


MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable President and Members of the City Council
Attention: Karen Randle, Executive Secretary

FROM: M. J. Brodie, President 

DATE: October 30, 2009

SUBJECT: City Council Bill No. 09-0412
Zoning – Cell Towers

City Council Bill # 09-0412, Zoning – Cell Towers, has been referred to the Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) for review and response. This Bill would require that conditional use applications for antenna towers, microwave relay towers, and similar facilities for communications transmission or receiving be referred to the Historical and Architectural Preservation Division of the Department of Planning for certain determinations; and specifying required findings and conditions for approval of these uses.

The Bill spells out procedures for bringing the review functions of the Historical and Architectural Preservation Division into play at an early stage in the conditional use application process by determining whether the property or location is within a National Register or Maryland historic district, a Baltimore City Preservation District or on a Baltimore City Landmark List and issuing a report of its findings to the Board. Should any of the criteria be met by the proposed location, the Bill provides for the timely determination by the Division and report to the Board as to whether the installation would adversely effect the district or property, and if so, whether and the means by which appropriate mitigation can be achieved. The Board, based on the Division's report, would then find that the proposed location is not within a historically protected area or, if it is, that it either has no adverse effect on the district or property or the applicant must follow the recommended means of mitigation as condition of approval.

It is BDC's opinion that this Bill would provide an efficient and orderly process for ensuring the adequate protection of historically important and sensitive districts and properties within Baltimore in an era of increasing requests for installation of communications transmission and receiving equipment and facilities. For this reason, BDC recommends favorable consideration of Bill # 09-0412.

cc: Andrew Frank
Angela Gibson
sandra.gladden/cebill09/09-0412

