


<b>FROM</b>	NAME & TITLE	CHRIS RYER, DIRECTOR	CITY of BALTIMORE  <b>MEMO</b>	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 8 <sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET		
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL #20-0610 / REPEAL – REISTERSTOWN PLAZA TRANSIT STATION URBAN RENEWAL AREA AND PLAN		

**TO**

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

DATE: October 9, 2020

At its regular meeting of October 8, 2020, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #20-0610, for the purpose of repealing Ordinance 09-219, which established the Reisterstown Plaza Transit Station Urban Renewal Area and Plan; 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 #20-0610 and adopted the following resolution; nine members being present (nine in favor):

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission concurs with the recommendation of its departmental staff, adopts the findings outlined in the staff report, with consideration for testimony and facts presented in the meeting, and recommends that City Council Bill #20-0610 be passed 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: Mr. Nicholas Blendy, Mayor's Office  
 Mr. Matthew Stegman, Mayor's Office  
 Ms. Nina Themelis, Mayor's Office  
 The Honorable Edward Reisinger, Council Rep. to Planning Commission  
 Mr. Colin Tarbert, BDC  
 Ms. Livhu Ndou, 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  
 Mr. Dominic McAlily, Council Services  
 Ms. Caroline Hecker, Esq.



Bernard C. "Jack" Young  
Mayor

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Sean D. Davis, Chairman

### STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer  
Director

October 8, 2020

**REQUEST:** City Council Bill #20-0610/ Repeal – Reisterstown Plaza Transit Station Urban Renewal Area and Plan:

For the purpose of repealing Ordinance 09-219, which established the Reisterstown Plaza Transit Station Urban Renewal Area and Plan; and providing for a special effective date.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

**STAFF:** Eric Tiso and James Ashford

**INTRODUCED BY:** Councilmember Schleifer

#### **SITE/GENERAL AREA**

General Area: The Reisterstown Plaza Transit Station Urban Renewal Ordinance is generally bounded by Northern Parkway to the south; Reisterstown Road to the east; and the Baltimore City-Baltimore County line to the north and west. The area is primarily businesses, but contains some residential and institutional uses. The area also contains a major public transit station – the Reisterstown Road Plaza Metro Station – and various major vehicular routes, including Reisterstown Road, Wabash Avenue, and Patterson Avenue.

#### **HISTORY**

- Ordinance # 81-392, approved July 2, 1981, established the previous Reisterstown Plaza Urban Renewal Plan (URP), and over time there were six legislative amendments to the plan.
- The Northwest Community Planning Forum Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan was adopted by the Planning Commission on March 10, 2005.
- Ordinance #09-219, approved October 2, 2009 established a new Reisterstown Plaza Transit Station URP, which better aligned with the then-new Comprehensive Master Plan for the City.

#### **CONFORMITY TO PLANS**

The last update to this URP was made shortly following the publication of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan, which among other things, made recommendations for land use around transit stations. Since that time, the City has adopted a comprehensive update to its Zoning Code in 2017, which both modified existing zoning districts, as well as created new ones such as four Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zones in the complete remapping of the City. Additionally, many of the specific design controls that were common to many URPs across the City were incorporated into the new Zoning Code, which meant that many of them were no longer needed. This has again caused this URP to be out of date, and so a repeal of the plan is appropriate at this time.

## **ANALYSIS**

Background: Staff notes that this bill was introduced in concert with City Council Bill #20-0609 – Rezoning – 4207 Menlo Avenue. The purpose of this companion bill is to prevent a conflict with the land use controls of the URP, should the proposed rezoning be approved. Another option would be to amend the URP’s land use plan, but that would require a comprehensive review of the plan and a complete re-write to coordinate all references with the current zoning code.

Staff believes that the zoning code is sufficient as it is now, and that such extensive updates to the URP are not warranted. Other goals of the plan included improvement of the business corridor through the goals in the plan, which included intended enhanced streetscapes, better landscaping, pedestrian friendly environment (*e.g.* 6 foot wide sidewalk requirement), and a more consistent development pattern. The weakness of the plan is that while these goals are listed in the plan, they aren’t necessarily enforceable by the plan. The City collectively now has complete streets requirements. We also have a Site Plan Review Manual and a Landscape Manual that are incorporated into the Zoning Code for streetscape and landscape requirements. There is also a Design Manual incorporated into the Zoning Code for basic design requirements, many of which were included because they were often referenced in URPs. For all of these reasons, staff believes that this plan is no longer needed, and recommends repeal of the URP as the preferred option.

Notification: The Glen Neighborhood Improvement Association, the Fallstaff Community Association, and CHAI (Comprehensive Housing Assistance, Inc.) have been notified of this action.



**Chris Ryer**  
**Director**