




MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable President and Members of the City Council
Attention: Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

FROM: William H. Cole, President and CEO 

DATE: February 13, 2018

SUBJECT: City Council Bill No. 18-0183
Urban Renewal – Coldstream Homestead Montebello – Amendment__

The Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) has been asked to comment on City Council Bill No. 18-0183, an ordinance for the purpose of amending the Urban Renewal Plan for Coldstream Homestead Montebello to modify the list of uses prohibited in the Urban Renewal Area; waiving certain content and procedural requirements; making the provisions of the Ordinance severable; providing for the application of this Ordinance in conjunction with certain other ordinances; and providing for a special effective date.

This Bill proposes the prohibition of Neighborhood Commercial Establishments, which are non-residential uses within a residential, or office-residential, zoning district within a structure that is non-residential in its construction or original use. Section 14-238 of the Baltimore City Zoning code defines the limitations surrounding Neighborhood Commercial Establishments and provides that they are a conditional use, subject to the Board of Municipal Zoning Appeals (BMZA) approval in residential districts. BDC believes that amending the Urban Renewal Plan to prohibit these uses will unnecessarily limit potentially productive and beneficial business and economic activity in the Coldstream Homestead Montebello Neighborhood, and may lead to long-term vacancy of eligible properties for which conversion to residential use may not be economically viable or desired. To the degree that specific properties may have proposed uses not desired by the community, BDC believes that the appropriateness of those properties for use as a Neighborhood Commercial Establishment can be addressed individually through the public BMZA process, as currently required under the code.

BDC has reviewed the ordinance and is in opposition to Bill No. 18-0183.

cc: Kyron Banks