

FROM	NAME & TITLE	CHRIS RYER, DIRECTOR <i>Chris Ryer</i>	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 8 TH FLOOR, 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET		
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL #25-0020 / ZONING – CONDITIONAL USE CONVERSION OF SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING UNIT TO 3 DWELLING UNITS IN THE R-8 ZONING DISTRICT – VARIANCES – 2001 WEST BALTIMORE STREET		

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

DATE: March 17, 2025

At its regular meeting of March 13, 2025, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #25-0020, for the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the conversion of a single-family dwelling unit to 3 dwelling units in the R-8 Zoning District on the property known as 2001 West Baltimore Street (Block 0206, Lot 045), as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting variances regarding certain bulk regulations (lot size area) and 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 **amendment and approval** of City Council Bill #25-0020 and adopted the following resolution, with eight members being present (eight in favor):

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 #25-0020 be **amended and 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. Ken Wilson, applicant



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Jon Laria, Chair; Eric Stephenson, Vice Chair

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

March 13, 2025

REQUEST: City Council Bill #25-0020 / Zoning – Conditional Use Conversion of a Single-Family Dwelling Unit to 3 Dwelling Units in the R-8 Zoning District – Variances – 2001 West Baltimore Street:

For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the conversion of a single-family dwelling unit to 3 dwelling units in the R-8 Zoning District on the property known as 2001 West Baltimore Street (Block 0206, Lot 045), as outlined in red on the accompanying plat; granting variances regarding certain bulk regulations (lot size area) and off-street parking requirements; and providing for a special effective date.

RECOMMENDATION: Amendment and Approval with the following amendment:

- Add variances for two units for the square footage requirement of 600 sqft in lieu of the 750 sqft required.

STAFF: Austin C. Davis

PETITIONER: Kenneth Wilson

OWNER: Otis Wilson

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: 2001 West Baltimore Street is located on the south side of the street near the intersection with Monroe Street. The property measures approximately 15 feet by 90 feet, with a total lot area of 1,350 square feet. The existing structure is a three-story rowhouse that was originally constructed as a single-family dwelling. The structure has an above-grade square footage of approximately [need figure] and is proposed for conversion into three separate dwelling units.

General Area: The property is located in the Boyd-Booth neighborhood, a predominantly residential area consisting of historic rowhouses. The neighborhood is supported by nearby transit routes and commercial corridors, including access to bus lines along West Baltimore Street and close proximity to Monroe Street.

HISTORY

According to available records, 2001 West Baltimore Street has historically been used as a single-family dwelling but has undergone modifications over time. The applicant is seeking a conditional use approval to allow for the conversion to three dwelling units. The site does not have off-street parking, and the variance request is based on the existing lot dimensions and constraints.

CONFORMITY TO PLANS

The proposal aligns with the Baltimore Comprehensive Plan, particularly its objectives related to affordable housing, adaptive reuse of historic structures, and neighborhood stabilization. The conversion to three dwelling units supports housing diversity while maintaining the existing building's form.

ZONING CODE REQUIREMENTS

Use: The property is located in an R-8 Rowhouse Residential District, where the conversion of a single-family dwelling to three dwelling units is permitted subject to conditional-use approval by the City Council.

Lot Area and Variance: The R-8 zoning district requires 1,875 square feet of lot area for three units (750 sq. ft. per unit, adjusted to 2.5 units per § 15-302). The subject lot is 1,350 square feet, requiring a variance of 28%.

Conversion standards and Variance: The converted dwelling must meet the following gross floor area per unit type: (1) 1-bedroom unit: 750 square feet; (2) 2-bedroom unit: 1,000 square feet; (3) 3- or more bedroom unit: 1,250 square feet (§ 9-703.c.). Two of the proposed one-bedroom dwelling units would only contain approximately 600 square feet in gross floor area, and so this application is not approvable without a 20% variance of this requirement.

Parking and Variance:

The zoning code requires one off-street parking space per dwelling unit. Since the property does not provide off-street parking, a 100% variance from parking requirements is needed.

ANALYSIS

Background: The applicant seeks to convert the existing single-family dwelling into three dwelling units. The property's location in a dense rowhouse neighborhood supports this request, and the proposed conversion is consistent with housing patterns in the area. The required lot area and parking variances are moderate and will allow for the adaptive reuse of the structure without significant external modifications.

Impact on Neighborhood: The proposed conversion will maintain the existing building's scale and form while increasing housing availability. The lack of off-street parking may have some impact on neighborhood parking demand, but the area is well-served by public transit. The proposal aligns with Baltimore's housing goals and contributes to increased density in a walkable area.

Required Findings:

As required by §5-406(b) of the zoning code, the City Council must find that:

1. The proposed use would not be detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare;
2. The use is not precluded by other laws or urban renewal plans;
3. The authorization is not contrary to public interest; and
4. The authorization is in harmony with the zoning code's intent.

Staff believes that the proposed conversion meets these standards and supports increased housing diversity while maintaining neighborhood character.

Equity: This project aligns with Baltimore’s Equity Framework by expanding access to affordable housing and promoting inclusive neighborhood development. The conversion of the property into three dwelling units enhances housing diversity and creates opportunities for a broader range of residents, particularly those with limited incomes. Additionally, the project supports transit-oriented living, reducing dependency on personal vehicles and fostering a more sustainable urban environment. By addressing housing needs within the Boyd-Booth neighborhood, the proposal contributes to equitable growth and neighborhood revitalization, ensuring that historically underinvested areas benefit from thoughtful development.

Conclusion: The requested conditional use and variances for 2001 West Baltimore Street are in harmony with Baltimore’s zoning policies and Comprehensive Plan objectives. The variances are justified given the property’s lot constraints, and the project contributes to neighborhood revitalization. For that reason, Planning staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval of this conditional-use conversion with the associated variances.

Chris Ryer
Director