

CITY OF BALTIMORE

STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE, Mayor

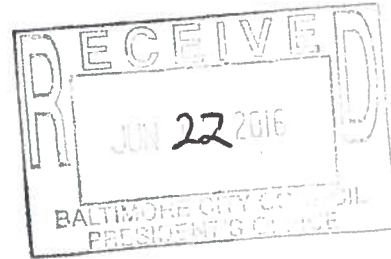


DEPARTMENT OF LAW

GEORGE A. NILSON, City Solicitor
101 City Hall
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

June 22, 2016

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



Re: City Council Bill 16-0653 – Rezoning – 1314 East Fayette Street; 1401, 1501, and 1601 East Pratt Street; and 1400, 1500, and 1600 Bank Street

Dear President and City Council Members:

The Law Department has been asked to review City Council Bill 16-0653 for form and legal sufficiency. The bill changes the zoning for the property known as 1314 East Fayette Street from the R-8 Zoning District to the B-2-4 Zoning District; and changes the zoning for the properties known as 1401, 1501 and 1601 East Pratt Street, and 1400, 1500, and 1600 Bank Street from the R-8 Zoning District to the R-10 Zoning District.

The City Council may permit such a rezoning if it finds facts sufficient to show either a mistake in the existing zoning classification or a substantial change in the character of the neighborhood. Md. Code, Land Use Article, §10-304(b)(2). In evaluating whether the proposed rezoning meets this standard, the City Council is required to make findings of fact on the following matters: (1) population changes; (2) the availability of public facilities; (3) the present and future transportation patterns; (4) the compatibility with existing and proposed development; (5) the recommendations of the Planning Commission and the Board of Municipal Zoning Appeal; and (6) the relation of the proposed amendment to the City's plan. Md. Code, Land Use Article, §10-304(b)(1). The required recommendations of the Planning Commission and the Board of Municipal Zoning Appeal, as noted above, must be based on certain considerations outlined in the City Code. See Baltimore City Zoning Code, §16-305.

The Law Department notes that the Department of Planning has issued a report concerning this bill ("Report"). The Report establishes sufficient facts for granting the proposed rezoning. If the Council adopts the findings of the Report, or finds facts similar to those contained in the Report, the legal requirements for granting the rezoning would be met.

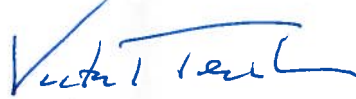
Certain procedural requirements must be satisfied before the Council may act to rezone the property, including public notice and hearing requirements. See Baltimore City Zoning Code, §§16-401 & 16-402. As the bill is the appropriate method for the City Council to review the facts and make the determination as to whether the legal standard for rezoning has been met, and

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assuming the legal standard is met and all other procedural requirements are satisfied, the Law Department approves the bill for form and legal sufficiency.

Finally, we note that the Planning Department seeks to amend the bill by deleting 1314 East Fayette Street from the proposed rezoning. If the bill is amended as proposed, the amendment will not adversely affect the legal sufficiency of the bill.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Victor K. Terval". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Victor K. Terval
Chief Solicitor

cc: George Nilson, City Solicitor
Angela C. Gibson, Mayor's Legislative Liaison
Elena DiPietro, Chief Solicitor, Opinions & Advice
Hilary Ruley, Chief Solicitor
Jennifer Landis, Assistant Solicitor