



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 #22-0302 / SALE OF PROPERTY - 2801 HARFORD ROAD; A PORTION OF BLOCK 4199, REVISED LOT 9		

DATE: December 6, 2022

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

The Department of Planning is in receipt of City Council Bill #22-0302, which is for the purpose of authorizing the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore to sell, at either public or private sale, all its interest in certain property that is located at 2801 Harford Road, and consisting of a portion of Block 4199, Revised Lot 9, and is no longer needed for public use; and providing for a special effective date.

The Department of Planning recommends **approval** of City Council Bill #22-0302, as it is consistent with an approved subdivision final plan approved by the Planning Commission in April of this year.

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

CR/ewt

attachments

cc: Ms. Nina Themelis, Mayor's Office
Mr. Ethan Cohen, Mayor's Office
The Honorable Eric Costello, Council Rep. to Planning Commission
Ms. Nikki Thompson, City Council President's Office
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



CHRIS RYER
Director

June 13, 2022

Office of the Comptroller
Department of Real Estate
100 Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Email via: kim.mccalla@morgan.edu; sharon.kempa@baltimorecity.gov

**Re: Minor Subdivision Final Plans / 2801 Harford Road; 2801 St. Lo Drive
Park De-Listing / A Portion of Clifton Park**

At its regular meeting of April 28, 2022, the Planning Commission approved the Final Subdivision Plan (dated March 18, 2022) for the above-described properties. The purpose of this subdivision is to adjust the lot lines between these two parcels to facilitate the transfer of the former Lake Clifton High School portion of Clifton Park from the City to Morgan State University. A lot line clean-up action is also proposed to dedicate portion of land near the historic pump house to the public right-of-way. No development is proposed at this time, but future redevelopment of the site is subject to additional Planning Commission review and approval.

The Planning Commission at the same hearing of April 28, 2022 considered the request by the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks to de-list a portion of Clifton Park that will be transferred to Morgan State University for the creation of their future satellite campus. Finding no further public need for this portion of the park, the Planning Commission approved the request to de-list the approximately 14.17 acres from the Parks Master Plan per the approved subdivision plan.

We are giving you three mylars of the stamped approved Final Subdivision Plan and paper copies of the stamped approved plans. The paper copies are for your records. The mylar copies must be filed in the Land Records Office of the Circuit Court of Baltimore City within one year. The Land Records Office is located in Room 610 of the Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse (100 North Calvert Street, Baltimore, MD 21201). Written notice stating the date of recording and folio number must be forwarded to us as soon as available.

BRANDON M. SCOTT
Mayor



CHRIS RYER
Director

We appreciate your investment in our community. If you have questions about the process, please contact Mr. Matthew DeSantis at 410-396-5622, or by e-mail at matthew.desantis@baltimorecity.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. DeSantis".

Matthew DeSantis, AICP
City Planner II



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Sean D. Davis, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

April 28, 2022

REQUESTS:

- Minor Subdivision Final Plans / 2801 Harford Road; 2801 St. Lo Drive
- Parks Master Plan Amendments/ Delist a portion of Clifton Park

RECOMMENDATION: Approval for both items

STAFF: Matthew DeSantis, AICP

PETITIONER: Morgan State University

OWNER: Mayor and City Council

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: The overall site (Clifton Park) spans nearly 272 acres. Clifton Park features Clifton Park Golf Course, soccer fields, baseball/softball diamonds, tennis courts, the Clifton Mansion historic site, and other passive public amenities. The former Lake Clifton High School is located in the south-central portion of the park and its parcel as currently delineated encompasses nearly 44 acres.

General Area: Clifton Park is encircled by several neighborhoods, including South Clifton Park and Darley Park to the south, Coldstream, Homestead, Montebello to the west, Mayfield to the north, and Belair Edison to the north and east.

HISTORY

The area now known as Clifton Park was used for farming in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The area was then used as part of Johns Hopkins estate in the mid- to late- nineteenth century, during which time the Clifton mansion and Gardener's Cottage were built. The valve house and drinking water reservoir were constructed in 1887, followed by the band shell in 1910 and later that decade the golf-course and swimming pool. In the 1960's the reservoir was filled in and Lake Clifton School was built on top. Historic preservation efforts began in the 1970's and continue to this day.

- On April 29, 2010, the Planning Commission adopted the Clifton Park Master Plan, which was prepared by the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks.

ANALYSIS

Scope of Request: The Commission is being asked to consider two separate but interconnected actions: 1) a minor subdivision application to “square off” the former Lake Clifton High School parcel so that it can be sold to Morgan State University for the development of a new satellite campus and
2) the delisting of this portion of Clifton Park from the Baltimore City Parks Master Plan so that it can be utilized in such manner.

Subdivision: Currently, 2801 St. Lo Drive (the former Lake Clifton site) is oval-shaped. The requested minor subdivision would accomplish the following two objectives:

- “square off” the parcel by enabling the oddly shaped sliver of park land that surrounds $\frac{3}{4}$ of the school site to be consolidated with the school parcel
- Extend the lot limits of the former school parcel to encompass the historic Clifton Valve House building, as Morgan State has agreed to assume ownership of this asset and will engage in stabilization efforts.

This action is for disposition only and no Development Plan has been submitted. As described by the Rules and Regulations for Land Subdivision, however, any subsequent Development Plans for this site would return to the Planning Commission for review and approval.

Park Delisting: The Baltimore City Charter establishes the Department of Planning and the Planning Commission, as well as outlines their powers and duties. The Planning Department is charged with creating and maintaining a Master Plan for the City. Within the Charter, the scope of the Master Plan is to consist of a series of component plans that can address among other things "the extent of publicly owned places of recreation, such as playgrounds, squares, and parks".

Periodically the Department of Recreation and Parks needs to review and make modifications to its land inventory. These plan amendments must be approved by the Planning Commission as amendments to the Parks Master Plan. In addition to making revisions to the Master Plan, which would include the addition of properties to the plan or delisting of properties from the Plan, the Charter outlines that public improvements, which could include parks and places of recreation, be in conformance with the Master Plan and have first been approved by the Planning Commission.

This project has an associated Land Disposition Agreement that was recently approved by the Board of Estimates. The agreement stipulates that Morgan State University will acquire the land in question for the demolition of the former school building, stabilization of the Valve House, construction of a Convocation Center, restoration and conservation of several pieces of public art currently on the high school campus, relocation of an existing basketball court to a more accessible location, and the creation a Master Plan to be approved by Planning Commission.

The majority of the land to be sold to Morgan is already not a part of the Parks Master Plan - the existing school parcel is just over 44 acres. The land that is subject to this delisting request is the approximately 14 acres that surrounds the school parcel, which will be consolidated subsequent

to the land subdivision. The majority of this land is not currently accessible or usable as public park space, and as such it makes sense for this land to also be included in the transaction with Morgan State University. The one exception is the existing basketball courts near St. Lo Drive and the CSX tracks, but Morgan has agreed to relocate this public amenity to another more accessible location within the park.

For these reasons, staff recommends approval of the approximately 14.17 acres from Clifton Park to be delisted from the Parks Master Plan.

In its consideration of the proposal, staff reviewed the following additional factors:

Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC): No development has been proposed for this site, and as such, no Site Plan Review has taken place at this time.

Elevations: No development has been proposed for this site, and as such, no Design Review has taken place at this time.

Landscaping / Forest Conservation: No development has been proposed for this site, and as such, no Forest Conservation review has taken place at this time. Once the site is owned by the State, Forest Conservation review would be under the jurisdiction of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

Zoning Regulations: The proposed lot disposition is compliant with the requirements of the site's OS zoning designation. Upon transfer to State ownership, however, the site would be exempt from Zoning Code requirements.

Subdivision Regulations: The proposed subdivision submission satisfies the Rules and Regulations of Land Subdivision.

Equity Analysis

1) Short / long-term impact on surrounding community: The minor subdivision and transfer of the Lake Clifton High School site to Morgan State for the development of a satellite campus will have significant long- and short-term effects on the surrounding community. Planning staff consider the redevelopment of what is now a vacant campus that incurs significant yearly expense for maintenance costs to Morgan State, a premier anchor institution for Baltimore City, for the expansion of their reach to represent a significant win for the City and surrounding communities.

2) Impact on Baltimore's existing patterns of inequity: The site is surrounded by East Baltimore neighborhoods that have suffered decades of under-investment. The land transfer and subsequent development of the site by Morgan State for a satellite campus will hopefully have positive effects on these surrounding communities by providing a proximity of new resources and opportunities for residents.

3) Has the community been meaningfully engaged: The Department of Housing and Community Development initially sought developers for the redevelopment of the site several years ago, and Morgan State was selected in 2020. DHCD typically includes input from the surrounding community when selecting between applications for surplus property. As the development of the new campus will unfold over many years and will require the creation of a master plan to guide this development, there should be additional opportunities for community engagement.

4) How are residents who have been historically excluded from planning processes being authentically included in the planning of the proposed policy or project: This major redevelopment represents a significant opportunity for the City and Morgan State University to engage with surrounding community members to help shape the long-term vision for this new campus. Planning staff will be eager to assist partners to this end.

5) Impact on internal operations: There has not been, nor is there expected to be, any substantive impact to internal operations as a consequence of this subdivision application.

Community Notification: The following community associations were notified of this application: Coldstream, Homestead, Montebello; South Clifton Park, Darley Park, and East Baltimore Midway. Additionally, the property has been posted in accordance with Planning Commission guidelines.



Chris Ryer
Director