


F R O M	Name & Title	Reginald Moore Executive Director <i>r. Moore + Moore</i>	CITY OF BALTIMORE MEMO	
	Agency Name & Address	Baltimore City Department of Recreation & Parks 3001 East Drive, Baltimore, Maryland (MD) 21217		
	Subject :	City Council Bill 24-0504 Zoning - Open Space District - Conditional Use Cultural Facility and Parking Lot - Variances - C.C. Jackson Park and Library		

DATE: May 9, 2024

TO: The Honorable City Council President Nick Mosby
Members of the City Council
11516269647090529263.docCity Hall, Room 400
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

I am herein reporting on City Council 24-0504 introduced by Councilwoman Sharon Middleton, to amend the Zoning - Open Space District - Conditional Use Cultural Facility and Parking Lot - Variances - C.C. Jackson Park and Library - 4910 Park Heights Avenue for the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a cultural facility and an open off-street parking area on the property known as C.C. Jackson Park and Library, 4910 Park Heights Avenue.

The City of Baltimore and its partners have invested significant resources in the revitalization of the of the Park Heights Master Plan Area. The investments include two brand-new 21st Century Schools; millions of dollars of homeowner repair grants; and the completion of an acquisition, relocation, and demolition strategy for 62 acres of land in Central Park Heights, among others. More than one-third of all vacant homes and lots in Park Heights –itself 1,500 acres – were concentrated into this 62-acre footprint, also known in as the Major Redevelopment Area (MRA). Development in the MRA will accommodate hundreds of new mixed-income, for-sale and rental units and new amenities. Further, the City is poised for the next phase of redevelopment in the heart of the MRA: expansion of CC Jackson Park and the construction of a brand-new Enoch Pratt Free Library branch, located at a shared site on the corner of Woodland Avenue and Park Heights Avenue. The Park Heights Master Plan (2008) identified the project location to serve as primary community resource for the housing construction that is now underway in the MRA.

The scale of the Park and Library projects has required that they be undertaken in multiple phases. Improvements have included the \$2 million construction of an artificial turf athletic field, basketball court, playground space, and walking paths and parking lot at CC Jackson Park and Recreation Center, completed in 2014, and a \$4.3 million renovation and expansion of the CC Jackson Recreation Center, completed in 2016; renovation of the existing pool is anticipated to begin design in 2025. CC Jackson Park and the Library share a property and will be bid together as one project in 2024. This Parking Ordinance will facilitate this project in moving further forward.

The current project expands the existing Park frontage along Park Heights Avenue to the east and Woodland Avenue to the south (see attached diagrams, page 6). Baltimore City Recreation and Parks (BCRP) undertook a community-based planning process between 2018 and 2019 to articulate the improvements (see attached concept plan, page 2). They will include an expanded walking loop with fitness stations, extended primary park path, expanded playground, flexible lawn/practice field, open space/event lawn, a pavilion, and

community garden space. A new Enoch Pratt Library branch on the corner of Park Heights and Woodland Avenues with an adjacent parking lot will be built concurrently with the Park (see attached Park and Library site plan, pages 7-10).

Construction documentation for the Park and Library are currently in process, and multiple City agencies CC Jackson Park is zoned Open Space (OS). The lots that encompass the expanded Park are formerly vacant buildings demolished by DHCD to make way for the improvements in the Major Redevelopment Area, including the Park expansion. These lots are in the process of being transferred to BCRP jurisdiction and will be consolidated with the existing park into one large parcel. OS allows institutional uses, including cultural facilities such as the Library, and confers certain requirements for parking.

OS zoning allows cultural facilities via conditional use approval by the Board of Municipal Zoning Appeals (BMZA), as per Article 32, Table 7-202 of the Zoning Code. Article 32, Table 7-202 also shows that parking in OS zoning is conditional by Ordinance, but Article 32, Table 16-406A requires cultural facilities to provide parking at a rate “1 space per 4,000 gross square feet area.” This request for an Ordinance includes both the conditional uses for a cultural facility and accessory parking, as well as a request to exceed the maximum parking limitation (Article 32 -§16-205).

The proposed plan for the shared CC Jackson Park and Library site includes a parking lot with a total of 47 spaces – 30 to serve Enoch Pratt and 17 for the Park. Four spaces are reserved for ADA handicapped use, and two will provide Electric Vehicle charging stations. In addition, the plan provides for 9 bicycle parking spaces. Table 16- 406 would require the Library to provide five parking spaces; Article 32 -§16-205 would allow up to ten. This is insufficient for either the Library or the Park, let alone the shared facilities.

The number of proposed parking spaces that would serve Enoch Pratt is consistent with the needs of staff and patrons at similar libraries throughout the City. CC Jackson Recreation Center has a parking lot of 28 spaces located on Dennison Avenue, but this lot is already insufficient, particularly when there are multiple events taking place at the recreation center and within the park. The planned 17 spaces that serve the expanded CC Jackson Park, along with the planned Library spaces, will augment access to neighborhood, Library, and BCRP events. Many of BCRP’s events take place during off hours, weekends, and times when overflow parking is needed. A new pavilion rental will also draw use of the new parking lot. The request for approval of accessory parking required for a cultural facility therefore includes a request to exceed the maximum parking limitation.

If you have any questions, please contact Jenny Morgan

