


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 #24-0516 / ZONING - CONDITIONAL USE - PARKING LOT (PRINCIPAL USE) - 1211 JEFFERSON STREET		

TO

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

DATE: May 10, 2024

At its regular meeting of May 9, 2024, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #24-0516, for the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a principal use parking lot on the property known as 1211 Jefferson Street (Block 1295, Lot, 001G), as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; and providing for a special effective date.

In its consideration of this Bill, the Planning Commission reviewed the attached staff report, which recommended approval of City Council Bill #24-0516 and adopted the following resolutions, with eight members being present (eight in favor):

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission concurs with the recommendation of its departmental staff, adopts the findings and equity analysis outlined in the staff report, with consideration for testimony and facts presented in the meeting, and recommends that City Council Bill #24-0516 be **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 Eric Costello, Council Rep. to Planning Commission
Mr. Colin Tarbert, BDC
Ms. Rebecca Witt, BMZA
Mr. Geoffrey Veale, Zoning Administration
Ms. Stephanie Murdock, DHCD
Ms. Elena DiPietro, Law Dept.
Mr. Francis Burnszynski, PABC
Mr. Liam Davis, DOT
Ms. Natawna Austin, Council Services



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Sean D. Davis, Chair; Eric Stephenson, Vice Chair

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

May 9, 2024

REQUEST: City Council Bill #24-0516/ Zoning – Conditional Use – Parking Lot (Principal Use) – 1211 Jefferson Street:

For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a principal use parking lot on the property known as 1211 Jefferson Street (Block 1295, Lot, 001G), as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; and providing for a special effective date.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Caitlin Audette

PETITIONER: Sommerset Jefferson LLC, c/o Caroline L. Hecker

OWNER: Sommerset Jefferson LLC

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: The subject property is currently vacant, but part of the ongoing Perkins Somerset Oldtown redevelopment. The site is roughly 0.7 acres and is a portion of the former location of the Somerset public housing community that was demolished in 2009.

General Area: The site is located in the Oldtown neighborhood. To the west is Oldtown Mall, to the east is North Central Avenue, and to the south is Orleans Street. The area is surrounded by a mix of health-care, educational, and institutional uses. The site is part of the Perkins / Somerset / Oldtown Transformation Plan.

HISTORY

- On May 27, 2010, the Planning Commission approved and adopted the original Oldtown Redevelopment Plan.
- On October 6, 2016, the Planning Commission approved and adopted an Update Addendum to the Oldtown Redevelopment Plan.
- On November 1, 2018, the Planning Commission approved the first subdivision for the new Somerset development. That action created 1234 McElderry Street, which is currently under development of the S-1 portion of the overall site. It also created a new extension of McElderry Street that will connect Central Avenue with Aisquith Street.
- On June 18, 2020, the Planning Commission approved the second subdivision for the new development. Creating an extension of Jefferson Street, 1211 Jefferson Street, and 1231 Jefferson Street.

- The Planning Commission adopted the Perkins Somerset Oldtown Transformation Plan at the November 17, 2022 hearing. This plan formally recognized the on-going work within the plan footprint.

CONFORMITY TO PLANS

This proposed conditional use is consistent with the Perkins Somerset Oldtown Transformation Plan approved by the Planning Commission in 2022, which identified it as a surface parking lot. The Oldtown Urban Renewal Plan defers to the underlying zoning for off-street parking requirements.

ANALYSIS

Background: This project is associated with the larger PSO Transformation Plan. The application for the CHOICE grant included a grocery store within the boundaries. In 2023 the developer announced that a Lidl grocery store would be located at the ground floor of 1231 Jefferson Street. A requirement of the store is the availability of ample parking for customers, including surface parking at 1211 Jefferson Street as well as parking within 1231 Jefferson Street. The current R-10 zoning states that parking lots are conditional by ordinance. The developer and grocer met with the Waters A.M.E. Church located adjacent to the site and have come to an agreement to allow church congregants access to the parking lot during limited times.

Conditional Use: Per §5-406 {“Approval standards”} of Article 32 – *Zoning*:

(b) *Limited criteria for denying.*

Neither the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals, nor the City Council, as the case may be, may approve a conditional use unless, after public notice and hearing and on consideration of the standards required by this subtitle, it finds that:

- (1) the establishment, location, construction, maintenance, or operation of the conditional use would not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare;
- (2) the use 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.

The proposed use of surface parking at 1211 Jefferson Street meets the above referenced criteria for approval.

Below is the staff’s review of §5-406(a) {“Required considerations”} of Article 32 – *Zoning*: Staff finds that the proposed surface parking lot will not negatively impact the below considerations. All work was reviewed by UDAAP and the Site Plan Review Committee and will meet Landscape Manual requirements. These reviews ensure that the project meet the requirements of the code, outlined below.

(b) *Required considerations.*

As a further 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.

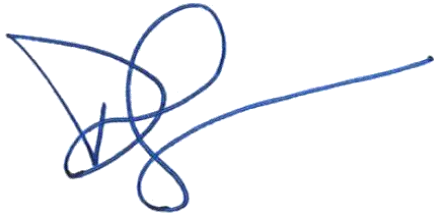
Equity:

- Impact:
 - How might the proposal impact the surrounding community in the short or long term?
 - The short-term impact on the surrounding community is construction related, as it will take several years to complete the final aspects of the Somerset redevelopment. The long-term impact is that community will become a more seamlessly integrated development within this area of southeast Baltimore and allow for mixed income living opportunities.
 - How would this proposal impact existing patterns of inequity that persist in Baltimore?
 - The entire PSO redevelopment promises to greatly improve what had been for many decades one of Baltimore's clearest manifestations of inequity. The replacement of the HABC housing, along with the addition of new affordable and market-rate apartments, will create new mixed-income PSO. The addition of an affordable and reliable grocery store will further support the larger development. The addition of limited amounts of surface parking will not negatively impact this overall positive development.
- Engagement:
 - Has the community been meaningfully engaged in discussing this proposal? How are residents who have been historically excluded from planning processes being authentically included in the planning of the proposed policy or project?
 - The PSO planning and development process has heavy resident participation, with the Housing Authority and Tenant Council hosting recurring meetings where project updates and participation happens. The construction of a surface parking lot to support a grocery store has long been part of the plan and part of the ongoing outreach.
- Internal Operations:
 - There has not been, nor is there expected to be, any substantive impact to internal operations as a consequence of this conditional use. Planning Staff is eager to continue to work with the development team and community members as this redevelopment continues.

Notification: The Oldtown Merchants Association, Pleasant View Gardens, Historic Stirling Street Neighbors, Waters A.M.E. Church, and over 60 other concerned individuals have been notified of this action.

Recommendation: Amendment and Approval with the following amendment:

- That the plans approved by the Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) are attached to, and made part of the bill.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chris Ryer
Director