

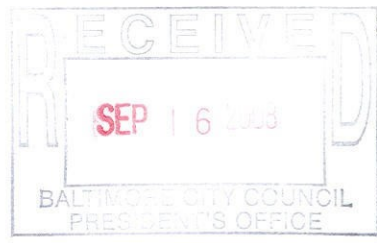
FROM	NAME & TITLE	GARY W. COLE, ACTING DIRECTOR <i>Shole</i>
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 417 E. FAYETTE STREET, 8 th FLOOR
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL #08-0158/URBAN RENEWAL -PARK HEIGHTS- RENEWAL AREA DESIGNATION AND URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

CITY of
BALTIMORE
MEMO



TO

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



DATE:
September 15, 2008

At its regular meeting of September 11, 2008 the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #08-0158 for the purpose of repealing the existing Park Heights Urban Renewal Plan and replacing it by designating as a "Renewal Area" an area situated in Baltimore City, Maryland known as Park Heights, bounded generally by Druid Park Drive on the south, Wabash Avenue on the west, Northern Parkway on the north, and Greenspring Avenue on the east; approving a Renewal Plan for Park Heights; establishing the objectives of the Plan; establishing permitted land uses in the Renewal Area; providing that where there may be a conflict between the provisions of the Renewal Plan and the provisions of any Planned Unit Development, the provisions of the Planned Unit Development control; authorizing the acquisition by purchase or by condemnation of any properties needed for urban renewal purposes; providing that the Department of Housing and Community Development may demolish, sell, or lease acquired properties; creating disposition lots and providing for controls on specific lots; providing that streets and alleys within the disposition lots may be sold in whole or in part consistent with the redevelopment of the lots; providing that scattered City-owned sites within the Renewal Area may be sold or leased for development or rehabilitation; providing that properties identified as "Public" may not be sold; providing for review by the Department of Housing and Community Development of development or rehabilitation plans in the Renewal Area with respect to their conformance with the provisions of the Renewal Plan; providing that the provisions of the Zoning Code apply to the properties in the Project Area; providing for the term of the Plan; establishing procedures for amending the Plan; approving appendices and exhibits to the Plan; waiving certain content and procedural requirements; making the provisions of this Ordinance severable; and providing for the application of this Ordinance in conjunction with certain other ordinances.

In its consideration of this Bill, the Planning Commission reviewed the attached staff report which recommended amendments to and approval of City Council Bill #08-0158 and adopted the following resolution, seven members being present (seven in favor).

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission concurs with the recommendation of its departmental staff, and recommends that City Council Bill #08-0158 be amended and passed by the City Council.

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

FA

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Subject: CITY COUNCIL BILL #08-0158/URBAN RENEWAL –PARK HEIGHTS-
RENEWAL AREA DESIGNATION AND URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

WYA/ttl

Attachments

cc:

Mr. Andy Frank, Deputy Mayor
Mr. Demuane Millard, Mayor's Office
Ms. Angela Gibson, Mayor's Office
The Honorable "Rikki" Spector, City Council Commission Representative
Mr. Geoffrey Veale, Zoning Enforcement
Mr. David Tanner, BMZA
Ms. Nikol Nabors-Jackson, DHCD
Mr. Larry Greene, Council Services
Ms. Deepa Bhattacharyya, Law Department

PLANNING COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

September 11, 2008

REQUESTS:

- Amendment To The Park Heights Master Plan
- City Council Bill #08-0158/ Urban Renewal - Park Heights - Renewal Area Designation and Urban Renewal Plan

For the purpose of repealing the existing Park Heights Urban Renewal Plan and replacing it by designating as a "Renewal Area" an area situated in Baltimore City, Maryland known as Park Heights, bounded generally by Druid Park Drive on the south, Wabash Avenue on the west, Northern Parkway on the north, and Greenspring Avenue on the east; approving a Renewal Plan for Park Heights; establishing the objectives of the Plan; establishing permitted land uses in the Renewal Area; providing that where there may be a conflict between the provisions of the Renewal Plan and the provisions of any Planned Unit Development, the provisions of the Planned Unit Development control; authorizing the acquisition by purchase or by condemnation of any properties needed for urban renewal purposes; providing that the Department of Housing and Community Development may demolish, sell, or lease acquired properties; creating disposition lots and providing for controls on specific lots; providing that streets and alleys within the disposition lots may be sold in whole or in part consistent with the redevelopment of the lots; providing that scattered City-owned sites within the Renewal Area may be sold or leased for development or rehabilitation; providing that properties identified as "Public" may not be sold; providing for review by the Department of Housing and Community Development of development or rehabilitation plans in the Renewal Area with respect to their conformance with the provisions of the Renewal Plan; providing that the provisions of the Zoning Code apply to the properties in the Project Area; providing for the term of the Plan; establishing procedures for amending the Plan; approving appendices and exhibits to the Plan; waiving certain content and procedural requirements; making the provisions of this Ordinance severable; and providing for the application of this Ordinance in conjunction with certain other ordinances.
- City Council Bill # 08-0159/ Rezoning - Properties In Park Heights

For the purpose of changing the zoning for certain properties in Park Heights: as outlined in green on the accompanying plats, from the B-1 Zoning District to the OS Zoning District and from the R-6 Zoning District to the OS Zoning District; as outlined in orange on the accompanying plats from the B-1 Zoning District to the R-10 Zoning District, from the M-2 Zoning District to the R-10 Zoning District, from the O-R Zoning District to the R-10 Zoning District, and from the R-6 Zoning District to the R-10 Zoning District; as outlined in red on the accompanying plats from the B-2 Zoning District to the B-3 Zoning District, from the R-5 Zoning District to the B-3 Zoning District, and from the R-7 Zoning District to the B-3

Zoning District; as outlined in yellow on the accompanying plats from the B-2 Zoning District to the R-6 Zoning District, from the B-3 Zoning District to the R-6 Zoning District, from the M-2 Zoning District to the R-6 Zoning District, from the O-R Zoning District to the R-6 Zoning District, and from the R-7 Zoning District to the R-6 Zoning District; as outlined in brown on the accompanying plats from the B-3 Zoning District to the B-1 Zoning District; as outlined in pink on the accompanying plats from the B-3 Zoning District to the B-2 Zoning District and from the R-6 Zoning District to the B-2 Zoning District; as outlined in purple on the accompanying plats from the B-3 Zoning District to the M-1; as outlined in turquoise on the accompanying plats from the B-3 Zoning District to the M-2 Zoning District; and as outlined in tan on the accompanying plats from the R-6 Zoning District to the R-5 Zoning District.

RECOMMENDATION:

- Amendment to The Park Heights Master Plan: Approval

- City Council Bill #08-0158/Urban Renewal Plan: Amendments and approval
 - Add the following properties to Appendix A:
 - 3600 Woodland Avenue Block 3196C, Lot 29
 - 3604-06 Woodland Avenue Block 3196C, Lot 30
 - 3608-12 Woodland Avenue Block 3196C, Lot 31

 - Add the following properties to Appendix B, Scattered Sites:
 - 3600 Woodland Avenue Block 3196C, Lot 29
 - 3604-06 Woodland Avenue Block 3196C, Lot 30
 - 3608-12 Woodland Avenue Block 3196C, Lot 31

 - Add Appendix C as follows:

Appendix C: Park Heights Design Standards

A. Design Review:

The Department of Planning, on behalf on the Department of Housing, will review all exterior permits within the Urban Renewal Ordinance. All projects will be considered for potential Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) review. Depending on the scope/scale/visibility of the project, permits will be either reviewed by design staff or by the department’s Urban Design and Architectural Review Panel (UDARP). Permits will be reviewed according to the standards below, as well as for general design principles. The Department may require applicants to make modifications to site plans to provide landscaping, fencing, and other amenities.

B. Residential

1. Renovation

- a) Windows and doors on front of house should fit existing openings. Replacement windows and doors on front of house should be the same size and location as existing windows and doors.
- b) Removal of front yards for parking or construction is not allowed. At least 25% of any front yard must remain landscaped or grass.
- c) Removal of historic features on the front (or sides of corner properties) of buildings, such as cornices or porches is not allowed. These features should be retained and may be restored or replaced with similar materials.

2. New Construction (applies only to Park Heights Avenue)

- a) Façades: Incorporation of bays, balconies, porches, stoops, or other projecting elements is encouraged to avoid flat façades on new buildings.
- b) Buildings and entrances must address public streets, with entries and lobbies that engage the street.
- c) Surface parking lots must not be visible from Park Heights Avenue. Parking lots should be located in the rear of the building or should be screened with landscaping.

C. Commercial

1. Renovation

- a) Windows and doors on front of building should fit existing openings. Replacement windows and doors on front of building should be the same size and location as existing windows and doors. No window or door opening on front or corner side facades is allowed.
- b) No temporary or permanent sign affixed or placed against the inside or outside surfaces of a display window may exceed 15% of the area of total glass areas of the storefront. No temporary sign will be affixed or placed against the inside or outside surfaces of transom windows or doors. Temporary signs must be removed within 30 days and may not be replaced by other temporary signs.
- c) All lighting and electrical elements such as wires, conduits, junction boxes, transformers, ballasts, switches, and panel boxes must be concealed from view as much as possible.
- d) Flat signs must be placed in the signboard area parallel to the building face and may not project more than 12” from the surface of the building and must not exceed in area three times the width in feet of the frontage of the building. In the case of corner properties, each façade is to be calculated separately as to size allowed for each. Flat signs

may be placed no higher than 2 inches below the sill of the bottom of the second story window where windows exist or 13 feet above grade level, whichever is lower. Signs shall be permitted at rear entrance doors but shall not exceed six square feet in size.

- e) One projecting sign is permitted for each building provided it is perpendicular to the building face. No projecting sign may exceed 6 square feet in area and may be placed no higher than the bottom of the second story window(s), where they exist, or 13 feet above grade level - whichever is lower. No portion of a projecting sign may be lower than 8 feet above grade. No portion of a projecting sign may project more than 5 feet in front of the building's façade.
- f) Painted signs or signs constructed of separate factory manufactured letters on building surfaces are permitted in accordance with the above limits for flat signs.
- g) Signs for upper floor uses may not exceed 3 square feet in area and may not project more than 1 inch beyond the surface of the buildings, nor may they be placed higher than 13 feet above grade level.
- h) Roof top signs, signs above the parapet of a building, billboards, or outdoor advertising signs painted or mounted on structures are not permitted.
- i) Painted or inlaid signs on first floor awnings are permitted on valance portions only. Awning lettering may not exceed 8 inches in height.
- j) Flashing or moving signs other than barber poles are not permitted.
- k) Future minor privilege permits for signs may be issued only for those signs meeting project design criteria.
- l) No new freestanding, monument or pole signs are allowed, except for a grocery store use.
- m) Signs should not cover architectural details.
- n) Banner signs (temporary or permanent) are not allowed.
- o) Awnings must be made of canvas or canvas-like material.
- p) Security grilles on front of building should be vertical and spaced to afford visibility to the interior. Mesh or solid security grilles are not allowed.

2. New Construction

- a) Height: To scale appropriately with the existing area, new construction shall not exceed five stories or be less than two stories in height.
- b) Facades: Buildings must address public streets, including prominent entries and lobbies with pedestrian friendly features that engage the street. The use of architectural

elements such as bays, balconies, or other projecting elements encouraged to avoid flat facades on upper floors. A minimum of 60% of a street-level façade should be transparent, using traditional store-front windows where appropriate.

- c) Signage: Aforementioned sign standards apply; however, a grocery store use may be allowed one freestanding sign, provided that such sign is designed as a monument or pole style sign that is set within a landscape area.

D. Waivers: Applicants may apply to the Commissioner of Housing for consideration of a waiver from one or more of these design standards.

- City Council Bill # 08-0159/Rezoning: Approval

STAFF: Sara Paraniham

PETITIONER: The Administration (Department of Planning)

OWNERS: Various

SITE/GENERAL AREA

General Area: The Park Heights Master Plan and Urban Renewal Ordinance are bounded by Northern Parkway to the north; Greenspring Avenue to the east; Wabash Avenue to the west; and Park Circle to the south. Park Heights is primarily residential, but contains a mix of land uses, including the Cold Spring Lane and Belvedere commercial areas, Sinai Hospital, Pimlico Racetrack, and the Wabash Avenue industrial area.

HISTORY

- The Park Heights Master Plan was adopted by the Planning Commission on February 2, 2006.
- Ordinance # 73-304, approved April 16, 1973, established the Park Heights Urban Renewal Plan. There have been 10 amendments. Amendment No. 10, dated November 17, 2003, was approved by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore by Ordinance No. 04-676, dated May 10, 2004.

CONFORMITY TO PLANS

The Park Heights Master Plan conforms to the City's Comprehensive Master Plan, LIVE EARN PLAY LEARN. For example, in the Comprehensive Plan Park Heights is designated as a Growth Promotion Area and the Park Heights Master Plan recommends several strategies in keeping with the Growth Promotion Area. The Major Redevelopment Area is a proposal to eliminate blight and create new development opportunities in Central Park Heights. The Plan also recommends changing the zoning near the metro stations to promote transit oriented development, another growth promotion strategy.

The Urban Renewal Ordinance and the Rezoning bill conform to the Park Heights Master Plan. In fact, both bills are directly based on the Master Plan and are efforts to implement the plans' recommendations. The existing Urban Renewal Ordinance dates from the 1970s and is largely out of date. The proposed Urban Renewal Ordinance is based on the recent Park Heights Master Plan and therefore it makes more sense to repeal and replace the existing ordinance rather than try to make amendments.

ANALYSIS

Master Plan Amendment

The Park Heights Urban Renewal Ordinance and Rezoning Bill implement the Park Heights Master Plan, which was originally adopted by the Baltimore City Planning Commission in February 2006. The Master Plan was developed based on more than two years of meetings with residents and representatives from community associations, faith-based groups, and nonprofits. The Park Heights Master Plan is a comprehensive plan for the revitalization of Park Heights, including recommendations that address physical infrastructure, land uses and human services. Two of the major components of the plan are the Major Redevelopment Area and land use changes throughout Park Heights. An Urban Renewal Ordinance and companion rezoning bill are key tools for implementing these important components of the Master Plan.

Major Redevelopment Area

One of the major principles of the master plan is to match strategies to conditions. Within Park Heights there is a wide variety of conditions – some areas with lots of vacancy and some areas with very little vacancy. The plan creates strategies that are tailored to these different conditions rather than applying a one size fits all recommendation.

Central Park Heights, specifically the area surrounding Park Heights and Woodland Avenues, is an area of intense blight. Large stretches of land sit vacant due to previous demolition. Of the houses that remain, the majority are vacant. Most of the houses, whether vacant or occupied, are in poor condition. Residents complain about the physical decay of the neighborhood, the sanitation problems associated with so much vacancy and abandonment, and the resulting pervasive problems with crime. The master plan identifies a strategy for transforming this largely abandoned area into an asset. By assembling all of the vacant land, there is an opportunity to create a new mixed income neighborhood in the heart of Park Heights. Given the overwhelming abandonment that has taken place over the last half century, it is impossible to turn the area around through renovating houses or a small scale development. Both of these strategies have been tried before and both have failed. Instead, the Master Plan identifies 75 acres in Central Park Heights that should be acquired to create a site for new construction. The area was selected based on high levels of abandonment on each block combined with an overall strategy of creating a site that was big enough to impact the conditions in Park Heights.

Since February 2006 when the Master Plan was originally adopted, staffs of Baltimore Housing and the Department of Planning have continued to monitor the proposed redevelopment area. Both departments continue to support this strategy, but recommend that the area be slightly revised. First, conditions have changed since the master plan was drafted and approved two years ago. For example, some properties have undergone renovations, changing the character of the block. We have tried to avoid acquisition in blocks that currently have few vacants while

maintaining a site that is large enough to create change. Creating a site that is surrounded by additional blight is counter-productive. Second, due to limited funding, we have tried to limit acquisition and relocation to the core area. For example, Reisterstown Road and the portion of Virginia Avenue on the west side of Reisterstown Road are not part of the core area so we are recommending revising the plan to remove this area from the Major Redevelopment Area. We are retaining select properties along Reisterstown Road due to the conditions of these properties and to implement land use changes at the entrance to the new development. For example, the properties on Reisterstown Road near Virginia Avenue are in poor condition and have commercial uses that we want to acquire so that we can improve the entrance to the new development and create residential land uses. As a result of the revisions, the proposed footprint for the Major Redevelopment Area is now 60 acres instead of 75 acres.

The master plan recommends transforming the area around Park Heights and Woodland. Overall, the goal in the master plan is to create a mix of new housing types – detached, townhouse, and multi-family. Although the footprint of the major redevelopment area is changing from 75 acres to 60 acres, the goal of mixed income, mixed housing type remains the same. The original concept showed a higher density area along Reisterstown Road. Since the majority of the area that was to be acquired along Reisterstown Road is no longer proposed for acquisition, the higher density area shifts to Park Heights Avenue. Park Heights Avenue is proposed to become a high density urban boulevard, anchored by a new 7 acre park at the corner of Park Heights and Garrison to serve the CC Jackson Recreation Center, the surrounding community, and citywide recreation activities.

City Council Bill #08-0158/Park Heights Urban Renewal Plan

Acquisition

As the Urban Renewal Ordinance is an implementation tool for the Park Heights Master Plan, the Urban Renewal Ordinance includes acquisition authority for all 625 of the properties within the Major Redevelopment Area as identified in the amended Master Plan. The Urban Renewal Ordinance includes acquisition authority for 320 properties that appear to be already City owned in case there are any ancient owners, ground rents, adjacent right of way, or other aspects of ownership that need to be resolved.

The Urban Renewal Ordinance also includes acquisition authority for five properties in the Cold Spring Neighborhood Center to facilitate the redevelopment of the shopping center as specified in the Master Plan. These properties were selected for acquisition because they are in marginal condition and they create an opportunity to stabilize the neighborhood by providing a site for a high quality, full service grocery store, library services, senior housing, retail, and office uses.

In addition, the new Urban Renewal Ordinance should be amended to include acquisition authority for three properties that are listed for acquisition in the existing urban renewal ordinance: 3600 Woodland Avenue, 3604-06 Woodland Avenue, and 3608-12 Woodland Avenue. These properties are to be acquired for the Park Heights golf driving range.

Disposition

Again, as the Urban Renewal Ordinance is an implementation tool for the Park Heights Master Plan, the Urban Renewal Ordinance specifies disposition standards that are based on the Master

Plan. The disposition strategy outlined in the Urban Renewal Ordinance specifies that future development must match certain goals and themes that are reflected in the conceptual development plan in the Master Plan. The Master Plan specifies that new housing developed in Park Heights should be mixed income, with approximately 25% of new units reserved for affordable housing. Affordable housing will be incorporated into all of the various housing types.

- Lot 1 – Continues the pattern of detached and semi-detached houses on the other side of Pimlico Road
- Lots 2, 4, and 5 – Continue the surrounding neighborhood’s rowhouse housing pattern, but at a lower density. Would allow detached, semi-detached or townhouses in groups of 5 or less.
- Lot 3 – Creates an urban boulevard on Park Heights Avenue that allows large multi-family buildings similar to Park Heights Avenue north of Northern Parkway; could include senior housing. In terms of land use, it could be similar to University Parkway near Hopkins University. There’s a track and park surrounded by large apartment and condo buildings with lower density neighborhoods nearby.
- Large park next to the Recreation Center with regulation size fields for track, football, baseball, etc (Rec Center is CC Jackson; located at former Park Heights Elem, current site of Magna training facility)
- At Reisterstown and Woodland, there is a relatively new park with basketball, tennis courts, and playground

The Master Plan also recommends transforming the Cold Spring Neighborhood Center and the Urban Renewal Ordinance specifies what the future development of the site should include and how it should be designed. This site will be disposed of for a full service grocery store and should include additional retail. The lot may include office and/or multi-family housing above retail. The lot may include institutional uses. A pedestrian edge shall be maintained along Park Heights Avenue and Cold Spring Lane. The pedestrian environment shall include building edges, entrance doors, and windows, in addition to a wide sidewalk with trees and street furniture. Front doors shall face Park Heights Avenue and Cold Spring Lane and be directly accessible from the sidewalks along these streets. The intersection of Park Heights Avenue and Cold Spring Lane should be articulated through special design features. Driveways and parking lots shall be on Reisterstown Road and/or Wylie Avenue.

The Urban Renewal Ordinance also provides disposition authority for scattered sites throughout Park Heights that are already City owned, or will be acquired by the City through the acquisition authority contained within the Ordinance. This will simplify the process of redeveloping land in Park Heights in a timely fashion.

Land Use

The Urban Renewal Ordinance includes a Land Use map for Park Heights (Exhibit 1). This land use map is based on the recommendations in the Park Heights Master Plan.

The plan recommends consolidating commercial activity in neighborhood commercial centers at Park Heights and Cold Spring as well as Park Heights and Belvedere while retaining the commercial corridors along the northern portions of Park Heights and Reisterstown Road, while eliminating the patches of commercial activity all along the southern portions of these streets. In

Park Heights there are many commercial and industrial uses immediately adjacent to residential and often there are conflicts between the two so the plan recommends separating the different types of uses and consolidating the commercial and industrial uses in appropriate areas. The plan also recommends capitalizing on the two metro stations in the area by creating transit oriented development at Cold Spring Metro Station and Rogers Avenue Metro Station. The land use map implements the master plan by strengthening the neighborhood commercial centers, reducing the scattered commercial land uses, reducing the industrial land uses, and creating high density residential areas around the transit stations.

The Urban Renewal Ordinance designates the land use category for every property in Park Heights:

- Low Density Residential – detached, semi-detached, low density rowhouses or multi-family
- Medium Density Residential – mostly rowhouses, some multi-family
- High Density Residential – large multi-family with potential for first floor retail
- Neighborhood Business – very limited commercial within a residential setting
- Community Business – local commercial district; commercial uses that you might walk to
- Community Commercial – more intense commercial uses; places you are more likely to drive to

Generally, the land use map follows current land use patterns with the following proposed changes:

- New housing types and a new public land use are recommended for the Major Redevelopment Area.
- Concentrate commercial uses and thus eliminate some of the existing commercial uses scattered along Reisterstown Road.
- Create a more compact Community Business area at Park Heights Avenue and Cold Spring Lane.
- Transit Oriented Development at Rogers Avenue Metro Station and Cold Spring Metro Station
- Reduce Industrial area next to Lucille Park in keeping with recent development trends.

In addition to the land use map, the Urban Renewal Ordinance includes some land use restrictions. Within the Community Business and Community Commercial land use categories certain uses are restricted that are not compatible with the neighborhood. The community provided input as to which uses to restrict.

Zoning

The Urban Renewal Ordinance Zoning map recommends changing the zoning to match the land use recommendations. The companion rezoning bill implements the zoning recommendations in the Urban Renewal Ordinance.

Urban Renewal Ordinance: Design Standards

The Urban Renewal Ordinance should include design standards to support the goals of the Park Heights Master Plan to stabilize the neighborhoods and improve the appearance of the

commercial areas. The Design Standards outline the design review process, identify specific design standards for residential and commercial renovations and new construction, and provide for a waiver process. The specific standards were developed with input from Park Heights' stakeholders.

City Council Bill #08-0159/Park Heights Rezoning

The rezoning bill recommends rezoning approximately 650 properties. Approximately 400 of these are within the major redevelopment area. Approximately 50 are part of potential transit oriented development initiatives.

Staff notified approximately 1,600 Park Heights' stakeholders, including occupants and property owners of the properties to be acquired and rezoned as proposed by the above three items being considered today by the Planning Commission meeting.



Gary W. Cole
Acting Director