



MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

From: Alice Kennedy, Acting Housing Commissioner *AK*

Date: October 10, 2020

Re: City Council Bill 20-0623 Zoning - Signs - Conversion of Existing Non-Digital Billboards

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 20-0623 for the purpose of amending the provisions concerning the conversion of non-digital billboards.

If enacted, City Council Bill 20-0623 would repeal and re-ordain with amendments the Signs Title of Article 32 of the Zoning Code to set new standards for the conversion of non-digital billboards.

The legislation would remove the provision that applicants who apply for the conversion of an existing non-digital billboard provide documentation to the Zoning Administrator that; at least 3 existing billboard faces in the City have been removed for each new digital billboard face to be erected, the new digital billboard is not relocated by more than 15 feet in any direction from its original location, and that each billboard being removed is a minimum of 100 square feet. City Council Bill 20-0623 also relieves the Zoning Administrator from the duties of tracking and maintaining a record of printed billboard removal “credits.”

The legislation would remove the lower height restrictions for conversion of an existing billboard to be converted to a digital billboard if, it is attached to a building, or is pole mounted and is 35 feet or less in height.

DHCD notes that this legislation would limit the City’s ability to regulate the conversion of existing non-digital billboards based on safety and aesthetics, and would allow for the proliferation of new digital billboards in the City free of the stricter provisions of existing law.

DHCD **defers to Planning** on the passage of City Council Bill 20-0623.

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cc: Mr. Blendy, Nicholas, *Mayor’s Office of Government Relations*