

FROM	NAME & TITLE	David E. Scott, P.E., Director
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Public Works 600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL 08-0166

CITY OF
BALTIMORE
MEMO



DATE:

TO

September 25, 2008

The Honorable President and Members
of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Karen Randle
Room 400 – City Hall

I am herein reporting on City Council Bill 08-0166 introduced by Council Member Cole on behalf of the State of Maryland Department of General Services and the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore.

The purpose of the Bill is to approve the application of the State of Maryland (the "State") and the City of Baltimore (the "City"), owners of certain property located in and around the State Center area, including 1100 North Eutaw Street (Block 459, Lot 1), "No Address" (Block 459, Lot 2), "No Address" (Block 459, Lot 3), 300 West Preston Street (Block 460, Lot 1), "No Address" (Block 460, Lot 2), 231 29th Division Street (Block 460, Lot 3), 301 West Preston Street (Block 478, Lot 1), 201 West Preston Street (Block 478, Lot 2), and "Armory Parking Lot North" and "Armory Parking Lot East" and comprising 1.70 acres (No Block or Lot, but constituting rights-of-way), respectively (collectively, the "State Center" or the "Property"), consisting of approximately 32.65 acres of land, streets and open space inclusive, more or less, to have the State Center designated a Business Planned unit Development; and to approve the Development Plan submitted by the State and City.

The State owns multiple properties near Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Howard Street that house roughly 3,500 State employees. With the exception of the 5th Regiment Armory building, the State office buildings were constructed beginning in the 1950s and are in need of significant renovation. Rather than reinvest in these buildings, the State approached the City and began talks to revitalize, reorient, and rebuild this area, located between Light Rail and Metro stops, as a transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly mix of office, retail, and residential uses. City Council Bill 08-0166, if approved, would designate the area bounded by Madison Avenue, Dolphin Street, Bolton Street, Hoffman Street, N. Eutaw Street, N. Howard Street, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard as a Business Planned Unit Development (PUD) and would approve a development plan for this area of over 37 acres (according to the Planning Department).

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In 2006 the State selected a development team that began meeting with representatives of area communities, leading to the creation of the State Center Neighborhoods Alliance. With the communities' help, a master plan was developed for the area and was presented to and received approval from the City's Urban Design and Architectural Review Panel in early 2008. The master plan helped provide the general guiding tenets for the PUD area development and are embodied in this legislation. Some of the guidelines are as follows:

- Creating pedestrian and bike-friendly areas;
- Adjusting roadways to allow for on-street parking, wider sidewalks, and green areas and streetscapes;
- Planning around and encourage transit links;
- Providing more off-street parking than required by zoning and located within blocks, with retail uses at street level;
- Accommodating the State offices within the PUD development;
- Using Green Building standards in the construction and renovation of buildings;
- Allowing a maximum floor area not to exceed 6,989,223.7 square feet, and no more than 2,000 dwelling units;
- Creating a strong retail and restaurant presence along the West Preston Street corridor;
- Constructing the lowest building heights along the Dolphin and Madison Street sides of the PUD, in deference to adjacent residential areas;
- Constructing mid-level buildings along the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Howard Street sides of the PUD; and
- Constructing the tallest structures at the northeast corner of Eutaw and West Preston Streets and generally toward the center of development sites.

The plan anticipates closure of the areas known as the North and East Armory Lots, which are rights-of-way, not parcels. As the plan is constructed in phases, it is expected that the widths of some rights-of-way will be adjusted to either narrow or widen the public ways to accommodate wider sidewalks and bike lanes, or more pedestrian-friendly and traffic-calming areas. Any adjustments to the rights-of-way would require the introduction of separate ordinances for consideration and approval by the Council.

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While the State of Maryland is not subject to local zoning laws, its commitment to consult with the surrounding communities and its submittal of this PUD ordinance demonstrates the State's good faith effort for this redevelopment project. Should the State dispose of any of its property within the PUD, the plans and improvements would be subject to final design approval by the Planning Commission.

Based on these findings, the Department of Public Works supports passage of City Council Bill 08-0166.



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Director

DES:mmc

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