



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 26, 2020

Re: City Council Bill 20-0621 Rezoning - 2 East Wells Street

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 20-0621 for the purpose of changing the zoning for the property known as 2 East Wells Street (Block 1030, Lot 082), as outlined in red on the accompanying plat, from the R-8 Zoning District to the C-2 Zoning District.

If enacted, City Council Bill 20-0621 would rezone the property located at 2 East Wells Street from the R-8 Zoning District to the C-2 Zoning District. This legislation would enable the petitioner, Wells CRP Building, LLC., to utilize the property for a wider array of commercial and residential uses.

At its regular meeting of October 8, 2020, the Planning Commission concurred only in part with the recommendation of its departmental staff, adopting many of the findings outlined in the staff report and recommended that City Council Bill 20-0621 be passed by the City Council. The Planning Commission did not support staff's recommendation to amend the legislation to an alternate OR-2 designation. Planning staff noted in their report that the change as proposed is not in the public's interest and that the existing zoning, or the OR-2 alternate, could support a number of the applicants desired mix of uses.

This building was rezoned under the old zoning code in 2013 from M-2-2 to R-8 and was developed accordingly. Staff concedes that it may have been a mistake not to zone this building as a more appropriate designation during the 2017 comprehensive rezoning and that the neighborhood has seen substantial change in the past decade. It will be necessary for the Council to make the required findings of facts to support that this missed opportunity to re-zone the property during Transform was in fact a mistake.

There may be a demand for a wider array of additional commercial uses in this area. The Port Covington area, just South of the property named in this legislation, is poised for major redevelopment.

DHCD **does not object** to the passage of City Council Bill 20-0621.

sm

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