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July 21, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

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RE: City Council Bill 25-0065

Dear Councilmembers:

As you know, on May 12, 2025, Mayor Brandon M. Scott introduced the Housing Options and Opportunity Act. Along with this Act, four other bills were introduced. In particular, City Council Bill 25-0065 which seeks to "eliminate outdated parking minimums that require new buildings to include a certain number of off-street parking spaces." The press release also states that this mandate "drives up construction costs, limits what can be built, and often stands in the way of the development our communities need." The Forest Park Neighborhood Association, Inc. is in agreement that there are some communities in need of development. However, Forest Park is not one of those communities.

Forest Park is a neighborhood of mostly homeowners and retirees in West Baltimore. Forest Park has many assisted living facilities, group homes, and inpatient drug rehabilitation facilities. In addition, many of the once single-family homes have been converted to apartments to increase the owners' monthly revenue. These facilities are situated within the community nearby or adjacent to homeowners. The residents of the facilities outlined above may or may not have vehicles to park on the street. However, the employees and visitors of residents in

these facilities own vehicles and park on the street in the first available parking spot they find. This currently poses a parking issue for homeowners in the community.

Forest Park also has a number of churches within the community. These churches either do not have designated parking or the parking lot does not accommodate the overflow of cars that belong to the worshipers. Therefore, the worshipers park in the community, which restricts the movement of the homeowners' cars. Homeowners risk having to park a block away if they leave their homes during church hours. In the alternative, homeowners delay their departure to ensure a parking space is available when they return. There is already an existing parking issue and City Council Bill 25-0065 does not address this issue or resolve it.

Forest Park also has an issue with "musical cars." When individuals can no longer park on their street for whatever reason, they move their cars to the first available parking space within the community. These abandoned cars prompt calls to Baltimore City's 311 Services to have the cars removed. After reviewing the text of City Council Bill 25-0065, the bill does not address or resolve the abandoned car issue.

The press release also states the proposed "parking mandates will make homeownership more attainable and rent more affordable." As we know, homeownership is not for the weak and there are various costs involved during and after the process. What would make homeownership attractive in Forest Park if the prospective homeowner cannot park in front of or nearby their homes? Would a homeowner be willing to purchase a home knowing that they will need to park a distance away from that home?

The Forest Park Neighborhood Association, Inc. opposes City Council Bill 25-0065 (emphasis added). City Council Bill 25-0065 may work or even improve the parking situation for other communities. We view City Council Bill 25-0065 as a detriment to our community. As previously stated, Forest Park is inundated with assisted living facilities, group homes, inpatient drug rehabilitation facilities, and converted multi-family dwellings. We are aware of the Fair Housing Act of Maryland and the Americans with Disabilities Act, as it pertains to the assisted living facilities, group homes, and inpatient drug rehabilitation facilities. We cannot control the sale of a large home that is purchased by an individual or group to convert into one of the facilities previously mentioned. However, we can seek assistance to help mitigate future parking issues that will be occur with the passage of City Council Bill 25-0065.

Thank you for your time and we hope that you will take the position of the Forest Park Neighborhood Association, Inc. into consideration before City Council Bill 25-0065 is passed.

Sincerely,

Carla M. Wilson, Legislative Chair

On Behalf of the Forest Park Neighborhood Association, Inc.

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