



MEMORANDUM

STEPHANIE
RAWLINGS-BLAKE,
Mayor

PAUL T. GRAZIANO,
Executive Director, HABC
Commissioner, DHCD

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Karen Randle, *Executive Secretary*

From: Paul T. Graziano, *Commissioner*

Date: February 9, 2011

Re: **City Council Bill 11-0645 - Urban Renewal - Johnston Square - Amendment** _

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 11-0645, which was introduced for the purpose of amending the Urban Renewal Plan for Johnston Square to reauthorize the acquisition of properties within the Project Area and to correct and clarify certain language; waiving certain content and procedural requirements; making the provisions of this Ordinance severable; providing for the application of this Ordinance in conjunction with certain other ordinances; and providing for a special effective date.

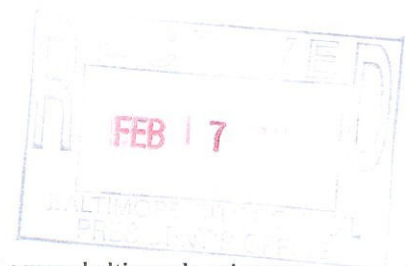
An amendment to the Urban Renewal Plan for Johnston Square is necessary to reauthorize the Plan's powers of acquisition and condemnation so that these actions may legally continue, in compliance with § 12-105.1 of the Real Property Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Without this reauthorization, the authority to acquire property under the Plan will terminate on July 1, 2011. In addition to obtaining the reauthorization of general acquisition authority of the properties already located within the existing land disposition map, the proposed legislation would also further clarify the City's ability to acquire adjacent streets or alleys that abut or are adjacent to these properties including all rights, title and interest or any private rights of use.

In February 2009, DHCD issued a request for proposals (RFP) for a 1.162-acre development site in the 1300 block of Greenmount Ave and the 700 of E. Hoffman Street. The site was awarded to The French Development Company and Empire Homes of Maryland, JV to construct a 73 unit affordable multifamily "green" apartment building, representing a \$16M investment. Additionally, Mi Casa, Inc. will develop 30 units of affordable homeownership in the 700-800 blocks of E. Preston Street using \$5,089,216 in Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 Funds. The Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) is also using stimulus funds to rehabilitate approximately 34 scattered site properties throughout Johnston Square. DHCD is pursuing acquisition of additional vacant buildings for rehabilitation to support both the HABC's plans and Mi Casa's efforts, and is pursuing assembling additional development parcels in the area between Preston and Hoffman Streets and between Greenmount Avenue and Ensor Streets due to its blighted condition.

The Department of Housing and Community Development supports the adoption of City Council Bill 11-0645.

PTG:pmd

cc: Ms. Angela Gibson, *Mayor's Office of Government Relations*
Ms. Kaliope Parthemous, *Deputy Mayor*



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