



BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Mission Statement

On behalf of the Citizens of Baltimore City, the Land Use & Transportation Committee is committed to shaping a reliable, equitable, and sustainable future for Baltimore's land use and transportation systems. Through operational oversight and legislative action, the committee aims to develop and support lasting solutions grounded in principles of good governance.

The Honorable Ryan Dorsey

CHAIR

PUBLIC HEARING

December 1, 2025

9:00 AM

CLARENCE "DU" BURNS COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Bill: 25-0055

***Title: Zoning – Conditional Use – Parking Lot
(Principal Use) – Variances 701 Mura Street***



Meeting: Bill Hearing

Committee: Land Use & Transportation

Bill # 25-0055

Title: Zoning – Conditional Use – Parking Lot (Principal Use) – Variances 701 Mura Street

Purpose: For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a principal use parking lot on the property known as 701 Mura Street (Block 1155, Lot 70), as outlines in red on the accompanying plat; granting certain variances from minimum lot area, minimum interior side yard, and minimum rear yard requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

REPORTING AGENCIES

Agency	Report
Law Department	Suggested Amendments
Planning Commission	Favorable
Department of Housing & Community Development	Favorable
Board of Municipal & Zoning Appeals	
Parking Authority of Baltimore City	Favorable
Department of Transportation	

BACKGROUND

The Law Department has reviewed the bill for form and legal sufficiency and determined that the variance language is incomplete. Amendments have been proposed to correct these omissions and ensure the bill aligns with the Zoning Code's requirements. The Planning Commission recommends a condition tying the parking lot spaces to recently renovated homes on the same block. This must be noted as it affects the use and legal interpretation of the conditional use.

Current Law

Article 32– Zoning, Sections 5-201(a), 5-501, 5-508, 14-331, 9-301 (Table 9-301), and 9-401 (Table 9-401) Baltimore City Revised Code (Edition 2000) The City Council must consider the following when evaluating changes to the text of the City's Zoning Code:

1. The amendment's consistency with the City's Comprehensive Master Plan;
2. Whether the amendment would promote the public health, safety, and welfare;
3. The amendment's consistency with the intent and general regulations of this Code;

4. Whether the amendment would correct an error or omission, clarify existing requirements, or effect a change in policy;
5. The extent to which the amendment would create nonconformities.

To grant a variance, the City Council must find that, “because of the particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical conditions of the specific structure or land involved, an unnecessary hardship or particular difficulty, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, would result if the strict letter of the applicable requirement were carried out.” The City Council must also make seven other findings:

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: a. be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity; or b. 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: a. any Urban Renewal Plan; b. the City’s Comprehensive Master Plan; or c. any Historical and Architectural Preservation District.
7. The variance will not otherwise: a. be detrimental to or endanger public health, safety, or welfare; or b. be in any way contrary to the public’s interest.

Bill Summary

Bill 25-0056 grants permission for the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a principal use parking lot on the property known as 702 Mura Street (Block 1155, Lot 101).

Variances

The Planning staff reports that this bill requires three zoning variances to accommodate the proposed development of a principal use parking lot at 702 Mura Street (Block 1155, Lot 101).

- A variance is needed for the minimum interior side yard, as the code requires 10 feet and only 0.8 feet are proposed.
- A second variance is needed for the minimum rear yard, where 25 feet are required and only 1 foot is proposed.

The requested variances will not negatively impact the goals of the Urban Renewal Plan or the Comprehensive Master Plan. The site is not located within any Historical and/or Architectural Preservation District, and the variances will not be detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare, nor contrary to the public interest. The Planning Commission recommends a variance for 81.4% impervious surface, although there’s some legal ambiguity about whether it’s required for non-dwelling lots. Nonetheless, it has been requested and should be captured.

Previous Hearing

At a previous hearing on this bill on June 26, 2025, an advocate for the bill representing the applicant asked for a postponement on the bill to allow for additional conversations to be had on it between stakeholders. The chair granted the request, and no vote was taken at the time.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**Fiscal Note:**

No fiscal impact for the City is expected from this bill

Information Source(s):

- 25-0055 1st Reader and Agency Reports
- 25-0055 hearing notes from 06/26/25
- Baltimore City Code Article 32 Zoning Code

Analysis by: Tony Leva
Analysis Date: 11/17/2025

Direct Inquiries to: Anthony.Leva@BaltimoreCity.Gov

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 25-0055
(First Reader)

Introduced by: Councilmember Jones
At the request of: ReBuild Johnston Square Phase I, LLC
Address: c/o Drew E. Tildon, Esq., Rosenberg Martin Greenberg LLP
25 S. Charles Street, 21st Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
Telephone: (410) 727-6600

Introduced and read first time: April 7, 2025

Assigned to: Land Use and Transportation Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Planning Commission, Department of Housing and Community Development, Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals, Department of Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ORDINANCE concerning

2 **Zoning – Conditional Use – Parking Lot (Principal Use) – Variances**
3 **701 Mura Street**

4 FOR the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and
5 operation of a principal use parking lot on the property known as 701 Mura Street
6 (Block 1155, Lot 70), as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting certain variances
7 from minimum lot area, minimum interior side yard, and minimum rear yard requirements;
8 and providing for a special effective date.

9 BY authority of

10 Article 32 - Zoning
11 Sections 5-201(a), 5-501, 5-508, 14-331, 9-301 (Table 9-301), and 9-401 (Table 9-401)
12 Baltimore City Revised Code
13 (Edition 2000)

14 **SECTION 1. BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That
15 permission is granted for the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a principal use
16 parking lot on the property known as 701 Mura Street (Block 1155, Lot 70), as outlined in red on
17 the plat accompanying this Ordinance, in accordance with Baltimore City Zoning Code §§ 9-301
18 and 14-331, subject to the condition that the parking lot complies with all applicable federal,
19 state, and local licensing and certification requirements.

20 **SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That pursuant to the authority of §§ 5-305(a)
21 and 5-308 of Article 32 – Zoning, permission is granted from the requirements of § 9-401
22 (Table 9-401: Rowhouse and Multi-Family Residential Districts – Bulk and Yard Regulations)
23 for the minimum lot area, as 3,000 square feet are required and 1,344 square feet are proposed.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Council Bill 25-0055

1 **SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That pursuant to the authority of §§ 5-305(a)
2 and 5-308 of Article 32 – Zoning, permission is granted from the requirements of § 9-401
3 (Table 9-401: Rowhouse and Multi-Family Residential Districts – Bulk and Yard Regulations)
4 for the minimum interior side yard, as 10 feet are required and 0.8 feet are proposed.

5 **SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That pursuant to the authority of §§ 5-305(a)
6 and 5-308 of Article 32 – Zoning, permission is granted from the requirements of § 9-401
7 (Table 9-401: Rowhouse and Multi-Family Residential Districts – Bulk and Yard Regulations)
8 for the minimum rear yard, as 25 feet are required and 1 foot is proposed.

9 **SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That as evidence of the authenticity of the
10 accompanying plat and in order to give notice to the agencies that administer the City Zoning
11 Ordinance: (i) when the City Council passes this Ordinance, the President of the City Council
12 shall sign the plat; (ii) when the Mayor approves this Ordinance, the Mayor shall sign the plat;
13 and (iii) the Director of Finance then shall transmit a copy of this Ordinance and the plat to the
14 Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals, the Planning Commission, the Commissioner of
15 Housing and Community Development, the Supervisor of Assessments for Baltimore City, and
16 the Zoning Administrator.

17 **SECTION 6. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That this Ordinance takes effect on the date it is
18 enacted.

Baltimore City Council



Land Use & Transportation

Committee

Bill: 25-0055

**Title: Zoning – Conditional Use – Parking
Lot (Principal Use) – Variances 701 Mura
Street**

Agency Reports

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON M. SCOTT
Mayor



DEPARTMENT OF LAW

EBONY THOMPSON
CITY SOLICITOR
100 N. HOLLIDAY STREET
SUITE 101, CITY HALL
BALTIMORE, MD 21202

May 9, 2025

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
Attn: Executive Secretary
Room 409, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: City Council Bill 25-0055 – Zoning – Conditional Use – Parking Lot (Principal Use) –
Variances – 701 Mura Street

Dear President and City Council Members:

The Law Department has reviewed City Council Bill 25-0055 for form and legal sufficiency. The bill would permit the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a principal use parking lot at 701 Mura Street. The bill also intends to grant variances from minimum lot area and minimum interior side yard and minimum rear yard requirements. Permission for the parking lot is being requested by ReBuild Johnston Square Phase 1, LLC.

The language in the bill that attempts to grant the variances is incomplete. Amendments to correct these omissions are attached. Additionally, the Planning Commission recommends amending the bill with a variance to permit 66.1% impervious surface in lieu of the 65% permitted by right, and with the condition that the parking spaces will be attributed to the recently renovated homes in the same block for their use.

Conditional Use Standards

The property proposed for off-street parking is in the R-8 Zoning District. In an R-8 District, the permitted and conditional uses are listed in Zoning Table 9-301. City Code, Art. 32, § 9-301. The table lists parking lots as conditional uses in R-8 subject to approval by ordinance. City Code, Art. 32, Tb. 9-301. Section 14-331 of the Zoning Code provides six additional requirements for off street parking lots: they cannot be used for loading or vehicle repair, they must be screened from view, be free from debris and refuse, must comply with the Zoning Code's sign restrictions, and the only buildings allowed are attendant shelters of no more than 10 feet high and 200 square feet. City Code, Art. 32, § 14-331(b).

Conditional Use Standards

To approve a conditional use, the City Council must find:

- (1) the establishment, location, construction, maintenance, or operation of the conditional use would not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare;
- (2) the use 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.

Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, § 5-406(b).

Variance Standards

To grant any variance, the City Council 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.” Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, § 5-308(a). The City Council must also make seven other findings:

- (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.

Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, § 5-308(b). The Planning Commission report contains some of the findings pertaining to the above criteria.

Procedural Requirements

The City Council committee assigned the bill must consider it at a scheduled public hearing wherein it will hear and weigh the evidence. Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, §§ 5-404; 5-406; 5-507; 5-602. After weighing the evidence presented and submitted into the record before it, the Committee is required to make findings of fact with respect to the factors and considerations outlined above. If, after its investigation of the facts, the Committee makes findings which support the conditional use and the variances sought, it may adopt these findings and the legal requirements will be met.

Finally, certain procedural requirements apply to this bill because both conditional uses and variances are considered “legislative authorizations.” Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, § 5-501(2). Specifically, notice requirements apply to the bill, and it must be referred to certain City agencies, which are obligated to review it in a specified manner. Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, §§ 5-504, 5-506, 5-602. Additionally, certain limitations on the City Council’s ability to amend the bill after the committee hearing apply. Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, § 5-507.

This bill is the appropriate method to review the facts and make the determination as to whether the legal standards for conditional use and variances have been met. However, the text of the bill needs to be amended because the language purporting to grant the required variances is incomplete. Suggested amendments are attached.

Additionally, the Planning Commission has recommended an additional amendment to allow a variance for 66.1% impervious surface in lieu of the 65% permitted by law. It is unclear that such a variance is necessary because Table 9-401 appears to impose maximum impervious surface requirements only on lots with dwellings within the R-8 zoning district. Law will defer to Planning Commission staff on the need for this amendment.

The Planning Commission also recommends an amendment to impose a condition that the parking spaces be attributed to the recently renovated homes in the same block solely for their use. This appears to be a permissible condition because it is “reasonably related” to the impact of the conditional use. See City Code, Article 32, § 5-405.

Assuming the necessary amendments are adopted, the required findings are made at the hearing, and all procedural requirements are satisfied, the Law Department can approve the bill for form and legal sufficiency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey Hochstetler', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeffrey Hochstetler
Chief Solicitor

cc: Ebony Thompson, Acting City Solicitor
Ty'lor Schnella, Mayor's Office of Government Relations
Hilary Ruley, Chief Solicitor, General Counsel Division
Ashlea Brown, Chief Solicitor
Michelle Toth, Assistant Solicitor
Desireé Luckey, Assistant Solicitor

LAW AMENDMENTS

Amendment 1:

On page 1, in line 21, after the word “granted” and before the word “from”, insert the words for a variance.

Amendment 2:

On page 2, in line 2, after the word “granted” and before the word “from”, insert the words for a variance. And on that same page, in line 6, after the word “granted” and before the word “from”, insert the words for a variance.

LAW I TBD

LAW I TBD

**AMENDMENTS TO COUNCIL BILL 25-0055
(1st Reader Copy)**

By: Law Department
{To be offered to the Land Use and Transportation Committee}

Amendment No. 1

On page 1, in line 21, after “granted” insert “for a variance”; and, on page 2 in lines 2 and 6, in each instance, after “granted” insert “for a variance”.



**CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT**

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Peter Little, Executive Director, Parking Authority of Baltimore City
CC	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
DATE	June 2, 2025
SUBJECT	25-0055 – Parking Lot (Principal Use) – Variances 701 Mura Street

Position: Favorable

BILL SYNOPSIS

City Council Bill 25-0055 is proposing the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a principal-use parking lot on the property known as 701 Mura Street.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

The Parking Authority of Baltimore City (PABC) has reviewed the proposed legislation. The establishment of this parking area will bring more parking supply to the neighborhood. The PABC recognizes the challenges of parking in row home neighborhoods and values this effort to help make that easier. During SPRC concerns were raised regarding access entry and exit from the spaces in the southern parking area. To address this, the applicant provided an autoturn turning movement exhibit, which is on sheet 5 of the document 701 Mura Street - SPRC Plans. The exhibit shows that a typical passenger vehicle would encroach slightly on the properties to the west of the access alley. If the parking spaces are not redesigned, the parking space may need to be limited to compact vehicles only.

FISCAL IMPACT

This bill will have no or minimal fiscal impact on PABC programs

AMENDMENTS

No amendments are being requested.

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 #25-0055 / ZONING – CONDITIONAL USE – PARKING LOT (PRINCIPAL USE) – VARIANCES – 701 MURA STREET		

TO

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

DATE: April 28, 2025

At its regular meeting of April 24, 2025, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #25-0055, for the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a principal use parking lot on the property known as 701 Mura Street (Block 1155, Lot 70), as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting certain variances from minimum lot area, minimum interior side yard, and minimum rear yard 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 #25-0055 and adopted the following resolutions, with eight members being present (eight in favor):

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission finds, in accordance with §5-308 and §5-406 of Article 32 – *Zoning*, 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.

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 #25-0055 be **amended and approved** by the City Council with the following amended variance to permit 66.1% impervious surface in lieu of the 65% permitted by right, and the condition that the parking spaces will be attributed to the recently renovated homes in the same block for their use.

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. Drew E. Tildon, Esq.



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Jon Laria, Chair; Eric Stephenson, Vice Chair

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

April 24, 2025

REQUESTS:

City Council Bill #25-0055/ Zoning – Conditional Use – Parking Lot (Principal Use) – Variances 701 Mura Street:

For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a principal use parking lot on the property known as 701 Mura Street (Block 1155, Lot 70), as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting certain variances from minimum lot area, minimum interior side yard, and minimum rear yard requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

City Council Bill #25-0056/ Zoning – Conditional Use – Parking Lot (Principal Use) – Variances 702 Mura Street:

For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a principal use parking lot on the property known as 702 Mura Street (Block 1155, Lot 101), as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting certain variances from minimum lot area, minimum interior side yard, and minimum rear yard requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- City Council Bill #25-0055: Adopt findings and Approve
- City Council Bill #25-0056: Adopt findings and Approve

STAFF: Brandon Kanoy

PETITIONER: Drew Tildon, Esq.

OWNER: Mayor and City Council of Baltimore

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: The north property (702 Mura Street) is currently developed with 3 rowhouses in substantial states of disrepair. The south property (701 Mura Street) is currently vacant. Demolition of the structures on the south property was previously permitted, but was not part of this proposal.

General Area: The site is located approximately 2 blocks directly south of the Green Mount Cemetery. It is well-serviced by traffic connections, mainly along Greenmount Avenue, which connects to Mura Street on the West termination of Mura Street. The Red CityLink bus line runs along Greenmount Avenue, with a Southbound stop located directly across Greenmount Avenue,

and a Northbound stop less than 1 block north along Greenmount Avenue. The Johnston Square Urban Renewal Plan governs development in this area.

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 “Higher Density” group in the General Land Use Plan. This proposed development conforms to that designation, which specifically calls out rowhouse residential development. The proposed Conditional Use will support the use and preservation of the existing rowhouses in this area and land use group.

The proposal meets the goals outlined in the Johnston Square Urban Renewal Plan.

ANALYSIS

Background: A total of 10 parking stalls are proposed in this project. The north lot (702 Mura Street) will have 6 parking spaces, and the south lot (701 Mura Street) will have 4 parking spaces. Included in this proposal are sidewalk improvements along the frontage of the properties, with truncated dome ramps to be installed to current ADA standards. The north property will include a minimum of 1 accessible parking stall. Parking will be reserved for residents of the inner block rowhomes.

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"}: Staff finds that the proposed conditional use minimizes the impact on the surrounding neighborhood. It provides safe off-street parking which will enhance the local use of the alley street. Fewer vehicles parked on the alley street will allow for more efficient access of emergency vehicles to the area. Construction of this conditional use will also preserve the existing uses in the area to the maximum extent possible, as it will remove substantially damaged structures, and prevent such damage from spreading to connected rowhouses. Staff finds the proposal is a prudent use of the available space and that it will provide additional access for future residents.

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 variances requested are necessary for the function of this project. Given the unique conditions of the site, strict application of zoning standards as written would place a greater burden on the applicant than is typical for most sites. Staff finds no adverse impacts with regard to the goals of the Urban Renewal Plan, or the Comprehensive Master Plan. The site is not located within any Historical and/or Architectural Preservation District. The variances requested

will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare, and will not be contrary to the public interest.

Equity:

- Impact: The proposed parking lots allow for the development of off-street parking for these inner block lots. This lessens the parking demand on the narrow alley street, and will allow future residents to better utilize the streetscape.
 - In the short term, this will allow the developer to provide vehicle parking as an amenity for future residents of this development. In the long-term, off street parking can be redeveloped or repurposed more easily than comparable on-street parking.
 - This proposal will enhance the revitalization efforts for the block. Baltimore has a long history of inner block lots which provide different options for homeowners at various price points. Preservation of a diversity of housing is key to providing homes for all.
- Engagement:
 - The developer has maintained substantial contact with the Rebuild Johnston Square neighborhood group.
- Internal Operations:
 - This project has received SPRC approval. Approval for SPRC 2025-004 was granted on 6 March 2025, and will expire on 6 March 2026. The applicant may file for extensions of this expiration as needed.

Notification: Rebuild Johnston Square has been notified of this action.



Chris Ryer
Director

**AMENDMENTS TO COUNCIL BILL 25-0055
(1st Reader Copy)**

By: Planning Commission
{To be offered to the Land Use and Transportation Committee}

Amendment No. 1

On page 2, after line 8, insert:

“SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That pursuant to the authority of §§ 5-305(a) and 5-308 of Article 32 – Zoning, permission is granted for a variance from the requirements of § 9-401 (Table 9-401: Rowhouse and Multi-Family Residential Districts – Bulk and Yard Regulations) for maximum impervious surface, as 65% coverage is permitted and 66.1% coverage is proposed.”;

and, on that same page, in line 9, strike “5.” and substitute “6.”; and, on that same page, in line 17, strike “6.” and substitute “7.”



**BALTIMORE CITY
BOARD OF MUNICIPAL
AND ZONING APPEALS**

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Interim Executive Director

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Chair

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417 E. Fayette St., Ste. 922
Baltimore, MD 21202
(410) 396-4301
zoning.baltimorecity.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable Members of the Land Use & Transportation Committee
From: Justin A. Williams, Interim Executive Director
CC: Geoffrey Veale, Zoning Administrator
Date: November 19, 2025
Re: Council Bill Nos. 25-0055 & 0056 – Zoning – Conditional Use Parking Lot
701 & 702 Mura Street
Position: No Objection

The Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA) has reviewed City Council Bill Nos. 25-0055 and #25-0056. These bills seek to permit the establishment, maintenance, and operation of principal use parking lots at 701 Mura Street and 702 Mura Street, respectively. Both bills require conditional use authorization by Ordinance and variances from bulk regulations, including minimum lot area, interior side yard, and rear yard requirements.

Agency Position on Approval Standards

As a quasi-judicial agency, the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals typically adjudicates land use matters based on specific evidentiary standards. Because the Zoning Code requires principal use parking lots in this district to obtain Conditional Use approval by City Council Ordinance, the Board defers to the Council's judgment regarding whether the applicant has satisfied the specific approval standards outlined in the Code.

Accordingly, the Board takes no position on the specific factual merits of the applications but offers **No Objection** to the passage of these bills.

For any questions regarding this report or to discuss these concerns further, please contact **Justin Williams** at justin.williams@baltimorecity.gov or **(410) 396-4301**.



CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Alice Kennedy, Commissioner, Housing and Community Development
CC	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
DATE	June 20th, 2025
SUBJECT	25-0055 Zoning – Conditional Use – Parking Lot (Principal Use) – Variances 701 Mura Street

Position: Favorable

BILL SYNOPSIS

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 25-0055 Zoning – Conditional Use – Parking Lot (Principal Use) – Variances 701 Mura Street for the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a principal use parking lot on the property known as 701 Mura Street (Block 1155, Lot 70), as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting certain variances from minimum lot area, minimum interior side yard, and minimum rear yard requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

If enacted, City Council Bill 25-0055 would permit a principle use parking lot on the property known as 701 Mura Street while granting variances from minimum lot area, minimum interior side yard, and minimum rear yard requirements. If approved, this Bill will take effect on the date of its enactment.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

At its regular meeting of April 24th, 2025, the Planning Commission concurred with the recommendations of its Departmental staff and recommended that the Bill be amended and approved by the City Council. In their report, the Commission noted that the proposed conditional use parking lot would support the use and preservation of existing nearby rowhouses while otherwise minimizing its impact on the surrounding neighborhood. This project is accompanied by another conditional use parking lot, immediately adjacent to the property and located at 702 Mura St and represented by City Council Bill 25-0056.

The property in reference is not located within any of DHCD's Streamlined Code Enforcement Areas or Community Development Zones but does fall within the Johnston Square Impact

Investment Area.

FISCAL IMPACT

As drafted, this Bill would have minimal fiscal impact on DHCD.

AMENDMENTS

DHCD supports the Planning Commission's amendments permitting 81.4% impervious surface rather than the 65% permitted by right, and the condition that the parking spaces be attributed to the recently renovated homes on the same block for their use.



CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Veronica P. McBeth, Director, Department of Transportation
CC	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
DATE	November 19, 2025
SUBJECT	25-0055 • Zoning – Conditional Use – Parking Lot (Principal Use) – Variances 701 Mura Street

Position: Without recommendation

BILL SYNOPSIS

Council bill 25-0055 would allow for the creation of a principal-use parking lot on the property known as 701 Mura Street and grant variances from minimum area, interior side yard, and rear yard requirements. This proposal was reported on favorably by the Planning Commission on April 24. This bill allows for the conversion of 701 Mura Street into a parking lot, on the south side of Mura Street. The bill is accompanied by Council Bill 25-0056, which would allow for 702 Mura Street to be used as part of this parking lot. Mura street provides for only one lane of parking.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

Based on its review of the proposed legislation, DOT has no concerns and provides no recommendation on Council Bill Council Bill 25-0055.

Baltimore City Council



Land Use & Transportation

Committee

Bill:25-0055

**Title: Zoning – Conditional Use – Parking
Lot (Principal Use) – Variances 701 Mura
Street**

Additional Materials

Baltimore City Council
Certificate of Posting - Public Hearing Notice

Today's Date: [10/29/2025]

City Council Bill No.: 25-0055



(Place a picture of the posted sign in the space below.)

Address: Under 701 Mura Street frontage

Date Posted: October 29, 2025

[Handwritten signature: Martin Ogle]

Name: Martin Ogle

Address: 9912 Maidbrook Road Parkville Md, 21234

Telephone: 443-629-3411

Land Use Check List

Bill 25-0055

☒ Memo from Planning Commission & Report from Planning Department Received By
OCS __04/28/25____ Date

Ok to announce a hearing date if the bill is on the Planning Commission agenda

☒ Hearing announcement in Council Meeting _10/20/25____ Date

☒ OCS staff meeting on Land Use Docket __11/12/25____ Date

☒ OCS sends public notice information to applicants _10/21/25____ Date

OCS handles newspaper notices for city-wide legislation sponsored by
Councilmembers

☒ OCS receives confirmation of compliance with the public notice from the applicant:

- Sign Posting _10/30/25____ Date
- News Paper Ad _____ Date
- 1st Class Mailing _____ Date

☐ Hearing Held _____ Date

☐ Findings of Facts Submitted to Counsel & DLR _____ Date

☐ 2nd Reader Vote _____ Date

OCS Analyst _____

OCS Analyst _____