

FROM	<p><i>TJS</i></p>	<p>CITY OF BALTIMORE</p>	
NAME & TITLE	THOMAS J. STOSUR, DIRECTOR		
AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 417 E. FAYETTE STREET, 8 th FLOOR		
SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL #09-0372/PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT- UNION MILL		MEMO

TO

DATE:

August 10, 2009

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

At its regular meeting of August 6, 2009 the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #09-0372 for the purpose of approving 1500-1620 Union Avenue, a former warehouse and assembly space last used by Life-Like Products, which made model train parts and accessories. The applicants are proposing to establish an Industrial Planned Unit Development (PUD) that will allow for the renovation of this historically significant ±86,000 sf industrial building that was built in 1866, and later expanded in 1872. The renovations will provide for 54 one-and two-bedroom apartments and ± 36,000 sf of office space. The non-residential portion of the building will be mostly office space for non-profit organizations, with potential for 6,000 sf restaurant or other retail/service use. The apartments will be marketed to new teachers, as with their recent development as Miller's Court. Non-historic minor concrete block and sheet metal additions will be removed. The parking lot is now under lease by Pepsi for the storage of trailers, but this lease will end October 31, 2010. The southern three-story wing of the building that faces Union Avenue will be developed for the 54 apartments. The northern two-story wing and the one-story connecting that faces Buena Vista Avenue will be developed as office space for non-profit organizations. The Boiler Building will most likely be developer as supporting retail space, with perhaps a café or restaurant to serve the tenants of this building.

In its consideration of this Bill, the Planning Commission reviewed the attached staff report which recommended amending and approving City Council Bill #09-0372 and adopted the following resolution, nine members being present (nine in favor).

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission concurs with the recommendation of its departmental staff, and recommends that City Council Bill #09-0372 be amended and passed by the City Council.

If you have questions, please contact Mr. Wolde Ararsa, Division Chief of Land Use and Urban Design at 410-396-4488.

TJS/WA/ttl

Attachments

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CITY COUNCIL BILL #09-0372/PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT- UNION MILL
August 10, 2009

cc:

Mr. Andy Frank, Deputy Mayor
Mr. Demuane Millard, Chief of Staff
Ms. Angela Gibson, Mayor's Office
The Honorable "Rikki" Spector, City Council Commission Representative
Mr. Geoffrey Veale, Zoning Enforcement
Mr. David Tanner, BMZA
Ms. Nikol Nabors-Jackson, DHCD
Mr. Larry Greene, Council Services



Sheila Dixon
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

August 6, 2009

REQUEST: City Council Bill #09-0372 / Planned Unit Development – Designation – Union Mill

For the purpose of approving the application of Seawall Union Ave, LLC, contract purchaser of certain property located at 1500 Union Avenue, to have that property designated an Industrial Planned Unit Development; and approving the Development Plan submitted by the applicant.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval, with the following amendment: That the development plan is revised to more clearly show the placement of the proposed signage by type and location.

STAFF: Eric Tiso

PETITIONER(S): Seawall Union Ave, LLC

OWNER: Kramer Brothers Hobbies of Long Island, Inc.

SITE/ GENERAL AREA:

Site Conditions: 1500-1620 Union Avenue is located on the northwest corner of the intersection with Buena Vista Avenue. This property contains \pm 3.685 acres of land and is currently improved with a two-and three-story \pm 86,000 sqft industrial building built in 1866, that was later expanded in 1872. This site is currently zoned M-2-1.

General Area: This property is located in the Hampden neighborhood, near the edges of the Jones Falls area and the Woodberry neighborhood. Druid Hill Park is located to the southwest, and Roosevelt Park is to the southeast. This area is a transition between industrial and residential areas. To the north of the site is the Pepsi plant, and to the south are residential blocks with areas of semi-detached and detached dwellings. The mixed-use Clipper Mill PUD is to the west, across I-83.

HISTORY: CHAP recommended Baltimore City Landmark Designation for this property on August 12, 2008. Also, Chap Special Listed this property on August 12, 2008.

CONFORMITY TO PLANS: This project is in general agreement with the Comprehensive Plan's LIVE section, Goal 1: Build Human and Social Capital by Strengthening Neighborhoods, Objective 5: Increase the City's Population by 10,000 Households in 6 years.

ANALYSIS:

Project: 1500-1620 Union Avenue is a former warehouse and assembly space last used by Life-Like Products, which made model train parts and accessories. The applicants are proposing to establish an Industrial Planned Unit Development (PUD) that will allow for the renovation of this historically significant ±86,000 sqft industrial building that was built in 1866, and later expanded in 1872. The renovations will provide for 54 one- and two-bedroom apartments and ±36,000 sqft of office space. The non-residential portion of the building will be mostly office space for non-profit organizations, with potential for a 6,000 sqft restaurant or other retail/service use. The apartments will be marketed to new teachers, as with their recent development at Miller's Court. Non-historic minor concrete block and sheet metal additions will be removed. The parking lot is now under lease by Pepsi for the storage of trailers, but this lease will end October 31, 2010.

Environmental/Landscaping: This project is pursuing LEED Gold certification, or the equivalent. Geothermal heating will be explored for feasibility. The northern side of the property is forested, and a Forest Stand Delineation has been completed. The site slopes from a low-point in the southwest corner of the site, rising about thirty feet to the northeast corner of the property. The building is partly set into the slope, with the southern wing of the building being three stories in height, the northern wing is two stories in height, with a one-story connecting wing on the eastern side of the building. There is about a twenty foot drop in elevation within the courtyard. This courtyard will be reconfigured into three landscaped terraces for use as an open amenity for both residents and office workers. The portions of the site adjacent to the streets will have grass lawns within hedgerows. Small trees will be added in the spaces between the proposed portions of the parking lots. The northern and western property boundaries will have a "green wall" of columnar evergreens to soften the appearance of the block wall along the bordering property.

Development Plan: This project has been reviewed and approved by the Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) on July 29, 2009, and depicts all of the required elements of §§ 9-101 and 9-107 of the Zoning Code. Additionally, staff has reviewed the requirements of §9-112, and has not found any negative impacts that will be created by the proposed development. The southern three-story wing of the building that faces Union Avenue will be developed for the 54 apartments. The northern two-story wing and the one-story connecting wing that faces Buena Vista Avenue will be developed as office space.

The existing parking lot is now accessed from a curb cut on the adjacent Pepsi property. A new curb-cut will be installed on Union Avenue to allow for direct access to this site and the 130 shared parking spaces. The western portion of the parking lot is fairly flat, but as it curves around the northern side of the building, it will begin switching-back to climb the hill to an improved access point on Buena Vista Avenue. Short retaining walls will be required to support the new parking sections. The existing small parking area on the south side of the building will be shortened and reconfigured for a drop-off area for visitors with bike racks. Handicapped parking will be provided on the drop-off lot and on the main parking lot closest to the building entrance.

Land Uses: The PUD proposes to allow all permitted and conditional uses in the M-2 District. Additional uses from the Business and Office Residential Districts are included to allow for residential use, office space, and supporting commercial retail operations. The existing billboard on the site will remain. Residential density is limited to not less than 1,500 sqft of lot area per dwelling unit (equivalent to R-6 density for multi-family detached dwellings).

Elevations: The building will be renovated, and will apply for historic tax credits. A new asphalt shingle roof will be installed, and the exterior brick will be cleaned and restored. Many of the windows that have been partly blocked up will be re-opened to their original dimensions, and newly glazed. The chimney on the Boiler Building will be stabilize, cleaned, repointed, and painted with a Union Mill identification sign. A new fence and gate will be installed to replace the existing chain-link fence closing off the courtyard from the parking lot.

Floodplain: The western-most portion of the site is within the floodplain. Portions of the existing and proposed reconfigured parking lot are in the floodplain area, as well as the Boiler Building, the loading dock area of the west end of the south wing, and the sub-level portion of the west end of the northern wing.

Community Input: The Medfield Community Association, Inc., Hampden Community Council-(HCC), and the Concerned Citizens of Woodberry Association were notified of this action.



Thomas J. Stosur
Director