
CITY OF BALTIMORE

Brandon M. Scott – Mayor
Zeke Cohen – Council President



Office of Council Services

Nancy Mead – Director
100 Holliday Street, Room 415
Baltimore, MD 21202

HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Honorable James Torrence
CHAIR

HEARING NOTES

LO25-0029

Whole Block Strategies & Disposition Timeline

Hearing Date: 2/17/2026

Hearing Start Time: 5:30 PM

Hearing End Time: 7:15 PM

Location: Du Burns Council Chamber / Webex

Total Estimated Attendance: 24

Committee Members in Attendance:

- **Chair** James Torrence
- Antonio Glover
- Zac Blanchard
- Select a Councilmember
- **Vice Chair** Odette Ramos
- Jermaine Jones
- Select a Councilmember

Additional Councilmembers in Attendance

- Select a Councilmember
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- Select a Councilmember

MAJOR SPEAKERS

(This is NOT an attendance record.)

- **Alice Kennedy**
 - **Deputy Commissioner Redfern**
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NOTES

- Chair Torrence opened the hearing and read the bills into the record.
 - LO25-0032 was postponed to include the state leadership
- The floor was open to Agency reports (slides in the hearing packet)
- The floor was open to committee questions topics included:
 - Torrence – abatement of liens – one unified real estate office
 - Ramo – 120 day metric is this still the goal?
 - There are a number of factors in play i.e. for fixed pricing and the discrepancy between budget book and OPI data. Ideally looking for a timeline under 120 day

- working on liens, vetting, and other efficiencies that can help with this. Looking at time of reward to BOE approval.
- *% of dispositions done within the 120 days*
- Blanchard – Does it make sense to have LDAs go through the BOE?
 - Changing that process away from the BOE could help to speed things up – the amount of the transaction doesn’t trigger BOE review but is tied to the property – so perhaps changing the tie to the property might help.
 - BOE has approved the fixed LDA template and given commissioner authority to implement them.
 - There is room for improvement in the approval process – however multistep processes increase the opportunity for error.
- Jones – Compliance timeline – what happens if permits are initially pulled but then stall out – how does that change the timeline.
 - The property stays in the compliance bucket until its complete. DHCD continues to check on the property until DHCD can issue a certificate of compliance. If DHCD were fully staffed this would happen every couple of months.
- Torrence – what are we doing to create black wealth? How are we going to be intentional in a strategy to build up black homeownership?
 - This is a key part of the growth strategy for the City. Partnering with Live Baltimore & the buy back the block program and helping renters become homeowners.
 - DHCD has fellow working on pipeline of black ownership “Protect the Nest Program”
 - Trying to not just provide downpayment and closing cost but wraparound service coaching to include credit repair, how to get civically involved, looking at AMI percentages to encourage different income levels to buy.
- *Looking to have a larger conversation to build black wealth requesting a meeting with DHCD/ Admin– “protect the nest program” *
 - Intentionally thinking about displacement and its relation to the zoning code, & whole block strategy as we redevelop.
 - How do we use tax incentives to create anti displacement
 - Thinking proactively about identified blocks
 - Not just displacement on the front end but downstream effects
- Glover – how do we/can we work with communities in preventing displacement
 - Working with community associations to purchase via receivership
- What legal/regulatory barriers can we help with on the Council?
 - In rem is a good and quick process – but the process is bound by federal regulations so there is a limit to local power
- Issue with financing for black and Latino community for homeownership
 - Torrence – commercial rate for black people 7% v. 4% for white
 - Need to find a way to make homes affordable permanently
- Ramos – fixed price v. opening bid – everything we dispose should be fixed price why do we still have open bid
 - Because it needs to be a separate kind of LDA for instance in the TIF bonds – the LDA has a clause for homeownership the change between the two allows for DHCD

- to have more teeth and set up the development to be successful. This is mostly a difference in nomenclature.
 - Most things – even in the open bid is a static price.
 - *Timeline on update for buy into bmore – 3-6 months* - update for the next hearing
- Jones – receivership process – receivership open and pending – what properties are we seeing in codemap that are not available?
 - Receivership is code enforcement – 50% of receiverships the owner abates the liens against the property the City does not ever own the property unless the property fails to sell.
- Access to low interest loans – are we considering getting developers access to capital this way?
 - Yes this is a part of the reframe property strategy – not as a loan but low interest line of credit. Not available yet but is in the works – supported by PNC and the Greater Baltimore Committee looking at both in and out of govt approach
- Glover – discrepancy in the cost of building and selling properties – north of park 200k house 3 blocks south is a 400k house -how can we help developers in the lower AMI neighborhoods?
 - This is something where the city is working on fostering that relationship and finding funding sources to help these developers create RFP in footprints tailored to certain developers to help them get these properties faster and then the TIF bonds to help
- Ramos – new round of block level planning – timeline and how will this work
 - Build out the blocks progressively – looking at Broadway East – zone 1 then feeds into zone 2 ect... this needs to happen on a yearly basis.
 - Requesting the block level planning for all 3 phases in the next 6 months
- *Timeline for outreach on community plan – 3 weeks?*
- Comparison to master plan and the need for comprehensive rezoning – need a draft of this before the budget

FURTHER STUDY REQUESTED

COPY IN SPREADSHEET

SEE FINAL VOTE RECORD IN BILL FILE

Hearing Packet in bill file? -----	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Attendance Sheet in bill file?-----	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Vote Record in bill file? -----	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Agency reports read? -----	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Hearing televised or audio-digitally recorded? -----	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the bill file? -----	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Evidence of notification to property owners in bill file? -----	<input type="checkbox"/>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A

Notes by: Tony Leva
Notes Date: 2/17/2026

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