



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

9/25/2025

10:00 AM

CLARENCE "DU" BURNS COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Bill: 25-0092

***Title: Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion to a Banquet Hall
in the C-2 Zoning District – Variance – 1123 West Baltimore
Street***

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Meeting: Bill Hearing

Committee: Land Use & Transportation

Bill # 25-0092

**Title: Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion to a Banquet Hall in the C-2 Zoning District –
Variance – 1123 West Baltimore Street**

Purpose: For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a banquet hall on the property known as 1123 West Baltimore Street (Block 0217, Lot 012) in the C-2 Zoning District, as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting a variance regarding off-street parking requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

REPORTING AGENCIES

Agency	Report
Law Department	Not Received
Planning Commission	Favorable
Department of Housing and Community Development	Favorable

BACKGROUND

Bill Summary

Council Bill 25-0092 grants permission to establish, maintain, and operate a banquet hall at 1123 West Baltimore Street (Block 0217, Lot 012) in the C-2 Zoning District.

The bill also allows a variance from the off-street parking requirements in § 16-204, since the building covers the entire lot and cannot provide off-street parking.

Background

The banquet hall will be operated by Lil Ms Butterfly Inc. and is intended for private, pre-reserved events such as weddings, showers, birthdays, nonprofit functions, corporate events,

and community gatherings. Hours will be Monday–Friday 10 a.m.–6 p.m., with weekend events by appointment ending by midnight.

The building was constructed in 1915 and has never provided off-street parking. Because the entire lot is covered by the structure, there is no space to create parking on-site. Under Zoning Code §16-601, structures more than 50 years old that have not historically provided parking may be exempt from off-street parking requirements if reviewed and approved by the Director of Planning. The Planning Department confirmed that the building meets these criteria and granted the exemption on September 17, 2025.

Historically, customers likely used the nearby commercial parking lot immediately south of the property, which has existed since at least 1981 and is now City-owned and open to the public. This long-standing pattern of relying on adjacent public parking, along with the site's location in a pedestrian-oriented commercial corridor served by City infrastructure, supports the exemption and removes the need for a parking variance.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Fiscal Note: There should be no fiscal impact.

Information Source(s): 1st reader and agency reports

Analysis by: Juliane Jemmott
Analysis Date: 9/17/2025

Direct Inquiries to: 410 – 396 - 1268

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 25-0092
(First Reader)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Bullock

At the request of: Lil Ms Butterfly Inc.

Address: 2203 Maryland Avenue

Baltimore, MD 21218-5627

Telephone: (443) 865-2730

Introduced and read first time: August 18, 2025

Assigned to: Land Use and Transportation Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: City Solicitor, Department of Housing and Community Development, Planning Commission

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ORDINANCE concerning

2 **Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion to a Banquet Hall in the C-2 Zoning**
3 **District – Variance – 1123 West Baltimore Street**

4 FOR the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and
5 operation of a banquet hall on the property known as 1123 West Baltimore Street
6 (Block 0217, Lot 012) in the C-2 Zoning District, as outlined in red on the accompanying
7 plat; granting a variance regarding off-street parking requirements; and providing for a
8 special effective date.

9 BY authority of

10 Article 32 - Zoning

11 Sections 5-201(a), 5-305(a), 5-308, 10-301 (Table 10-301), 14-302, and

12 16-204 (Table 16-406)

13 Baltimore City Revised Code

14 (Edition 2000)

15 **SECTION 1. BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That
16 permission is granted for the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a banquet hall on the
17 property known as 1123 West Baltimore Street (Block 0217, Lot 012) in the C-2 Zoning District,
18 as outlined in red on the plat accompanying this Ordinance, in accordance with Baltimore City
19 Zoning Code §§ 5-201(a), 10-301 (Table 10-301: Commercial Districts – Permitted and
20 Conditional Uses), and 14-302, subject to the condition that the banquet hall complies with all
21 applicable federal, state, and local licensing and certification requirements.

22 **SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That pursuant to the authority granted by
23 §§ 5-305(a) and 5-308 of Article 32 - Zoning, permission is granted for a variance from the
24 requirements of §§ 16-204 (Table 16-406: Required Off-Street Parking) for off-street parking, as
25 the building covers the entire lot at 1123 West Baltimore Street and no off-street parking can be
26 provided.

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

Council Bill 25-0092

1 **SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That as evidence of the authenticity of the
2 accompanying plat and in order to give notice to the agencies that administer the City Zoning
3 Ordinance: (i) when the City Council passes this Ordinance, the President of the City Council
4 shall sign the plat; (ii) when the Mayor approves this Ordinance, the Mayor shall sign the plat;
5 and (iii) the Director of Finance then shall transmit a copy of this Ordinance and the plat to the
6 Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals, the Planning Commission, the Commissioner of
7 Housing and Community Development, the Supervisor of Assessments for Baltimore City, and
8 the Zoning Administrator.

9 **SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That this Ordinance takes effect on the date it is
10 enacted.

Baltimore City Council




Land Use & Transportation

Committee

Bill: 25-0092

**Title: Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion
to a Banquet Hall in the C-2 Zoning District
– Variance – 1123 West Baltimore Street**

Agency Reports

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 #25-0092/ ZONING – CONDITIONAL USE CONVERSION TO A BANQUET HALL IN THE C-2 ZONING DISTRICT – VARIANCE – 1123 WEST BALTIMORE STREET		

TO

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

DATE: September 19, 2025

At its regular meeting of September 18, 2025, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #25-0092, for the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a banquet hall on the property known as 1123 West Baltimore Street (Block 0217, Lot 012) in the C-2 Zoning District, as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting a variance regarding 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 approval of City Council Bill #25-0092, and adopted the following resolution:

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission finds, in accordance with §5-406 of the Zoning Code of Baltimore City, that the proposed use provided in this bill:

- would not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare;
- would not be precluded by any other law, including an applicable Urban Renewal Plan;
- would not be contrary to the public interest; and
- meets all criteria for approval specified in §5-406(b) of the Zoning Code of Baltimore City, as described in the Departmental staff report; and further

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission concurs with the recommendation of its Departmental staff, and therefore recommends that City Council Bill #25-0092 be **approved** by the City Council.

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
Mr. Shawn Scott, Applicant



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Jon Laria, Chair; Eric Stephenson, Vice Chair

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

September 18, 2025

REQUEST: City Council Bill #25-0092/ Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion to a Banquet Hall in the C-2 Zoning District – Variance – 1123 West Baltimore Street

For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a banquet hall on the property known as 1123 West Baltimore Street (Block 0217, Lot 012) in the C-2 Zoning District, as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting a variance regarding off-street parking requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt findings and approve

STAFF: Justin Walker

PETITIONER: Shawn Scott

OWNER: Cecil Clarke

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: 1123 West Baltimore Street is located on the southwest corner of the intersection with South Carlton Street. The property measures approximately 32 by 67 feet and is currently improved with a two-story building that occupies the entire lot. The site is zoned C-2 and lies within the Southwest Partnership Vision Plan area and the Union Square CHAP District. The structure is situated at the end of a row of commercial buildings, where one building carries a vacant building notice and two others were recently demolished. The buildings across the alley to the east were demolished in late 2020. The subject building is presently unoccupied and was previously authorized for use as a place of worship in 2013, and its last authorized use was for a retail goods establishment (screen printing business) in 2022. Staff notes that the owners are working through corrections of exterior modification violations with CHAP staff.

General Area: The subject property is located within the Hollins Market Neighborhood Statistical Area along the West Baltimore Street corridor, which is predominantly zoned C-1 and C-2 to accommodate neighborhood- and community-serving commercial uses. The blockface is largely commercial, with only one dwelling unit recorded by DHCD data, and there are no schools located within a block of the site. The University of Maryland BioPark is located approximately a quarter mile to the east. Overall, the area context supports the proposed banquet hall use with limited residential or institutional uses in close proximity to the site.

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 Mixed Use: Predominantly Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial group in the General Land Use Plan. This proposed development conforms to that designation.

ANALYSIS

Background: Lil Ms Butterfly Inc. proposes to operate an event venue at 1123 West Baltimore Street, per the Zoning Code this is a banquet hall, as defined below. The use will be located on the first floor of the property. The venue will host weddings, baby showers, birthday celebrations, nonprofit functions, corporate events, and community gatherings. In addition to hall rental, the business will provide event planning and décor services to their clients.

The proposed hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., with Saturday and Sunday hours available by appointment to conclude by 12:00, midnight. The clientele will include local residents, nonprofit organizations, and individuals or companies seeking space for private or corporate events.

Definition: The proposed use of the property meets the definition of a banquet hall in Article 32 – *Zoning* (hereinafter *Zoning* or Zoning Code).

§ 1-303. "Bail bond establishment" to "Child day-care home".

...

(c) *Banquet hall*.

(1) *In general*.

"Banquet hall" means an establishment:

- (i) for which all events are directly managed by the owner of the facility or by a person regularly employed by the owner and responsible to the owner for the on-site management of all events held in that facility and for event arrangements;
- (ii) that is used regularly for serving food or beverage provided by the owner or by caterers and suppliers approved in advance by the owner;
- (iii) that serves designated groups that, before the day of the event, have reserved the facility for banquets or meetings and provided all insurance certificates, security contracts, off-street parking contracts required by the facility's owner;
- (iv) to which the general public is not admitted;
- (v) for which no admission fee is charged at the door; and
- (vi) in which no third party promoter is involved or stands to profit.

(2) *Supplemental definition*.

In paragraph (1)(vi) of this subsection, "promoter" means a person whose primary business is to organize, schedule, and operate one-time events in various leased venues through wide-scale promotions and advance sales of general admission tickets advertised primarily by flyers, websites, e-blasts, and social media and customarily selling general admission tickets at the door.

(3) *Inclusions*.

"Banquet hall" includes an establishment that provides live entertainment as an accessory to the use described in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(4) *Exclusions*.

"Banquet hall" does not include any restaurant or tavern.

Conditional Use: In the C-2 zoning district, a banquet hall use is a conditional use that must be approved by ordinance of the Mayor and City Council (*Zoning*, Table 9-301). Conditional Uses are generally presumed to be allowable in a given zoning district, provided that certain required

findings can be met, as outlined in *Zoning* § 5-406, below. The proposed use would occupy the first floor of the structure.

§ 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 or the City Council 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.

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

The nature of the proposed site, including its size and shape and the proposed size, shape, and arrangement of structures; Staff does not find anything about the property's configuration that would render it unsuitable for the proposed banquet hall use. The building's first floor is one contiguous level, and is located in a commercial zone where there should be little negative impact to any nearby residential uses.

The resulting traffic patterns and adequacy of proposed off-street parking and loading; This is a relatively small building in a commercial area, and so staff does not expect that the proposed use will generate enough intensity of use that would present an unreasonable impact to traffic patterns in the immediate area. Loading could either be accomplished through the front door, as is typical for many small business uses in C-2 zones throughout the City, or could be through the rear of the building from the adjacent alleys.

The nature of the surrounding area and the extent to which the proposed use might impair its present and future development; This use is generally appropriate for commercial zones,

and should not create any negatively impacts beyond a typical business. Staff does not believe that the redevelopment of the nearby vacant properties will be negatively impacted in any way.

The proximity of dwellings, churches, schools, public structures, and other places of public gathering; Staff notes that there is one Place of Worship in the same block, at the opposite corner to the west. We do not expect there to be any negative impacts on that Place of Worship, given that the typical hours of operation will not conflict between the two, and given the relatively small size of the proposed banquet hall. The nearest school is three blocks distant, and should not be impacted by this proposed use.

Accessibility of the premises for emergency vehicles; This property is easily accessible to Police, Fire and EMS services.

Accessibility of light and air to the premises and to the property in the vicinity; The building is not proposed to be changed, and so there are no concerns for access to light and air.

The type and location of adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and other necessary facilities that have been or will be provided; This building is located within the existing City street grid, is adequately served by City infrastructure, and no new construction is proposed. This use should not present any greater impact to City services than prior uses that have occupied the site.

The preservation of cultural and historic landmarks and structures; This site is located within the Union Square CHAP district. As there are no exterior changes proposed, there is no impact presented here. Should any future exterior changes be desired, review by the CHAP Commission will be required.

The character of the neighborhood; This site is located in the northwestern corner of the Hollins Market neighborhood, along the commercial corridor of West Baltimore Street. Hollins House, a ten-story residential Senior Community for Adults (62+ years) is located a block to the east, on the north side of the street. To the south of this site is a commercial node with C-1 zoning for a block and a half before reaching the next residential area.

The provisions of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan; The General Land Use Plan has designated this block as Mixed Use: Predominantly Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial, for which the existing C-1 and C-2 zones are appropriate. The proposed banquet hall therefore does not conflict with the anticipated use mix for this area.

The provisions of any applicable Urban Renewal Plan; This site is not located within an Urban Renewal Plan (URP) area.

All applicable standards and requirements of this Code; The proposed use will need to meet the general requirements of the Building, Fire, and Related Codes, as well as any business licensing that may be required.

The intent and purpose of this Code; and Any other matters considered to be in the interest of the general welfare. Staff finds that this use is appropriate for the C-2 zone, the commercial corridor as outlined in the General Land Use Plan, and does not present any likely impacts greater than any other allowable business. Staff therefore finds no reason why the establishment, location, maintenance, or operation of this use would be detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare beyond what can ordinarily be anticipated from the operation of a business of this type.

We therefore recommend that the Planning Commission should adopt these findings and recommend the bill favorably.

Off-Street Parking: In addition to conditional use approval, the Zoning Code requires banquet halls to provide off-street parking at a rate of one space per ten persons of fire-rated capacity (Zoning, Table 16-406). The site is entirely occupied by the structure; therefore, no off-street parking can be provided on-site.

Given that this building is over 50 years old, it is eligible for an exemption of parking per Zoning § 16-601:

§ 16-601. Exemptions and reductions from requirements.

...

(f) *Structures over 50 years old, etc.*

(1) *In general.*

Structures over 50 years old or structures that have received an historic tax credit are exempt from the parking requirements, subject to review and approval by the Director of Planning, if they have not historically provided parking and they lack sufficient space on the lot to accommodate parking.

There have been several different commercial and residential uses approved for this building stretching back to the late 90s in City records, but staff can't locate any prior variances for parking. That leads us to believe that the building has never provided off-street parking, as it was built in 1915, and so dates prior to the adoption of the 1971 Zoning Code when off-street parking was first required. We also note that a commercial parking lot has existed to the immediate south of this site dating back to at least 1981, and that was likely where some of the parking demand for this portion of the commercial corridor was met. We note that the parking lot is now City-owned, and available for public parking.

Under §16-601 of the Zoning Code, the Director of Planning granted a parking exemption on the application dated September 17, 2025. Based on the findings above, staff concludes that the exemption requirements were met. Accordingly, the property is exempt from the parking requirements of Zoning Code Table 16-406, and no variance is necessary for approval of the proposed use.

Variance Approval Standards:

§ 5-308. Approval standards.

(a) ***Required finding of practical difficulty.***

To grant a variance, the Zoning Administrator, the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals, or the City Council, as the case may be, shall find that:

- (1) because of the conditions peculiar to the property, including particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical conditions of the specific structure or land involved, a practical difficulty, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, would result if the strict letter of the applicable requirement were carried out; or
- (2) because of exceptional circumstances related to the specific structure or land involved, a 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 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;

- (2) the purpose of the variance is not based exclusively on a desire to increase the value or income potential of the property;
- (3) 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;
- (4) the variance is in harmony with the purpose and intent of this Code;
- (5) 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
- (6) 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.

After the drafting of CCB #25-0092, the applicant applied for and was granted a parking exemption under §16-601 of the Zoning Code. This provision authorizes the Director of Planning to exempt structures that are more than 50 years old and that historically have not provided parking from the parking requirements of Zoning Code Table 16-406. As the property is now exempt, an off-street parking variance is no longer required.

Equity: The proposed banquet hall will provide a community amenity by reducing vacancy and reactivating a commercial building along the West Baltimore Street corridor. The project will generate additional foot traffic, preserve the structure within the CHAP district, and contribute to the long-term vitality of the neighborhood. With residentially zoned lots located several blocks away, direct impacts are expected to be limited, and nearby paid parking lots and transit service provide accessibility to patrons, ensuring the use can operate without creating disproportionate burdens on surrounding properties.

Recommendation: Adopt findings and approve

Notification: The Hollins Roundhouse Neighborhood Association was notified of this action and provided a letter of support. In addition to the required posting on the property, staff sent notice of this Planning Commission action via GovDelivery.



Chris Ryer
Director



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	September 22, 2025
SUBJECT	25-0092 Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion to a Banquet Hall in the C-2 Zoning District – Variance – 1123 West Baltimore Street

Position: Favorable



BILL SYNOPSIS

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 25-0092 Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion to a Banquet Hall in the C-2 Zoning District – Variance – 1123 West Baltimore Street for the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a banquet hall on the property known as 1123 West Baltimore Street (Block 0217, Lot 012) in the C-2 Zoning District, as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting a variance regarding off-street parking requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

If enacted, City Council Bill 25-0092 would permit a banquet hall on the property located at 1123 West Baltimore Street while granting a variance for off-street parking. If approved, this Bill will take effect on the date of its enactment.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

At its regular meeting of August 18th, 2025, the Planning Commission concurred with the recommendations of its Departmental staff and recommended that the Bill be approved by the City Council. In their report, the Commission noted that the proposed banquet hall would be in accordance with the 2024 Comprehensive Master Plan, as the property is within the Mixed Use: Predominantly Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial group in the General Land Use Plan. Their report also mentioned that as the structure is over 50 years old, it is eligible for an exemption of parking, per Zoning § 16-601. Therefore, the variance for off-street parking is no longer required.

The property in reference is not located within any of DHCD's Streamlined Code Enforcement Areas but is located within a Community Development Zone and the Southwest Impact

Investment Area. This conditional use conversion may benefit the Hollins Market neighborhood by returning a currently unoccupied building to productive use and by offering a new social amenity for the surrounding communities.

FISCAL IMPACT

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

AMENDMENTS

DHCD does not seek any amendments to this Bill at this time.

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BRANDON M. SCOTT,
Mayor



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

September 24, 2025

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

Re: City Council Bill 25-0092 – Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion to a Banquet Hall
in the C-2 Zoning District – Variance – 1123 West Baltimore Street

Dear President and City Council Members:

The Law Department reviewed City Council Bill 25-0092 for form and legal sufficiency. The bill would permit, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a banquet hall on the property known as 1123 West Baltimore Street (Block 0217, Lot 012) in the C-2 zoning district and grant a variance from off-street parking requirements. The ordinance would take effect on the date of its enactment.

Conditional Use Standards

Banquet halls are permitted as a conditional use if approved by ordinance in the C-2 zoning district. Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, Zoning Table 10-301. 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). In making these findings, the City Council must be guided by fourteen “considerations” involving such things as the “nature of the surrounding area and the extent to which the proposed use might impair its present and future development,” “the character of the neighborhood,” and “the resulting traffic patterns and adequacy of proposed off-street parking.” Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, § 5-406(a).

Variance Standards

Council Bill 25-0092 contains a request for a variance from off-street parking requirements. Required off-street parking for a banquet hall is “1 per 10 persons of fire-rated capacity.” Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, Zoning Table 16-406.

To grant a variance, the City Council must find that, “because of the conditions peculiar to the property, including particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical conditions of the specific structure or land involved” or “because of exceptional circumstances related to the specific structure or land involved,” a practical difficulty, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, would result from a strict application of the law’s requirements. Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, § 5-308(a). The City Council must also make six other findings:

1. the 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;
2. the purpose of the variance is not based exclusively on a desire to increase the value or income potential of the property;
3. 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;
4. the variance is in harmony with the purpose and intent of this Code;
5. 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
6. 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). It is important to note that all of these criteria must be found, in addition to a finding of practical difficulty. Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, § 5-308(a). The City Council must evaluate a request for a variance based on evidence presented at a public hearing. Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, § 5-305(a).

Planning Commission Recommendations

The site for the proposed banquet hall is a two-story building that occupies the entire lot at the southwest corner of the intersection of West Baltimore Street and South Carlton Street. The site is zoned C-2 and is in the Southwest Partnership Vision Plan area and the Union Square CHAP District. The property is also in the Hollins Market Neighborhood Statistical Area which is predominantly zoned C-1 and C-2 to accommodate community commercial uses. The Planning Report states that the area supports the proposed use as a banquet hall.

The subject structure is currently unoccupied. It was previously authorized for use as a place of worship in 2013 and as a screen printing business in 2022. The owners are working with CHAP staff to correct exterior modification violations. The 2024 Comprehensive Master Plan for the

City designates the subject property in the “Mixed Use: Predominantly Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial group.” The proposed development of the property conforms to this designation. The site is not located in an Urban Renewal Plan area. The applicant plans to operate an event venue on the first floor of the property, and the business will also provide event planning and décor services.

The Planning Report indicates that nothing about the property’s configuration renders it unsuitable for use as a banquet hall. Given the relatively small size of the building, it is not expected to unreasonably impact the traffic patterns in the immediate area. The use of the property as a banquet hall is not expected to negatively impact the Place of Worship on the opposite corner given that their typical hours of operation will not conflict. The nearest school is three blocks away. The property is accessible to emergency vehicles. The building will not be altered so there is no effect on access to light and air, and no effect on the site’s historic designation. The building is adequately served by existing City infrastructure.

The bill contains a request for a variance from off-street parking requirements. For a banquet hall, the Code requires off-street parking to be provided at a ratio of one space per ten persons of fire-rated capacity. Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, Zoning Table 16-406. Because the structure occupies the entire site no off-street parking can be provided. The Planning Report notes, however, that because this structure is more than 50 years old it is eligible for an exemption from parking requirements, subject to approval by the Director of Planning, if it has not historically provided parking and the lot lacks sufficient space to accommodate parking. See Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, § 16-601(f). The Planning Staff noted it could not find any previous variance granted to the property related to parking. Moreover, a former commercial parking lot that is now City-owned is just to the south of the site and likely accommodated parking for this site. Based on these factors, Planning Staff believes it is likely that no off-street parking was ever provided at the subject site. The Planning Report states that “[u]nder § 16-601 of the Zoning Code, the Director of Planning granted a parking exemption on the application dated September 17, 2025.” Planning Staff found that the requirements of the exemption were met. The Report states, “the property is exempt from the parking requirements of Zoning Code Table 16-406, and no variance is necessary for approval of the proposed use.” If the Council finds that the subject site has a valid exemption from off-street parking requirements, Section 2 of Council Bill 25-0092 on lines 22-26 of the first page should be removed, and Section 3 beginning on line 1 of the second page should be renumbered. The reference to a variance should also be removed from the bill title and the purpose clause.

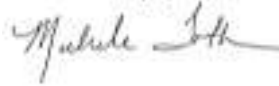
The Planning Report contains an equity analysis. The Planning Commission accepted the Planning Staff recommendation and recommended approval of this bill.

Hearing Requirements

Certain procedural requirements apply to this bill beyond those discussed above because an ordinance that authorizes a conditional use or a variance is considered a “legislative authorization.” Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, § 5-501(2)(i) and (ii). Specifically, notice requirements apply to the bill, and the bill must be referred to certain City agencies which are obligated to review the bill in a specified manner. Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, §§ 5-504, 5-506, 5-602. Finally, certain limitations on the City Council’s ability to amend the bill apply. Baltimore City Code, Art. 32, § 5-507.

The bill is the appropriate method for the City Council to review the facts and make the determination as to whether the legal standards have been met for a conditional use and for a variance, if required. Assuming 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 yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michele M. Toth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michele" being more prominent than the last name "Toth".

Michele M. Toth
Assistant Solicitor

cc: Ebony Thompson
Ethan Hasiuk
Ty'lor Schnella
Shamoyia Gardiner
Hilary Ruley
Jeff Hochstetler
Ashlea Brown
Desiree Luckey
Ahleah Knapp



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	September 23, 2025
SUBJECT	25-0092 Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion to a Banquet Hall in the C-2 Zoning District – Variance – 1123 West Baltimore Street

Position: Favorable

BILL SYNOPSIS

City Council Bill 25-0092 is for the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a banquet hall on the property known as 1123 West Baltimore Street (Block 0217, Lot 012) and granting a variance regarding off-street parking requirements.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

The Parking Authority of Baltimore City (PABC) has reviewed the proposed legislation. This property is not located within any PABC-administered parking programs. PABC staff conducted a site visit in September 2025. According to the Zoning Administrator Memo dated June 5, 2025, this bill requires an off-street parking variance as the existing building occupies the full lot. There is sufficient on-street and off-street parking nearby to accommodate demand.

FISCAL IMPACT

It is not expected that passage of the bill will have any fiscal impact as relates to parking.

AMENDMENTS

No amendments are being requested.



BALTIMORE CITY
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Office of the Zoning Administrator
417 E. Fayette Street, Benton Bldg., Room 147

Ref: 1123 West Baltimore Street

Date: June 5, 2025

This memo is submitted to confirm the review of a request from the owner and/or representative of the property (or properties) referenced above for authorization to:

Use premises for a Banquet Hall – C-2 Zoning District

Please be advised that the Office of the Zoning Administrator has determined that the authorization requested above (in whole or in part) requires approval by Ordinance of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore. In the furtherance of said Ordinance approval, the Zoning Administrator has determined that the following variances per the Zoning Code of Baltimore City are required or needed to be incorporated into the bill for approval.

- Off-street parking requirements – For Banquet Halls, one space per ten persons of the Fire rated capacity are required. The existing building covers the entire lot, so no off-street parking spaces can be provided, therefore, a variance will be needed (Subsection 16-406). It should be noted that an open off-street parking area exists to the south of the rear of the property, located at 10 South Carlton Street.

This memo is being submitted in accordance with Subsections 5-201 and 5-303 of the Zoning Code for Baltimore City.

Respectfully,

Geoffrey M. Veale
Zoning Administrator

cc: Department of Legislative Reference
Shawn Scott, Applicant
Councilmember John Bullock
Department of Planning

Baltimore City Council



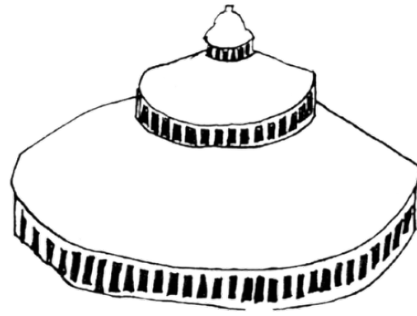
Land Use & Transportation

Committee

Bill:25-0092

**Title: Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion
to a Banquet Hall in the C-2 Zoning District
– Variance – 1123 West Baltimore Street**

Additional Materials



HOLLINS ROUNDHOUSE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

107 S. Poppleton Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

board@hollinsroundhouse.org

July 15, 2025
Baltimore City Council
City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

RE: Letter of Support for Lil Ms Butterfly Inc. – 1123 W Baltimore Street

To Whom It May Concern,

At the June 11, 2025 public meeting of the Hollins Roundhouse Neighborhood Association, community members voted to express our full support for Lil Ms Butterfly Inc., located at 1123 W Baltimore Street, as they pursue zoning variances to operate their business as an Event Planning, Decor, and Banquet Hall company.

Lil Ms Butterfly Inc. has demonstrated a commitment to the community, including engaging in thoughtful dialogue with our association and neighbors. Their business aligns with the character and future vision of the Hollins Roundhouse neighborhood—supporting local entrepreneurship, revitalizing vacant or underused commercial properties, and creating space for cultural, celebratory, and community-centered events.

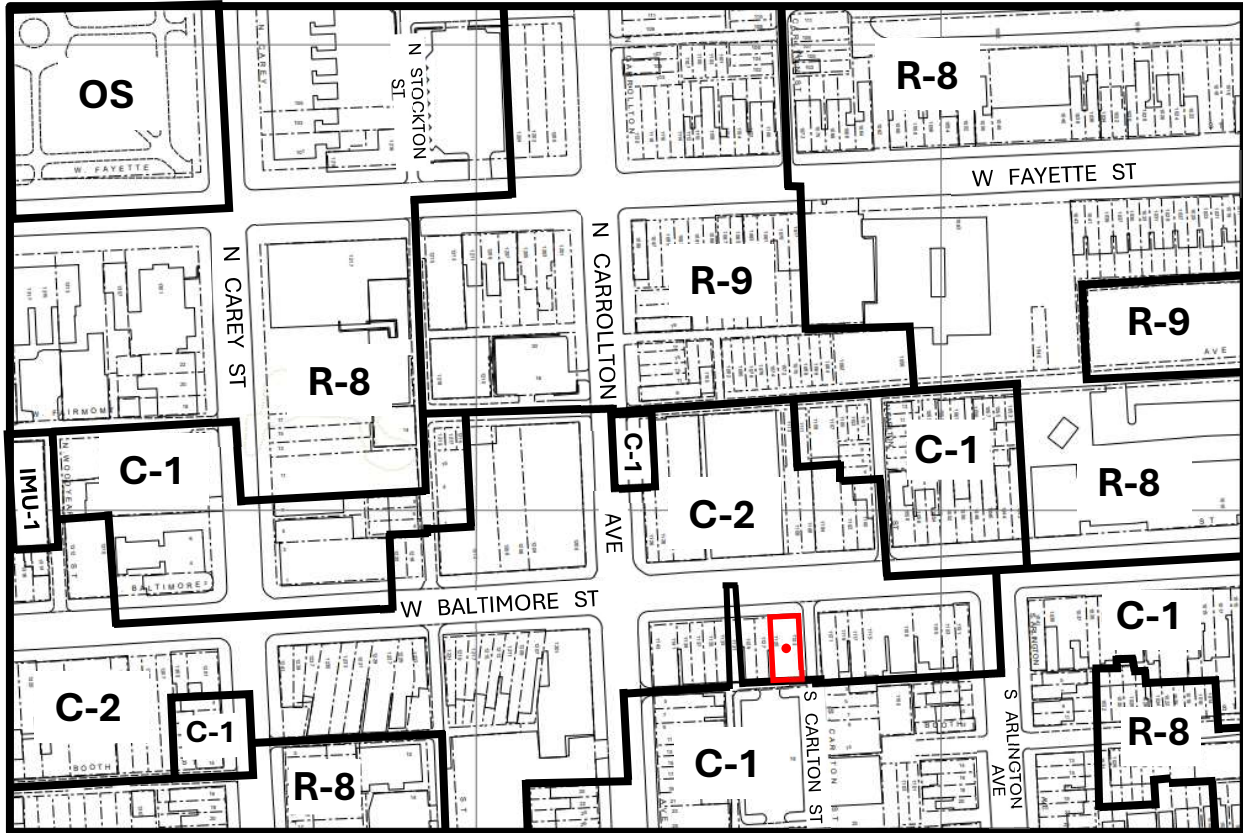
We believe that the addition of Lil Ms Butterfly Inc. will bring valuable services, activity, and economic vitality to the area. The company's vision and professionalism reflect the type of growth and stewardship we wish to see in our community.

Therefore, the Hollins Roundhouse Community Association is pleased to offer this letter of support and encourages all relevant City agencies to act favorably on behalf of Lil Ms Butterfly Inc.'s application.

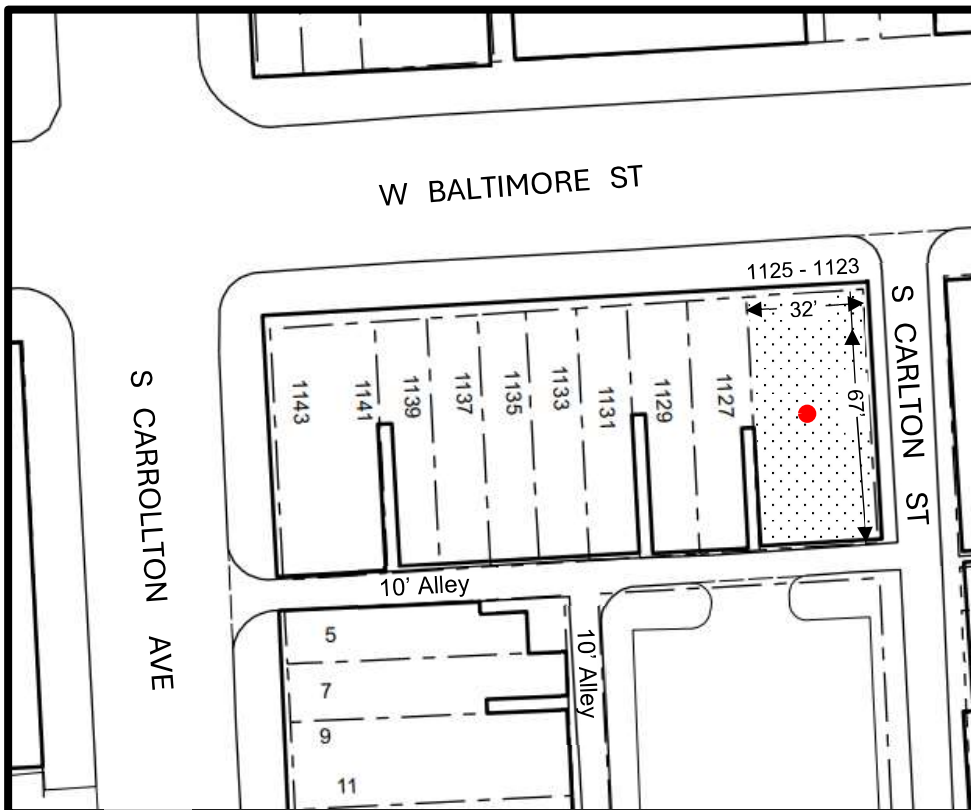
Sincerely,

Dr. Laura Dykes
President
Hollins Roundhouse

SHEET NO. 54 OF THE ZONING MAP OF THE ZONING CODE OF BALTIMORE CITY



Scale: 1" = 200'



Scale: 1" = 50'

Note:

In Connection With The Property Known As No. 1123 WEST BALTIMORE STREET. The Applicant Wishes To Request The Conditional Use Of The Aforementioned Property As A Banquet Hall, As Outlined In Red Above.

WARD 18 SECTION 6

BLOCK 217 LOT 12

MAYOR

PRESIDENT CITY COUNCIL

BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING ON BILL NO. 25-0092

The Land Use & Transportation Committee of the Baltimore City Council will conduct a public hearing on City Council Bill No. 25-0092 on Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in the Clarence "Du" Burns Chamber, City Hall, 100 N. Holliday Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202. Information on how the public can participate in the hearing virtually, via Webex, will be available at <https://baltimore.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.

**Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion to a Banquet Hall in the C-2 Zoning District – Variance – 1123 West
Baltimore Street**

FOR the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a banquet hall on the property known as 1123 West Baltimore Street (Block 0217, Lot 012) in the C-2 Zoning District, as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting a variance regarding off-street parking requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

Applicant: Shawn Scott

For more information, contact the Committee Staff at (410) 396-1091. NOTE: This bill is subject to amendment by the Baltimore City Council.

RYAN DORSEY

Chair

1123

BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING ON BILL NO. 25-002

The Land Use & Transportation Committee of the Baltimore City Council will conduct a public hearing on City Council Bill No. 25-002 on Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in the Carson D. Burns Chamber, City Hall, 100 N. Holliday Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202. Information on how the public can participate in the hearing virtually, via Webex, will be available at <https://baltimore.org/city/council.aspx>.

Zoning - Conditional Use Conversion to a Banquet Hall in the C-2 Zoning District - Variance - 1123 West Baltimore Street

For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a banquet hall on the property known as 1123 West Baltimore Street (Block 1217, Lot 012) in the C-2 Zoning District, as outlined in and on the accompanying plat, granting a variance regarding off-street parking requirements, and providing for a special effective date.

Applicant: Shawn Scott

For more information, contact the Committee Staff at (410) 386-1091. NOTE: This bill is subject to amendment by the Baltimore City Council.

RUAN DOSEY
Chair

NO PARKING
ANYTIME
ON STREET
1123 WEST
BALTIMORE ST



CUMMINGS

