

FROM

NAME & TITLE  
AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS  
SUBJECT

THOMAS J. STOSUR, DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET  
CITY COUNCIL BILL #13-0210 / ZONING – PARKING LOT DISTRICT –  
301 EAST LOMBARD STREET (AKA 300 EAST PRATT STREET)

CITY of  
BALTIMORE  
**MEMO**



TO

DATE:

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

May 17, 2013

At its regular meeting of May 16, 2013, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #13-0210, for the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of an open off-street parking area on the property known as 301 East Lombard Street (aka 300 East Pratt Street), as outlined in red on the accompanying plat.

In its consideration of this Bill, the Planning Commission reviewed the attached staff report which recommended approval of City Council Bill #13-0210 and adopted the following resolution eight members being present (eight in favor).

**RESOLVED**, That the Planning Commission concurs with the recommendation of its departmental staff, subject to one amendment:

- That the fifth bullet in the staff recommendation, that proposes a new Section 3, that the word “plat” be replaced with “plan” in each instance, to be more understandable and consistent with other staff amendments.

And therefore, the Planning Commission recommends that City Council Bill #13-0210 be amended and passed by the City Council.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Wolde Ararsa, Division Chief, Land Use and Urban Design Division at 410-396-4488.

TJS/WA

Attachment

- cc: Ms. Kaliope Parthemos, Deputy Chief for Economic and Neighborhood Development  
Mr. Alex Sanchez, Chief of Staff  
Ms. Angela Gibson, Mayor’s Office  
The Honorable Rochelle “Rikki” Spector, Council Rep. to Planning Commission  
Mr. David Tanner, BMZA  
Mr. Geoffrey Veale, Zoning Administration  
Mr. Nicholas Blendy, DHCD  
Ms. Barbara Zektick, DOT  
Ms. Elena DiPietro, Law Dept.  
Ms. Karen Randle, Council Services  
Mr. Jon Laria, Ballard Spahr LLP  
Mr. Courtenay Jenkins, Cushman & Wakefield, Inc.



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake  
Mayor

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

### STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur  
Director

May 16, 2013

**REQUEST:** CCB #13-0210/ Zoning – Parking Lot District – 301 East Lombard Street (aka 300 East Pratt Street):

For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of an open off-street parking area on the property known as 301 East Lombard Street (aka 300 East Pratt Street), as outlined in red on the accompanying plat.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Amendment and Approval, with the following amendments:

- On page 1, strike line 17
- On page 1, amend lines 18-19 to read "1. The improvements shown on the attached site and landscape plan, dated April 9, 2013 and approved by the Site Plan Review Committee on April 16, 2013, are hereby made a part of this Ordinance, and must be implemented and maintained thereafter."
- On page 1, line 20, renumber paragraph 3 as paragraph 2.
- On page 1, in line 25, strike all text after the period, continuing through to, and including the end of, page 2, line 2. Replace with: "If bona fide efforts have been made to develop the property, as determined in the reasonable judgment of the Director of Planning, the property owner shall be entitled to a 2-year extension of this permission to be conclusively evidenced by a letter from the Director of Planning."
- On page 2, before line 3, add a new Section 3: "And be it further ordained, that the Planning Commission shall have the authority to approve a substitute plat for the plat attached hereto, after public notice and hearing, which plat shall become a part of this Ordinance." Then renumbering Sections 4 and 5 to 5 and 6 respectively.

**STAFF:** Eric Tiso

**PETITIONER:** 301 East Lombard Development, LLC, c/o Jon Dooley

**OWNER:** Urban American LP

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

Site Conditions: 301 East Lombard Street (aka 300 East Pratt Street) is located on the southeastern corner at the intersection with South Street, contains ±0.998 acres, and is currently improved as a surface parking lot. The site is zoned B-5-2, and is within the Inner Harbor Project I Urban Renewal Plan (URP) area. This property is also located within the downtown Parking Lot District (*cf.* Zoning Code, Title 10, Subtitle 5).

General Area: This site is located within the Inner Harbor area, and is located between the Renaissance Harbor Place Hotel to the west, the former Examiner building to the East, and the Pratt Street Pavilion and the World Trade Center to the south.

## **HISTORY**

- Ordinance #92-111, dated July 2, 1992, granted conditional use approval for a parking lot, with a two-year expiration limit.
- Ordinance #94-343, dated June 17, 1994, granted conditional use approval for a parking lot for three additional years.
- Ordinance #97-130, dated March 31, 1997, granted conditional use approval for a parking lot for three additional years.

## **CONFORMITY TO PLANS**

This project is compatible with LIVE Goal 2: Elevate the Design and Quality of the City's Built Environment, Objective 1: Improve Design Quality of Baltimore's Built Environment, specifically: Create and adopt a City-wide landscape ordinance. This parking lot complies with the design intent of the draft Landscape Manual for retro-fitting additional landscaping on existing surface parking lots in the downtown area.

## **ANALYSIS**

Project: This bill will reauthorize 301 East Lombard Street as a surface parking lot. The prior authorization had lapsed, and the property has continued its operation as a public pay lot. The property is in negotiations for sale, and the current bill has provisions that will limit the land use authorization to not more than four years, with a potential two year extension. At the same time, TransForm Baltimore, the draft Zoning Code approved by the Planning Commission, proposes that principal use surface parking lots will be prohibited in the C-5 Downtown zoning districts, in which this property is located. It is important to note that if the new zoning code is approved with the downtown surface parking lot prohibition, the prohibition will take effect before the four- or six-year duration of this land use approval expires. This bill will allow the parking lot to be "grandfathered" and continue following the effective date of the new zoning code, but the expiration at the end of the four or six year period will be permanent.

Downtown Parking Lots: As part of TransForm Baltimore, the comprehensive rewrite of our Zoning code, staff has created a draft Landscape Manual that requires attractive landscaping for new parking lots generally, and requires additional screening and planting for existing parking lots in the Downtown area. This site plan complies with the design intent of the draft Landscape Manual, through reinforcing landscaping buffers at the northern and southern ends of the site, and by upgrading the perimeter fencing around the entire site.

Site Plan Review Committee: The SPRC has reviewed and approved an improved site plan for this parking lot that adjusts the parking space layout for better design and function. The applicants have proposed an alternate version of the plan that includes a second entry-only curb cut from South Street. This plan is still in review by the SPRC.

Amendments: Staff recommends that the bill be approved with several amendments that can be summarized as follows:

1. The amendments proposed will attach the site plan approved by the SPRC on April 16, 2013 to the legislation.
2. The bill initially approves the parking lot for a four year period, with a possible extension of two years, but doesn't provide details on how this is evidenced or approved. The proposed amendments will clarify this extension to be approved by the Director of Planning, by letter.
3. Adds a new Section 3, which authorizes the Planning Commission to approve an alternate site plan, without requiring additional hearings or amendments to the Ordinance.

Community Input: The Downtown Partnership and the Central Business District Coalition have been notified of this action.



**Thomas J. Stosur**  
**Director**