


FROM	NAME & TITLE	GARY W. COLE, ACTING DIRECTOR <i>G. Cole</i>	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 417 E. FAYETTE STREET, 8 th FLOOR		
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL #08-0234/ CITY STREETS - OPENING -DIAMOND STREET		

TO

DATE:

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

December 26, 2008

At its regular meeting of December 18, 2008, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #08-0234 for the purpose of opening a portion of Diamond Street between West Fayette Street and Shad Alley. City Council Bill #08-0234 is the required legislation that will formally open the aforementioned portion of Diamond Street. This is the second step in a four step process that is needed to dispose of surplus right-of-way property. This action is consistent with previous Planning Commission action.

In its consideration of this Bill, the Planning Commission reviewed the attached agenda, summary and previous staff report which recommends approval of City Council Bill #08-0234 and adopted the following resolution, eight members being present (eight in favor).

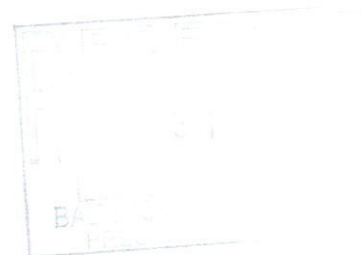
RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission concurs with the recommendation of its departmental staff and recommends that City Council Bill #08-0234 be passed by the City Council.

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

GWC/ttl

Attachments

- cc:
- Mr. Andy Frank, Deputy Mayor
 - Mr. Demaune Millard, Chief of Staff
 - Ms. Angela Gibson, Mayor's Office
 - The Honorable Rochelle "Rikki" Spector, Council Rep. for Planning Commission
 - Mr. David Tanner, BMZA
 - Mr. Geoffrey Veale, Zoning Administration
 - Ms. Nikol Nabors-Jackson, DHCD
 - Mr. Larry Greene, Councilmanic Services
 - Ms. Marcia Collins, DPW
 - Mr. Paul Barnes, DPW



PLANNING COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

June 19, 2003

REQUEST: Street Closing/A Portion of Diamond Street from West Fayette Street to Shad Alley

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Peggy Drake

PETITIONER: University of Maryland, Baltimore

OWNER: Mayor and City Council of Baltimore

SITE/ GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: The 100 North block of Diamond Street is a paved alley-style street with a 20' right-of-way. It currently runs both directions from the 500 West block of Fayette Street to the 500 West Block of Lexington Street. Approximately 220' north of the sidewalk along Fayette Street is the south side of the intersection of Diamond Street with Shad Alley. Shad Alley has 12' wide pavement and runs west from Diamond Street to the 100 North block of Greene Street. Diamond Street continues north from Shad Alley to Lexington Street. Sidewalks extend about half-way (approximately 140') up Diamond Street from Fayette. This block of Diamond Street is in an R-7 zoning district located in the Market Center West Urban Renewal Area.

General Area: Diamond Street is near the east end of the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) campus, where the UMB Master Plan guides development. The new building for the UMB Law School is directly across Fayette Street. Along both sides of Diamond Street, construction is underway for the University Suites at UMB. A sixteen-story high rise building for graduate student housing will go north of existing row structures facing Fayette west of Diamond Street to near Shad Alley. UMB is in the process of acquiring an existing building on the south side of Shad Alley that would allow the high-rise to go up to Shad Alley. An additional fifty beds would be provided in historic row structures being renovated on either side of Diamond where it intersects Fayette, with other buildings in the project extending east along Fayette to Paca Street. The area contains university buildings and associated retail and commercial uses and is part of Baltimore's Westside Renaissance.

HISTORY

- Ordinance #77-0579 established the Market Center West Urban Renewal Plan on November 16, 1977.
- The thirteenth and most recent amendment to that Plan was approved under Ordinance #01-0405 on February 2, 2001.

CONFORMITY TO PLANS

The closing of a portion of the 100 North block of Diamond Street would be in harmony with the goals and objectives of the Market Center (West) Urban Renewal Plan. The action would also be consistent with the Master Plan for the University of Maryland, Baltimore campus.

ANALYSIS

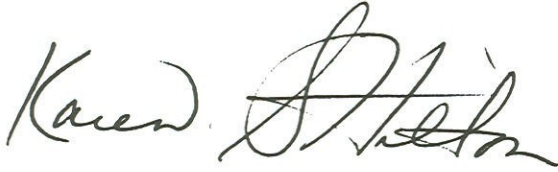
The University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), in conjunction with A & R Development and the Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO), is developing graduate student housing on properties that border the 100 North block of Diamond Street. A new sixteen-story high-rise building is now under construction along the west side of Diamond Street from Shad Alley south to the rears of existing historic row buildings that face Fayette Street. Attached structures on either side of Diamond Street at Fayette Street are among a group of historic buildings being renovated for additional graduate student housing. In all, there will be 147 units to provide housing for 337 graduate students in 229,489 square feet of new construction and renovated space, at a cost of approximately \$34,000,000.

UMB is seeking approval to close and acquire Diamond Street from Shad Alley south to Fayette Street in order to control and help assure safe access to this new housing during late evening and other hours. A main entrance to all the buildings will be located just west of Diamond Street at Fayette. Residents and visitors will be able to walk to units in the high rise as well as the renovated existing buildings through walkways from that main entrance. In addition, the high-rise building will include a two-level garage, with one of the levels accessed by way of Diamond Street. UMB will change the direction of traffic on this closed portion of Diamond Street from two-way to one-way south. Garage users will have a key card to exit from what would become a driveway out to Fayette. Existing walkways on either side of Diamond Alley will be retained and improved as needed to provide safe access for pedestrians and drivers leaving that garage.

There will continue to be public access to Diamond Street from West Lexington Street to Shad Alley. Shad Alley will offer access from the end of the public right-of-way on Diamond Street west to Greene Street. Utility access under Diamond Street will be retained as a condition of the closure and sale.

The Planning Department finds that the right-of-way on Diamond Street between West Fayette Street and Shad Alley is no longer needed for a public purpose.

The Westside Renaissance, Market Center Merchants' Association, and the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore have been notified of this action.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karen S. Hilton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Karen" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Hilton".

Karen S. Hilton, AICP
Acting Director