


TJS

FROM	NAME & TITLE	THOMAS J. STOSUR, DIRECTOR	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 8 TH FLOOR, 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET		
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL #17-0172/ HOWARD STREET COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT		

DATE:

TO

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

January 12, 2018

At its regular meeting of January 11, 2018, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #17-0172, for the purpose of designating the area located within certain boundaries as the Howard Street Commercial Historic District; and providing for a special effective date.

In its consideration of this Bill, the Planning Commission reviewed the attached staff report, which recommended approval of City Council Bill #17-0172 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 #17-0172 be passed by the City Council.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Eric Tiso in the Land Use and Urban Design Division at 410-396-8358.

TJS/ewt

Attachment

- cc: Mr. Pete Hammen, Chief Operating Officer
- Mr. Jim Smith, Chief of Strategic Alliances
- Ms. Karen Stokes, Mayor's Office
- Mr. Colin Tarbert, Mayor's Office
- Mr. Kyron Banks, Mayor's Office
- The Honorable Edward Reisinger, Council Rep. to Planning Commission
- Mr. William H. Cole IV, BDC
- Mr. David Tanner, BMZA
- Mr. Geoffrey Veale, Zoning Administration
- Ms. Sharon Daboin, DHCD
- Ms. Elena DiPietro, Law Dept.
- Mr. Francis Burnszynski, PABC
- Ms. Valorie LaCour, DOT
- Ms. Natawna Austin, Council Services



Catherine E. Pugh
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Sean D. Davis, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

January 11, 2018

REQUEST: City Council Bill #17-0172/ Howard Street Commercial Historic District:
For the purpose of designating the area located within certain boundaries as the Howard Street Commercial Historic District; and providing for a special effective date.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Stacy Montgomery

INTRODUCED BY: City Council President (Administration)

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: Situated within the historic retail core of Baltimore City and on a street grid that largely remains from the original settlement of the area, the proposed Howard Street Commercial historic district demonstrates distinctive characteristics of modestly scaled 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture. The proposed Howard Street Commercial district comprises 1 ½ city blocks northwest of the Inner Harbor and immediately adjacent to (west of) the Central Business District and south of the Mount Vernon historic district. Howard Street continues to serve this area as the primary thoroughfare for public transit, as the light rail tracks replaced the historic streetcar route.

The district is comprised of two to four story commercial structures, most of which date to the 19th and early 20th centuries. The buildings in this district are primarily brick, many with large commercial windows on the upper stories, and dentiled metal cornices. The earliest buildings along Park Avenue are two stories with a dormer on the gable roof, with modified storefronts on the 1st story. There are several 20th century buildings that retain the scale of the older commercial buildings in the Moderne and Art Deco style.

The proposed Howard Street Commercial local historic district is home to a cohesive group of modestly scaled commercial structures at the northern end of Baltimore's historic retail district. The proposed district is part of the larger Market Center National Register Historic District, which is home to large department stores, banking centers, theaters and restaurants. The Howard Street Commercial District represents the smaller, specialized retailers in buildings that transitioned from primarily residential to commercial use at the turn of the 20th century.

Howard Street became the major thoroughfare through the retail district and was home to a variety of commercial and manufacturing enterprises. In the late 19th century the 400 block was home to a number of stables and laundries, as well as furniture manufacturing and upholstery operations. In the early to mid-20th century, the majority of the buildings in the 400 block of

Baltimore Heritage, Downtown Partnership, the Market Center Merchants Association and Councilman Costello. In July of 2016, the proposal to replace the Westside MOA with local historic districts was presented to the board of the Maryland Historical Trust.

On May 9, 2017, in accordance with CHAP *Rules and Regulations*, Howard Street Commercial Historic District Designation Hearing One was held at which the Commission requested that staff prepare a “full and proper study with findings of fact” to support the designation. On July 11, 2017, CHAP held the Howard Street Commercial Historic District Designation Hearing Two and approved the study and designation (See CHAP Staff Report, July 11, 2017).

CHAP determined that the neighborhood meets CHAP’s criteria for designation one “that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Baltimore history and three “that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.”

The Planning Commission and its staff apply all relevant plans to proposed historic district designations. In the case of Howard Street Commercial, staff applied the Comprehensive Master Plan, and also reviewed the Market Center Urban Renewal Plan which affects the proposed district.

The Howard Street Commercial district designation is consistent with the Comprehensive Master Plan. The LIVE element of the plan includes Goal 2: Elevate the Design and Quality of the City’s Built Environment with Objective 4: Protect and Enhance the Preservation of Baltimore’s Historic Buildings and Neighborhoods which encourages actively pursuing local historic district designation.

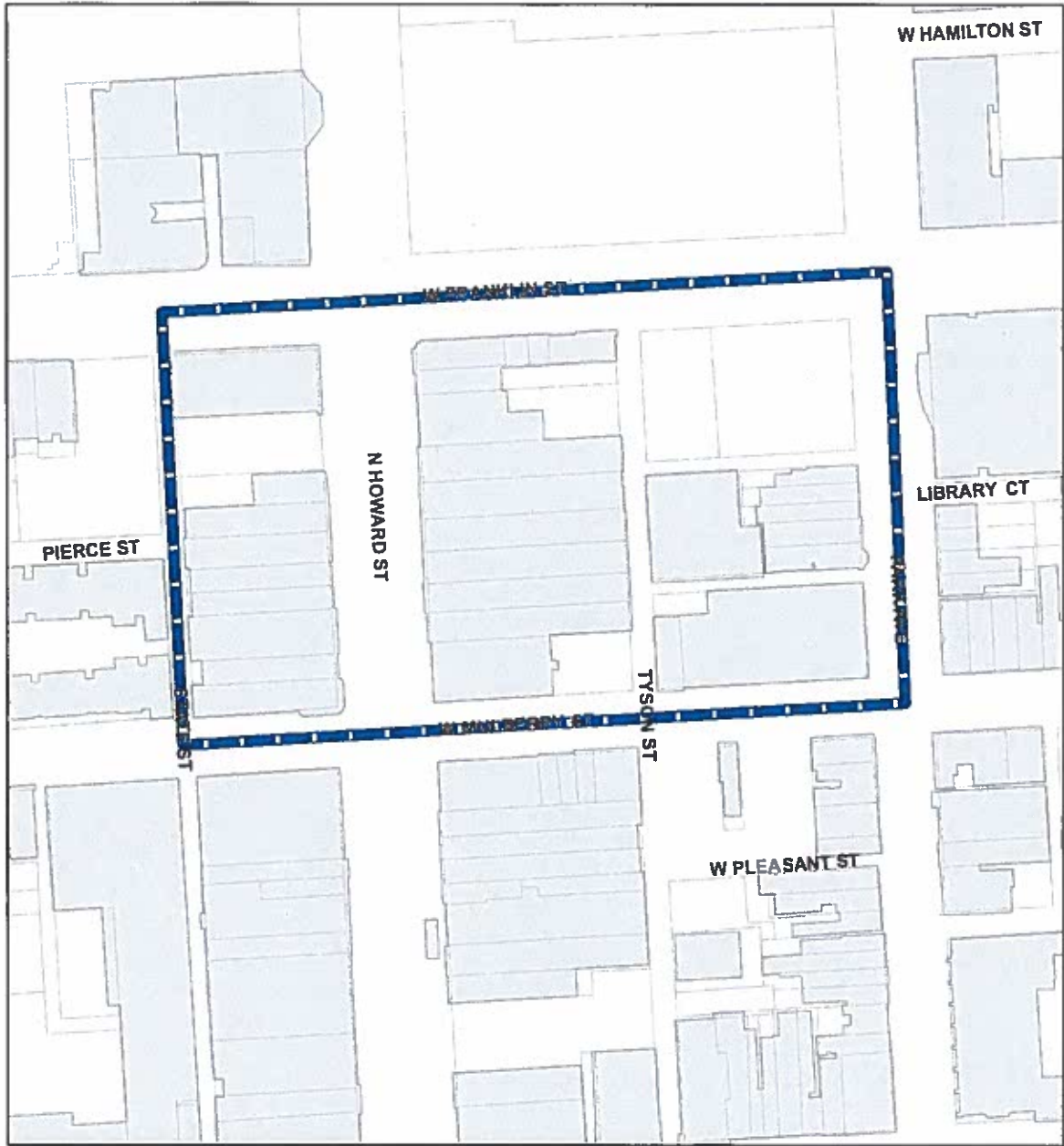
The Market Center Urban Renewal Plan was originally adopted in 1977 has been amended a number of times, most recently in 2014. Local designation is consistent with the goals of the plan, among them: to assure harmonious development by requiring that all plans for new development, exterior rehabilitation or demolition be reviewed and approved as consistent with the objectives of the Renewal Plan, and to encourage the preservation of existing historic/ architecturally significant buildings and streetscapes and the unique historic character of the area for Baltimore residents and visitors. The proposed designation will create consistent and predictable design review and will encourage the preservation of significant historic buildings through a transparent process within Baltimore City.

The buildings located within the proposed Howard Street Commercial Historic District demonstrate the transition retail establishments undertook between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, from residential buildings with small commercial operations to purpose-built commercial structures. This significant architecture and history and the conformity of the proposed designation with the Comprehensive Master Plan and the Market Center Urban Renewal Plan, staff recommends the designation of Howard Street Commercial Historic District as a local historic district.

Notification: The property owners, Market Center Merchants Association, Baltimore Heritage, Mount Vernon Belvedere Association and the Baltimore National Heritage Area have been notified of this action.



Thomas J. Stosur
Director



Howard Street Commercial Historic District

Legend

 Proposed Local Historic District