



FROM	NAME & TITLE	CHRIS RYER, DIRECTOR 	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 8 TH FLOOR, 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET		
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL #25-0076 / ZONING – CONDITIONAL USE CONVERSION OF A SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING UNIT TO 2 DWELLING UNITS IN THE R-8 ZONING DISTRICT – VARIANCES – 3224 AUCHENTOROLY TERRACE		

TO

The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
City Hall, Room 400
100 North Holliday Street

DATE: July 29, 2025

At its regular meeting of July 17, 2025, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #25-0076, for the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the conversion of a single-family dwelling unit into 2 dwelling units on the property known as 3224 Auchentoroly Terrace, as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting variances regarding certain off-street parking requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

In its consideration of this Bill, the Planning Commission reviewed the attached staff report, which recommended amendment to remove the included parking variance and approval of City Council Bill #25-0076 and adopted the following resolutions, with eight members being present (eight in favor):

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission finds, in accordance with §5-308 and §5-406 of Article 32 – *Zoning*, that:

- (1) the conditions on which the application is based are unique to the property for which the variance is sought and are not generally applicable to other property within the same zoning classification;
- (2) the unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty is caused by this Code and has not been created by the intentional action or inaction of any person who has a present interest in the property;
- (3) the purpose of the variance is not based exclusively on a desire to increase the value or income potential of the property;
- (4) the variance will not:
 - (i) be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity; or
 - (ii) substantially diminish and impair property values in the neighborhood;
- (5) the variance is in harmony with the purpose and intent of this Code;
- (6) the variance is not precluded by and will not adversely affect:
 - (i) any Urban Renewal Plan;
 - (ii) the City's Comprehensive Master Plan; or
 - (iii) any Historical and Architectural Preservation District; and
- (7) the variance will not otherwise:
 - (i) be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare; or
 - (ii) be in any way contrary to the public interest.

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission concurs with the recommendation of its departmental staff, and adopts the findings with consideration for testimony and facts presented in the meeting, and recommends that City Council Bill #25-0076 be **amended and approved** by the City Council.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Eric Tiso, Division Chief, Land Use and Urban Design Division at 410-396-8358.

CR/ewt

attachment

cc: Ms. Nina Themelis, Mayor's Office
The Honorable John Bullock, Council Rep. to Planning Commission
Ms. Rebecca Witt, BMZA
Mr. Geoffrey Veale, Zoning Administration
Ms. Stephanie Murdock, DHCD
Ms. Hilary Ruley, Law Dept.
Mr. Francis Burnszynski, PABC
Mr. Luciano Diaz, DOT
Ms. Nancy Mead, Council Services
Mr. Chase Hoffberger, Applicant



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Jon Laria, Chair; Eric Stephenson, Vice Chair

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

July 17, 2025

REQUEST: City Council Bill #25-0076/ Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion of a Single-Family Dwelling Unit to 2 Dwelling Units in the R-8 Zoning District – Variances – 3224 Auchentoroly Terrace

For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the conversion of a single-family dwelling unit into 2 dwelling units on the property known as 3224 Auchentoroly Terrace, as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting variances regarding certain off-street parking requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt findings and approve with the following amendment:

- Strike the off-street parking variance granted in Section 2 of the bill.

STAFF: Justin Walker

PETITIONER: Chase Hoffberger

OWNER: Via Companies, LLC

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: 3224 Auchentoroly Terrace is a mid-block, three-story rowhouse situated on a 15-foot by 142-foot lot. The property is currently vacant and is the last remaining unoccupied structure on the block. Its last authorized use was as a single-family dwelling. The site is located within the Auchentoroly Terrace CHAP Historic District, the Greater Rosemont and Mondawmin (GRAMA) Plan Area, and is zoned R-8.

General Area: 3224 Auchentoroly Terrace is located directly across the street from Druid Hill Park and one block to the south of the intersection with Gwynns Falls Parkway. The property is within the Auchentoroly-Parkwood Neighborhood Statistical Area.

HISTORY

There are no previous legislative or Planning Commission actions regarding this site.

CONFORMITY TO PLANS

The 2024 Comprehensive Master Plan for the City of Baltimore was enacted by Ordinance #24-426, dated December 2, 2024. The subject property is designated in the Residential: Higher Density group in the General Land Use Plan. This proposed development conforms to that designation.

ANALYSIS

Background: The project involves the conversion of the existing single-family dwelling into a two-dwelling-unit building, with each unit containing three bedrooms. All work will be limited to the interior of the structure, with no exterior alterations or renovations proposed. The project will return a vacant property to productive residential use.

Conditional Use Approval Standards:

§ 5-406. Approval standards.

(a) *Evaluation criteria.*

As a guide to its decision on the facts of each case, the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals must consider the following, where appropriate:

- (1) the nature of the proposed site, including its size and shape and the proposed size, shape, and arrangement of structures;
- (2) the resulting traffic patterns and adequacy of proposed off-street parking and loading;
- (3) the nature of the surrounding area and the extent to which the proposed use might impair its present and future development;
- (4) the proximity of dwellings, churches, schools, public structures, and other places of public gathering;
- (5) accessibility of the premises for emergency vehicles;
- (6) accessibility of light and air to the premises and to the property in the vicinity;
- (7) the type and location of adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and other necessary facilities that have been or will be provided;
- (8) the preservation of cultural and historic landmarks and structures;
- (9) the character of the neighborhood;
- (10) the provisions of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan;
- (11) the provisions of any applicable Urban Renewal Plan;
- (12) all applicable standards and requirements of this Code;
- (13) the intent and purpose of this Code; and
- (14) any other matters considered to be in the interest of the general welfare.

(b) *Limited criteria for denying.*

The Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals or the City Council, may not approve a conditional use or sign unless, after public notice and hearing and on consideration of the standards required by this subtitle, the Board or Council finds that:

- (1) the establishment, location, construction, maintenance, or operation of the conditional use or sign would not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare;
- (2) the use or sign would not be precluded by any other law, including an applicable Urban Renewal Plan;
- (3) the authorization would not be contrary to the public interest; and
- (4) the authorization would be in harmony with the purpose and intent of this Code.

Below is the staff's review of Article 32 – *Zoning*, §5-406 {"Approval standards"}: Staff finds no evidence that the proposed conversion would negatively affect public health, safety, or welfare. Rehabilitating these long-vacant structures and returning them to active residential use would be of benefit to the public. The site is not located within an Urban Renewal Plan area, and no other regulations preclude the proposed conversion. The request is consistent with the General Land Use Plan and the City's Comprehensive Master Plan.

Variance Approval Standards:

§ 5-308. Approval standards.

(a) Required finding of practical difficulty.

To grant a variance, the Zoning Administrator, the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals, or the City Council, as the case may be, shall find that:

- a. because of the conditions peculiar to the property, including particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical conditions of the specific structure or land involved, a practical difficulty, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, would result if the strict letter of the applicable requirement were carried out; or
- b. because of exceptional circumstances related to the specific structure or land involved, a practical difficulty, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, would result if the strict letter of the applicable requirement were carried out.

(b) Other required findings.

The Zoning Administrator, the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals, or the City Council, as the case may be, must also find that:

- (1) the practical difficulty is caused by this Code and has not been created by the intentional action or inaction of any person who has a present interest in the property;
- (2) the purpose of the variance is not based exclusively on a desire to increase the value or income potential of the property;
- (3) the variance will not:
 - (i) be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity; or
 - (ii) substantially diminish and impair property values in the neighborhood;
- (4) the variance is in harmony with the purpose and intent of this Code;
- (5) the variance is not precluded by and will not adversely affect:
 - (i) any Urban Renewal Plan;
 - (ii) the City's Comprehensive Master Plan; or
 - (iii) any Historical and Architectural Preservation District; and
- (6) the variance will not otherwise:
 - (i) be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare; or
 - (ii) be in any way contrary to the public interest

Below is the staff's review of Article 32 – *Zoning*, §5-308 {“Approval standards”}: Staff finds that the requested variance is no longer necessary. The Opinion of the Zoning Administrator, dated March 28, 2025, included a required parking variance for this conversion request. Since that time, Ord. 25-015 has taken effect. This ordinance amends §16-601 of the Zoning Code to exempt residential uses with up to three units from minimum parking requirements. This project qualifies for that exemption; therefore, the parking variance is no longer required, and an amendment to remove the variance from the bill has been proposed. As there are no other variances included in this bill, meeting the approval standards of §5-308 is not necessary.

Equity:

This proposal supports neighborhood reinvestment by converting a long-vacant single-family home into a two-unit multifamily dwelling, each with three bedrooms, able to accommodate larger family units. The project helps expand housing options in an area using existing building stock and returns a blighted property to productive use. The New Auchentoroly Terrace Association, Inc. has provided a letter of support for the project. No significant impact on internal operations or staff resources is anticipated.

Notification: In addition to the required posting on site, the New Auchentoroly Terrace Association, Inc was informed of this proposal and has provided a letter of support.



Chris Ryer
Director