PUD proposes the creation of a new mixed use development that includes both a low density and high density option that would be built in phases. As stated before, this site is a former industrial site. The proposed land uses and density in the PUD are based on the former underlying zoning of B-2-3. Though the site is currently one parcel, the site may be subdivided in the future and this PUD allows for a comprehensive development approach that takes into account the overall design and placement of multiple buildings, new streets and pedestrian ways. In addition to design and use controls, master planning the site through a PUD also allows for future density shifts throughout the PUD once the 20 acre site is subdivided.

Background

This original PUD was designed for flexibility in development. There was both a low-density and high-density development plan included. The PUD anticipates a mix of retail, office, residential and hotel. The developer has decided to proceed with the low-density option for the redevelopment of the site. On May 4, 2017, the Planning Commission approved a minor amendment to modify the development plan and move forward with this option. In addition, they approved the final design of the building for the first tenant, LA Fitness.

The low-density option anticipates approximately 285 units, 139,300 SF of retail, a 150 key hotel and 1,137 parking spaces. This scenario would include a large retail pad site of approximately 65,000 SF and two bars of retail that front North/South Street and a smaller retail bar along Eastern Avenue. This request is for the final design approval of the retail bar buildings (including refined site plan) and the first phase signage package for the development east of North/South Street.

Retail Bar Buildings –Final Design Approval

The request for final design approval of the retail bars and refined site plan for the Eastern side of the site would allow for the developer to move forward with the first phase of redevelopment of 5601 Eastern Avenue. There are three bars of retail proposed and are noted as the 200 building, 300 building and 400 building. There is a planned 500 building that would

come back for approval at a later date. The uses are planned to be a combination of retail and restaurant with some outdoor seating provided.

The retail bar that fronts Eastern Avenue is known as the 200 building and is approximately 120' x 60'. It is planned to have two or three bays suited for either restaurant or in-line retail. The building has a roof height of 16' with two parapet levels, the lower parapet height is at 19' with the corner wrapped with a higher parapet at 21'. The building has a painted metal with glass storefront system with fiber cement panel and composite metal brow and metal canopy. In addition the east and rear facades materials are a combination of brick, corrugated metal panel.

There are two bars of retail that front North/South Street. The 300 building is the northern most bar near the intersection of Eastern Avenue and North/South Street. The 400 building terminates near the intersection of North/South Street and Center Drive. The buildings are separated by a pedestrian via that would help connect both sides of the retail/pedestrian experience on both the east and west sides of the development. Both corner bays abutting the pedestrian via are allowed to have outdoor seating that would line the pedestrian via, leaving a clear walk path. In addition, the developer is proposing to salvage portions of the existing warehouse building trusses to span the new outdoor space.

Building 300 is approximately 102' x 75'. The proposed height is 16' to the roofline, but also steps with various parapet heights: total height of 23' at the northwest corner, 17' for the in-line retail and approximately 21' for the south elevation. It is proposed to have four bays. There are a combination of materials, including a painted metal storefront system, wood batten cladding, brick and a wood screen system. The storefronts would also include an open metal canopy system and painted graphics.

Building 400 is approximately 182' x 77'. It is planned to have up to seven bays, five of which would front North/South Street and two fronting Center Drive. The building is 16' to the roof and like buildings 200 and 300 has varying parapet heights. The total height of the north elevation is 21'6", the east elevation is 19'6", and the west elevation is 18'8". The south elevation features gabled roofs over the two storefronts with a finished height of 27' at the point of the gable.

In keeping with the other buildings, the 400 building is a combination of materials with a metal storefront system, corrugated metal, stained wood panels and open metal canopies. The building would also feature painted art at various bays.

Development Plan Reviews:

With the exception of design review for the retail site adjacent to the proposed LA Fitness, the development plan and retail bars and pad site east of North/South Road have completed Design Review and Site Plan Review. Refinement of the site plan will happen with each new phase. Any subsequent projects will require future Design Review and Site Plan Review as well as Final Design Approval at Planning Commission.

Signage Package –Final Design Approval

The developer has proposed a first phase signage package that includes major project identification signage as well as signage for the proposed retail bars and pad site. This action, is for approval of signs that are located in the Project Signage Package- Phase 1 document dated December 21, 2017. The package details the types of signs as well as guidelines and overview on the tenant signage. The details are as follows:

1. Primary Monument Sign at the intersection of North/South Street and Eastern Avenue. This sign is 25'x 9' with a corten steel base and painted cut metal panels.
2. Two Secondary Monument Signs along Eastern Avenue. These signs are 9' x 14'6" with a concrete base and painted cut metal panels.
3. A Directory Map at the corner of North/South Street and Center Drive
4. Three Vehicular Directional Signs (two along Center Drive and one on South Street west of North/South Street)
5. Tenant Signage for the two retail bars and pad site. The tenant signage consists of three types": primary above the entrance, secondary signage at the rear of building and a tertiary blade sign. Primary signs for corner conditions can be up to 250 square feet and 85 square feet for in-line retail. Secondary signs for corner retail can be up to 125 square feet and 85 square feet for in-line retail. The tertiary blade signs are a maximum of 9 square feet. The typical dimensions for the signage, signage prohibitions and criteria are included in the Project Signage Package-Phase 1 document. It is intended that look and design of each sign would be very unique in lettering and may include artwork.

The developer will propose additional signage as more phases of the redevelopment come on-line. With the exception of a secondary monument sign along Eastern Avenue and a vehicular directional sign along the rear of a future mixed use building on South Drive, this action would not approve any other signage for future development on the western side of the master plan, the 500 retail bar on along Center Drive or below South Drive.

Notifications:

In advance of a hearing on this matter, staff notified the stakeholder group which consists of representatives from the following associations: Southeast Neighborhoods Development (SEND), Greektown CDC, the Greater Greektown Neighborhood Alliance and City Councilman Zeke Cohen.



Thomas J. Stosur
Director