



BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Mission Statement

On behalf of the Citizens of Baltimore City, the Land Use & Transportation Committee is committed to shaping a reliable, equitable, and sustainable future for Baltimore's land use and transportation systems. Through operational oversight and legislative action, the committee aims to develop and support lasting solutions grounded in principles of good governance.

The Honorable Ryan Dorsey

CHAIR

PUBLIC HEARING

June 26, 2025

9:00 AM

CLARENCE "DU" BURNS COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Bill:25-0039

***Title: City Streets – Closing – A 16 Foot Alley and a
Portion of a 10 Foot Alley***

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Meeting: Legislative Oversight Hearing

Committee: Land Use & Transportation

Bill # 25-0039

Title: City Streets – Closing – A 16 Foot Alley and a Portion of a 10 Foot Alley

Purpose: For the purpose of condemning and closing a 16 foot alley and a portion of a 10 foot alley bounded by Presstman Street, Brunt Street, Robert Street, and Pennsylvania Avenue, as shown on a plat numbered 312-A-11A, prepared by the Survey Section and filed in the Office of the Department of Transportation; and providing for a special effective date.

REPORTING AGENCIES

Agency	Report
Planning Commission	Favorable
Department of Transportation	Favorable

BACKGROUND

The closure of the alley is to assist in the creation of a singular parcel for the future development of the Sanaa Center, which is a proposed arts and cultural institution within the Black Arts District. The proposed building will be located over the portions of the alleys proposed for closure. This action is in direct alignment with the mission of the Black Arts District.

The Sanaa Center “will be a local economic and cultural engine that will empower Black creatives, strengthen the Historic Pennsylvania Avenue business corridor, generate new jobs, and bolster the arts ecosystem both in Baltimore and in the DMV,” according to the project website.

Bill Summary

The Department of Transportation is authorized to condemn and close a 16 foot alley and a portion of a 10 foot alley bounded by Presstman Street, Brunt Street, Robert Street, and Pennsylvania Avenue.

Parcel 1 is located at the intersection of Brunt Street and a 16-foot alley, approximately 170 feet southeast of the intersection of Brunt Street and Presstman Street. It extends 16 feet along Brunt Street, runs approximately 60 feet southwest along the 16-foot alley to the intersection with a 10-foot alley, continues 16 feet along the 10-foot alley, and returns 60 feet northeast to the point of origin. The total area of this parcel is approximately 960 square feet, or 0.022 acres.

Parcel 2 is located at the intersection of a 5-foot alley and a 10-foot alley, approximately 75 feet southeast of Presstman Street. It spans 10 feet in width and extends approximately 111 feet along the 10-foot alley, forming a narrow, rectangular strip adjacent to the alleyway.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Fiscal Note: This bill should have no fiscal impact.

Information Source(s): Reporting Agencies, Bill 25-0039 1st reader.

Analysis by: Juliane Jemmott
Analysis Date: 6/17/2025

Direct Inquiries to: (410) 396 - 1268

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 25-0039
(First Reader)

Introduced by: The Council President

At the request of: The Administration (Department of Transportation)

Introduced and read first time: March 10, 2025

Assigned to: Land Use and Transportation Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Planning Commission, Department of Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ORDINANCE concerning

2 **City Streets – Closing – A 16 Foot Alley and a Portion of a 10 Foot Alley**
3

4 FOR the purpose of condemning and closing a 16 foot alley and a portion of a 10 foot alley
5 bounded by Presstman Street, Brunt Street, Robert Street, and Pennsylvania Avenue, as
6 shown on a plat numbered 312-A-11A, prepared by the Survey Section and filed in the Office
7 of the Department of Transportation; and providing for a special effective date.

8 BY authority of

9 Article I - General Provisions

10 Section 4

11 and

12 Article II - General Powers

13 Sections 2, 34, 35

14 Baltimore City Charter

15 (1996 Edition)

16 **SECTION 1. BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
17 Department of Transportation shall proceed to condemn and close a 16 foot alley and a portion of
18 a 10 foot alley bounded by Presstman Street, Brunt Street, Robert Street, and Pennsylvania
19 Avenue, and more particularly described as follows:

20 Beginning for Parcel 1 at the point formed by the intersection of the southwest
21 side of Brunt Street 35 feet wide, and the northwest side of a 16 foot alley, said
22 point of beginning being Southeasterly 170 feet, more or less, measured along the
23 southwest side of said Brunt Street from the southeast side of Presstman Street 66
24 feet wide; thence binding on the southwest side of said Brunt Street Southeasterly
25 16 feet to the southwest side of said 16 foot alley; thence binding on the southwest
26 side of said 16 foot alley Southwesterly 60 feet more or less, to the intersection of
27 the northeast side of a 10 foot alley; thence binding on the northeast side of said
28 10 foot alley Northwesterly 16 feet to the northwest side of said 16 foot alley;
29 thence binding on the northwest side of said 16 foot alley Northeasterly 60 feet,
30 more or less, to the place of beginning.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

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Containing 960 square feet or 0.022 acres, more or less.

Beginning for Parcel 2 at the point formed by the intersection of the southeast side of a 5 foot alley and the southwest side of a 10 foot alley, said point of beginning being Southeasterly 75 feet, more or less, measured along the southwest side of said 10 foot alley from the southeast side of Presstman Street 66 feet wide; thence leaving the southwest side of said 10 foot alley Northeasterly 10 feet to the northeast side of said 10 foot alley; thence binding on the northeast side of said 10 foot alley Southwesterly 111, feet more or less, to intersect the southeast side of said 10 foot alley; thence binding on the southeast side of said 10 foot alley Southwesterly 10 feet to the southwest side of said 10 foot alley; thence binding on the southwest side of said 10 foot alley Northwesterly 111, feet more or less, to the place of beginning.

Containing 1,110 square feet or 0.026 acres, more or less.

As delineated on a plat numbered 312-A-11A prepared by the Survey Control Section and filed on January 12, 2024 in the Office of the Department of Transportation.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That the proceedings for the condemnation and closing of a 16 foot alley and a portion of a 10 foot alley and the rights of all interested parties shall be regulated by and in accordance with all applicable provisions of state and local law and with all applicable rules and regulations.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That after the closing under this Ordinance, all subsurface structures and appurtenances now owned by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore continue to be the property of the Mayor and City Council, in fee simple, until their use has been abandoned by the Mayor and City Council. If any person wants to remove, alter, or interfere with them, that person must first obtain permission from the Mayor and City Council and, in the application for this permission, must agree to pay all costs and expenses, of every kind, arising out of the removal, alteration, or interference.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That no building or structure of any kind (including but not limited to railroad tracks) may be constructed or erected in or on any part of the street closed under this Ordinance until all subsurface structures and appurtenances owned by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore have been abandoned by the Mayor and City Council or, at the expense of the person seeking to erect the building or structure, have been removed and relaid in accordance with the specifications and under the direction of the Director of Transportation of Baltimore City.

SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That after the closing under this Ordinance, all subsurface structures and appurtenances owned by any person other than the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore shall be removed by and at the expense of their owners, promptly upon notice to do so from the Director of Transportation.

SECTION 6. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That at all times after the closing under this Ordinance, the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, acting by or through its authorized representatives, shall have access to the subject property and to all subsurface structures and appurtenances used by the Mayor and City Council, for the purpose of inspecting, maintaining, repairing, altering, relocating, or replacing any of them, without need to obtain permission from or pay compensation to the owner of the property.

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1 **SECTION 7. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That this Ordinance takes effect on the date it is
2 enacted.

Baltimore City Council




Land Use & Transportation Committee

Bill: 25-0039

**Title: City Streets – Closing – A 16 Foot
Alley and a Portion of a 10 Foot Alley**

Agency Reports

FROM	NAME & TITLE	CHRIS RYER, DIRECTOR	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 8 TH FLOOR, 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET		
	SUBJECT	STREET CLOSING / CLOSING OF A 10 FOOT AND 16 FOOT ALLEY IN THE VICINITY OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE AND PRESSTMAN STREET – BLOCK 320		

TO Ms. Corren Johnson, Director
Department of Transportation
417 East Fayette Street, Benton Building 5th Floor

DATE: September 6, 2023

This is to inform you that on August 31, 2023, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the closing of a ten-foot and a sixteen-foot alley in Block 320. A copy of the staff report is attached. The purpose of this closure is to create a single lot for redevelopment of a community center.

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. Marcia Collins, DPW
Mr. David Framm, DOT
Mr. Francis Burnszynski, PABC



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

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

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

August 31, 2023

REQUEST: Alley Closings/ Closing of a 10-Foot and 16-Foot Alley in Block 320 (1900 Block of Brunt Street)

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt findings and Approve

STAFF: Renata Southard

PETITIONER: The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

OWNER: Mayor and City Council of Baltimore

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: These two alleys are located in the block bounded by the 1900 block of Pennsylvania Avenue on the west, Presstman Street on the north, Brunt Street on the east, and Robert Street on the south.

General Area: These alleys are in a block that is located in the northern portion of the Upton neighborhood, that has a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional uses. The Shake & Bake Family Fun Center is located three blocks to the southeast on Pennsylvania Avenue.

HISTORY

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

ANALYSIS

Background: These alley closures will assist in the creation of a singular parcel for the future development of The Sanaa Center, a proposed arts and cultural institution within the Black Arts District. The proposed building will be located over the portions of the alleys proposed for closure.

Alley Closures: These closures are referred to the Planning Commission for review since the street and alley network of the City falls under the master planning authority of the Planning Commission. In this case, all of the properties surrounding these alleys are owned by the Mayor and City Council. For that reason, staff recommends that the Planning Commission find that these alleys are no longer needed for any public purpose, and that they can be closed and sold. The portions of the alleys to be closed are shown in the block plat below.

Exhibit "A"

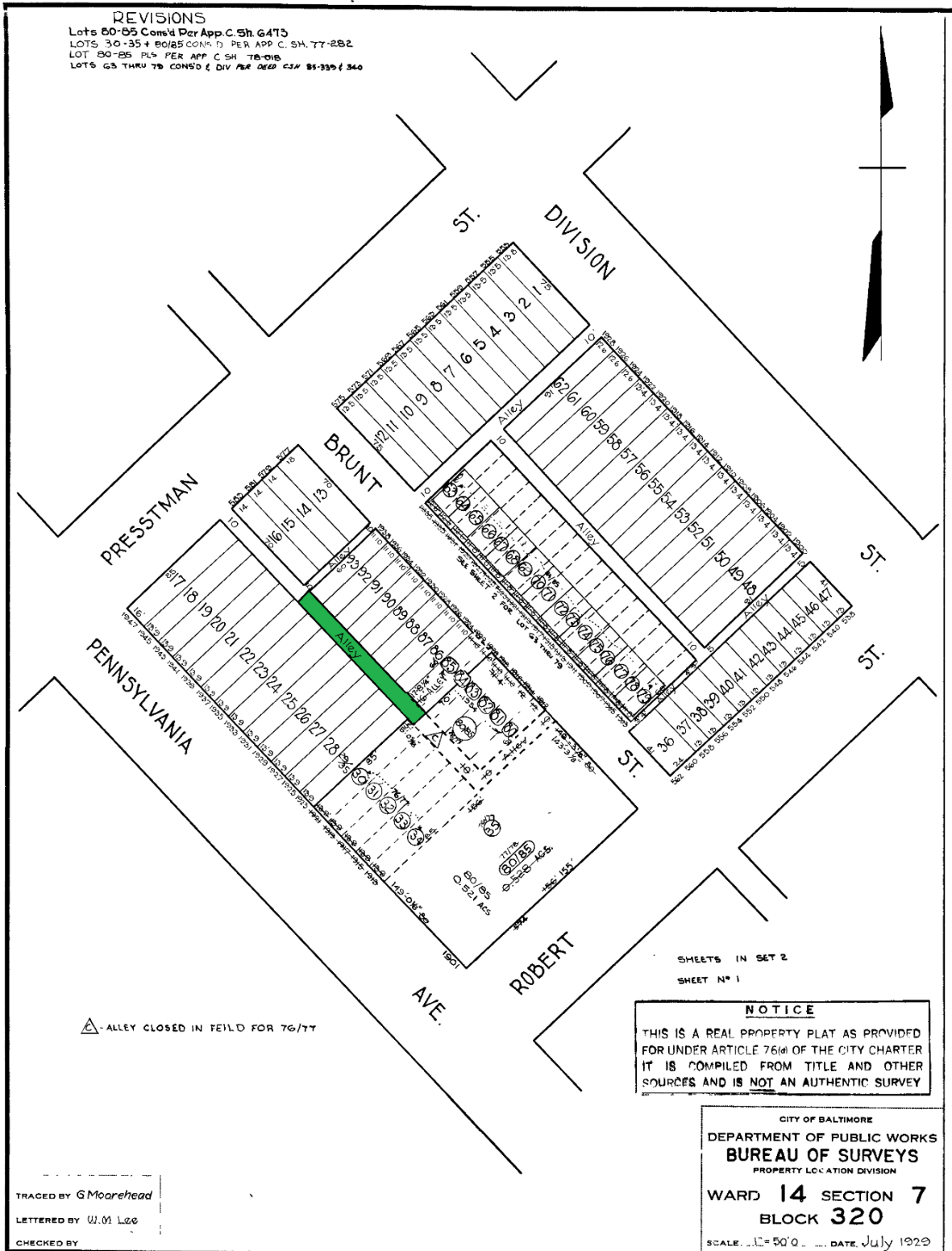
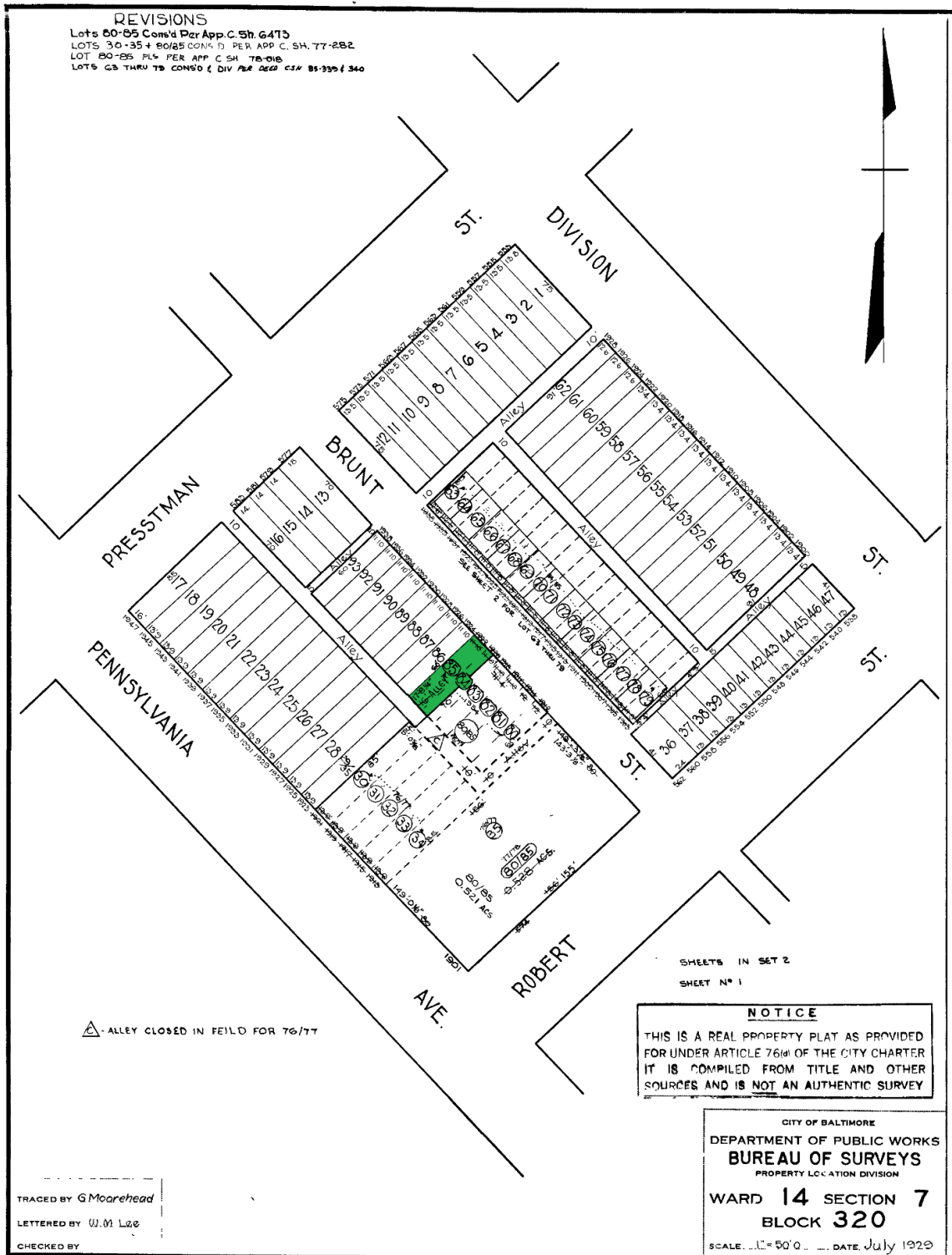


Exhibit “B”



Equity:

- Impact:
 - *How might the proposal impact the surrounding community in the short or long term?* As noted, these alley closures will assist in the creation of a singular parcel for the future development of The Sanaa Center, a proposed arts and cultural institution within the Black Arts District. The Black Arts District was established to recognize the significance of West Baltimore as a place of great importance in African American music, art, and culture within the City. The closing of two alleys to accommodate the plans for the Sanaa Center are in direct alignment with the mission of the Black Arts District. The Sanaa Center “will be a local economic and cultural engine that will empower Black creatives, strengthen the Historic Pennsylvania Avenue business corridor, generate new jobs, and bolster the arts ecosystem both in Baltimore and in the DMV,” according to the project website. Planning anticipates minimal impact to traffic, and improved utilization of the parcels (which are currently vacant) along the 1900 block of Pennsylvania Avenue due to the alley closings.
 - *How would this proposal impact existing patterns of inequity that persist in Baltimore?* West Baltimore has been historically and systematically disinvested, beginning with patterns established by the Home Owners Loan Corporation maps - or “redlining” - more than 80 years ago. The Sanaa Center, located in the Upton neighborhood of West Baltimore, is looking to reinvest in West Baltimore with a \$10 million development project (with \$7.2 million in capital currently raised). While the alley closing is a small portion of the project, these parcels are important to the overall project vision to reinvest in West Baltimore.
- Engagement:
 - *Has the community been meaningfully engaged in discussing this proposal?* The project team has met with the community regarding the alley closure for the new Sanaa Center, including the Black Arts and Entertainment District, Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street, and the Upton Community.
 - *How are residents who have been historically excluded from planning processes being authentically included in the planning of the proposed policy or project?* In general, community participation in the Black Arts District has been robust, and this project is a part of the overall goal of the District.
- Internal Operations:
 - *This may include staff commentary regarding impact on staff time or resources devoted to a project.* This project and report have had minimal impact on staff time and resources.

Notification: The Upton Planning Committee, the Black Arts District, and the Intersection of Change, have been notified of this action.



Chris Ryer
Director

Ordinance for Saana Center Alley Closing Bill

(Based on the Planning Commission Staff Report)

February 24, 2025

Background

The Sanaa Center is a proposed arts and cultural institution within the Black Arts District. The Black Arts District was established to recognize the significance of West Baltimore as a place of great importance in African American music, art, and culture within the City. The Sanaa Center “will be a local economic and cultural engine that will empower Black creatives, strengthen the Historic Pennsylvania Avenue business corridor, generate new jobs, and bolster the arts ecosystem both in Baltimore and in the DMV,” according to the project website.

Legislation

These alley closures will assist in the creation of a singular parcel for the future development of The Sanaa Center, a proposed arts and cultural institution within the Black Arts District. The proposed building will be located over the portions of the alleys proposed for closure. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the closing of a ten-foot and a sixteen-foot alley in Block 320 on August 31, 2023. The closing of two alleys to accommodate the plans for the Sanaa Center are in direct alignment with the mission of the Black Arts District.