



BALTIMORE CITY  
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council

From: Michael Braverman, Commissioner

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "JG for MB".

Date: August 5, 2019

Re: **City Council Bill 19-0372: Zoning – Fells Point Height Overlay District**

---

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 19-0372, for the purpose of establishing a new Fells Point Height Overlay District; specifying height limits allowed in certain areas of the district; providing that the regulations of the underlying zoning districts apply; and generally specifying the regulation of properties within the Overlay District.

If enacted, this bill would limit a maximum height for new construction to 50 feet along the Broadway Corridor and 40 feet in other areas of the proposed Overlay District. Under the 2017 Zoning Code, the areas included in the proposed Overlay District are mostly zoned either R-8 or C-1. In R-8 districts, the maximum height allowance for multi-family dwellings is 45 feet, or 60 feet on a corner lot. In C-1 districts, the maximum height allowance is 40 feet, or 60 feet if upper levels are residential. Along most of the Broadway Corridor, the maximum height allowance would be reduced from 60 feet to 50 feet, while through the rest of the proposed District, the maximum height allowance would be set at 40 feet.

The Planning Commission opposes the bill, arguing that the existing Zoning and Historic District guidelines allow for development that preserves the character of the Fells Point and Upper Fells Point neighborhoods.

Lowering maximum height allowances in the Fells Point area would make dense infill development more difficult on vacant lots along the Broadway Corridor. Restricting building height could also reduce affordability for residents and business owners.

DHCD agrees with the Planning Department staff report and opposes City Council Bill 19-0372.

MB:td

cc: Mr. Jeffrey Amoros, *Mayor's Office of Government Relations*  
Mr. Eric Tiso, *Department of Planning*