



Catherine E. Pugh
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

May 4, 2017

REQUESTS:

- Minor Amendment- Revised Low Density Development Plan/5601 Eastern Avenue PUD #157- 5601 Eastern Avenue
- Minor Amendment & Final Design Approval- LA Fitness/ 5601 Eastern Avenue PUD #157-5601 Eastern Avenue

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.

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 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.

Minor Amendment- Revised Low Density Development Plan

Development Plan: This proposed PUD is designed for flexibility in development. There is both a low-density and high-density development plan included. But above that there are also square foot (SF) limits in the entire PUD. Though the allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR) would allow for an approximate density of 4.3 million SF, the PUD limits the development to 2 million SF, which is further capped within four development areas. In addition to these limits, there is a square footage cap by the type of land uses provided within the PUD. The PUD anticipates a mix of retail, office, residential and hotel.

As previously stated, this PUD allows for both a low-density and high-density option. This is to provide for maximum flexibility as development moves forward. Currently, the PUD consists of one parcel. It is expected that there will be future subdivisions as development proceeds that would correspond with either of the two development plan options. Both options are designed around a common vehicular and pedestrian circulation system. This circulation system sets in place a north-south spine road, a common access points and service drive that connect to the spine road. Both options also have a common development plan to the west of the spine road, which has a large mixed-use building that has 372,900 SF, 333,600 SF of residential and 610 parking spaces. In the rear of the site, there is a 150,000 SF

hotel/residential building. The difference in the low-density and high-density options is east of the spine road.

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 85,000 SF and a smaller bar of retail that fronts the spine road. This minor amendment is to revise the low density option outlined above and will replace the low density option in the approved PUD. One of the reasons that have necessitated the revision is that the large retail pad site of 85,000 SF is planned to be reduced to approximately 65,000 SF. This reduction in size, necessitated other modifications to the site. The program of the western portion of the site remains unchanged. The changes that are proposed are minor in nature and include the following:

1. Adding a retail pad building on the north east corner of the site along Eastern Avenue.
2. Shifting Center Street to the south, approximately seventy feet; to accommodate additional surface parking needs for prospective anchor retail tenants;
3. Adding an additional retail bay along North/South Street;
4. Introducing a pedestrian via that would help connect both sides of the retail/pedestrian experience on both the east and west sides of the development.
5. Decreasing the width of the North/South entry drive adjacent to the anchor retail tenant and south of Center Street.

Minor Amendment & Final Design Approval- LA Fitness

The first phase of construction will consist of an LA Fitness, which is located in the large anchor pad site at the rear of the eastern section of the development plan. LA Fitness is a nationwide membership based fitness center. It will only occupy the easternmost portion of the anchor site. The entire anchor site is approximately 65,000 square feet. The LA Fitness will occupy approximately 34,000 square feet.

The fitness center will be a one story building at 24 feet tall. The front façade will feature a series of glass fenestrations and be primarily clad in EFIS. In addition, there are three proposed signs that will be affixed to a metal siding architectural feature. The allowable signage area for each of the signs is 27'x8'. This signage area includes both the 3' 4" internally illuminated letters and other logo artwork. The proposed signs will be located on the north, east and south facades.

Development Plan Reviews:

Both the revised PUD master plan and LA Fitness 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.

Notifications:

Minor Amendment– 5601 Eastern Avenue PUD- Low Density Development Plan
Minor Amendment & FDA- LA Fitness

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