


FROM	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 #25-0041 / Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion of Single-Family Dwelling Unit to 3 Dwelling Units in the R-7 Zoning District – Variances – 2628 Edmondson Avenue		

TO

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

DATE:

May 19, 2025

At its regular meeting of May 15, 2025, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #25-0041, for the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the conversion of a single-family dwelling unit to 3 dwelling units in the R-7 Zoning District on the property known as 2628 Edmondson Avenue, as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting variances regarding certain bulk regulations (lot size area) and off-street parking requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

In its consideration of this Bill, the Planning Commission reviewed the attached staff report, which recommended amendment and approval of City Council Bill #25-0041 and adopted the following resolution, with seven members being present (seven in favor):

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission concurs with the recommendation of its departmental staff, adopts the findings and equity analysis outlined in the staff report, with consideration for testimony and facts presented in the meeting, and recommends that City Council Bill #25-0041 be **amended and approved** by the City Council with an amendment to strike the off-street parking variance granted in Section 3 of the bill.

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: Ms. Nina Themelis, Mayor's Office  
The Honorable John Bullock, Council Rep. to Planning Commission  
Ms. Rebecca Witt, BMZA  
Mr. Geoffrey Veale, Zoning Administration  
Ms. Stephanie Murdock, DHCD  
Ms. Hilary Ruley, Law Dept.  
Mr. Francis Burnszynski, PABC  
Mr. Luciano Diaz, DOT  
Ms. Nancy Mead, Council Services  
Ms. Melanie Maurice



Brandon M. Scott  
Mayor

## PLANNING COMMISSION

*Jon Laria, Chair; Eric Stephenson, Vice Chair*

### STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer  
Director

**May 15, 2025**

**REQUEST:** City Council Bill #25-0041/ Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion of Single-Family Dwelling Unit to 3 Dwelling Units in the R-7 Zoning District – Variances – 2628 Edmondson Avenue:

For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the conversion of a single-family dwelling unit to three dwelling units in the R-7 Zoning District on the property known as 2628 Edmondson Avenue, as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting variances regarding certain bulk regulations (lot area) and off-street parking requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt findings and approve with the following amendment:

- Strike the off-street parking variance granted in Section 3 of the bill.

**STAFF:** Justin Walker

**PETITIONER:** Melanie Maurice

**OWNER:** Melanie Maurice & Kyle Maurice

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

Site Conditions: 2628 Edmondson Avenue is located on the north side of the street, approximately 110' east of the intersection with Claymont Avenue. This property measures approximately 23' by 85' and is currently improved with a three-story building occupying nearly the entire lot. This site is zoned R-7 and is located within the West Baltimore MARC Station TOD Plan area.

General Area: The site is located in the Mosher neighborhood statistical area on the west side of the city. It is situated immediately west of Helen Mackall Park and approximately 0.4 miles from the West Baltimore MARC Station. The property is an end-of-row rowhouse within a group of six homes. The subject property, along with most of the other houses in the group, is currently vacant and in need of repair.

#### **HISTORY**

There are no previous legislative or Planning Commission actions regarding this site.

## CONFORMITY TO PLANS

The 2024 Comprehensive Master Plan for the City of Baltimore was enacted by Ordinance #24-426, dated December 2, 2024. The subject property is designated in the Residential: Higher Density group in the General Land Use Plan. This proposed development conforms to that designation.

In addition to aligning with the General Land Use Plan, the proposed development is consistent with the area master plan—the West Baltimore MARC Station Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan. This plan calls for increased density close to the MARC Station to better leverage the potential of the transit system by providing more people with convenient access to the station, which also serves as a major bus hub. The plan further emphasizes the importance of offering a diversity of housing types while respecting the neighborhood's character and aesthetic. No exterior design changes to the building are proposed as part of this development.

## ANALYSIS

Background: The proposal involves the conversion of an existing single-family attached dwelling into three two-bedroom apartment units, bringing the property back into productive use. One unit is proposed for each floor of the structure. The owner intends to rent the units to low-income tenants through a voucher program. The building has been vacant and boarded for many years and is in need of extensive repair.

Residential Conversions: In the Residence Districts, the conversion of a single-family dwelling to a multi-family dwelling is allowed only in the R-7, R-8, R-9, and R-10 Districts, subject to: (1) the requirements of this subtitle; and (2) in the R-7 and R-8 Districts, conditional-use approval by Ordinance of the Mayor and City Council (§9-701).

### Conditional Use Approval Standards:

#### **§ 5-406. Approval standards.**

##### *(a) Evaluation criteria.*

As a guide to its decision on the facts of each case, the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals must consider the following, where appropriate:

- (1) the nature of the proposed site, including its size and shape and the proposed size, shape, and arrangement of structures;
- (2) the resulting traffic patterns and adequacy of proposed off-street parking and loading;
- (3) the nature of the surrounding area and the extent to which the proposed use might impair its present and future development;
- (4) the proximity of dwellings, churches, schools, public structures, and other places of public gathering;
- (5) accessibility of the premises for emergency vehicles;
- (6) accessibility of light and air to the premises and to the property in the vicinity;
- (7) the type and location of adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and other necessary facilities that have been or will be provided;
- (8) the preservation of cultural and historic landmarks and structures;
- (9) the character of the neighborhood;
- (10) the provisions of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan;
- (11) the provisions of any applicable Urban Renewal Plan;
- (12) all applicable standards and requirements of this Code;
- (13) the intent and purpose of this Code; and
- (14) any other matters considered to be in the interest of the general welfare.

(b) *Limited criteria for denying.*

The Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals or the City Council, may not approve a conditional use or sign unless, after public notice and hearing and on consideration of the standards required by this subtitle, the Board or Council finds that:

- (1) the establishment, location, construction, maintenance, or operation of the conditional use or sign would not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare;
- (2) the use or sign would not be precluded by any other law, including an applicable Urban Renewal Plan;
- (3) the authorization would not be contrary to the public interest; and
- (4) the authorization would be in harmony with the purpose and intent of this Code.

Below is the staff's review of Article 32 – *Zoning*, §5-406 {"Approval standards"}: In staff's review of this request, there is no indication that the proposed conversion will negatively impact public health, safety, or welfare. Returning this structure to productive use will benefit the community by removing a long-vacant building and providing additional housing options. The site is not within an Urban Renewal Plan area, so no other law precludes this conversion. The proposal aligns with both the General Land Use Plan and the applicable area master plan.

Insufficient Lot Area: In this zoning district, multi-family dwellings require 1,100 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit (Table 9-401). In this case, for three dwelling units, 2,750 square feet of lot area is required. The lot only encloses 1,955 square feet and so does not meet this requirement.

Measurement of density: In the residential districts, the maximum number of permitted dwelling units on a lot is determined by dividing the total area of the lot by the lot area requirement that applies to the district in which the lot is located. On a lot with three or more dwelling units, a fraction of the total area that is 50% or more of the required lot area factor counts as an additional permitted dwelling unit (§15-302). As 2,750 square feet is required and 1,955 square feet is provided, a lot area variance of 29% is needed.

Variance Approval Standards:

**§ 5-308. Approval standards.**

(a) Required finding of unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty.

In order to grant a variance, the Zoning Administrator, the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals, or the City Council, as the case may be, must find that, because of the particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical conditions of the specific structure or land involved, an unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, would result if the strict letter of the applicable requirement were carried out.

(b) Other required findings.

The Zoning Administrator, the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals, or the City Council, as the case may be, must also find that:

- (1) the conditions on which the application is based are unique to the property for which the variance is sought and are not generally applicable to other property within the same zoning classification;
- (2) the unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty is caused by this Code and has not been created by the intentional action or inaction of any person who has a present interest in the property;
- (3) the purpose of the variance is not based exclusively on a desire to increase the value or income potential of the property;
- (4) the variance will not:
  - (i) be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity; or
  - (ii) substantially diminish and impair property values in the neighborhood;
- (5) the variance is in harmony with the purpose and intent of this Code;
- (6) the variance is not precluded by and will not adversely affect:
  - (i) any Urban Renewal Plan;

- (ii) the City’s Comprehensive Master Plan; or
- (iii) any Historical and Architectural Preservation District; and
- (7) the variance will not otherwise:
  - (i) be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare; or
  - (ii) be in any way contrary to the public interest.

Below is the staff’s review of Article 32 – *Zoning*, §5-308 {“Approval standards”}: Staff finds that the requested variance conforms to the standards outlined in §5-308. The subject property is an end-of-unit rowhouse with three existing entrances—a condition not present on the other structures in the row. Granting the lot area variance will allow for the creation of one dwelling unit on each floor of the building, making efficient use of the existing layout. The variance will not be injurious to the use or enjoyment of surrounding properties. Additionally, it is consistent with the intent of the Zoning Code, the General Land Use Plan, and the applicable area master plan.

Staff notes that CCB #25-0006 was recently adopted by the City Council and signed by the Mayor on May 1<sup>st</sup>. This bill removes the requirement for minimum gross floor area based on the number of bedrooms. It also exempts any residential property with three units or fewer from parking requirements. This is why staff recommends an amendment to strike the parking variance from the bill. The bill has a 30-day waiting period before taking effect and so will become effective on June 1, 2025. By the time this bill is heard in the Land Use and Transportation Committee, those new provisions will have taken effect.

Equity:

This project supports equitable development by providing three new housing units in a TOD area, increasing housing options near transit without displacing residents. It aligns with the Comprehensive Plan and the area’s land use goals, and it will return a vacant building to productive use. The project has received a letter of support from the local community association, reflecting community alignment.

Notification: The Rosemount Homeowners and Tenants Association have been notified of this action and provided a letter of support.



**Chris Ryer**  
**Director**