



FROM	NAME & TITLE	CHRIS RYER, DIRECTOR 	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 8 TH FLOOR, 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET		
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL #22-0200 / AMENDING CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT URBAN RENEWAL PLAN		

TO

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

DATE: March 17, 2022

At its regular meeting of March 17, 2022, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #22-0200, for the purpose of amending the Urban Renewal Plan for the Central Business District to revise the signage provisions; waiving certain content and procedural requirements; making the provisions of this Ordinance severable; providing for the application of this Ordinance in conjunction with certain other ordinances; 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 #22-0200 and adopted the following resolution, with eight members being present (seven in favor).

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission concurs with the recommendation of its departmental staff, and recommends that City Council Bill #22-0200 be **approved** by the City Council.

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

CR/ewt

attachment

cc: Ms. Natasha Mehu, Mayor's Office
Ms. Nina Themelis, Mayor's Office
Mr. Ethan Cohen, Mayor's Office
The Honorable Eric Costello, Council Rep. to Planning Commission
Mr. Matthew Stegman, City Council President's Office
Ms. Nikki Thompson, City Council President's Office
Mr. Colin Tarbert, BDC
Ms. Kathleen Byrne, BMZA
Mr. Geoffrey Veale, Zoning Administration
Ms. Stephanie Murdock, DHCD
Ms. Elena DiPietro, Law Dept.
Mr. Francis Burnszynski, PABC
Mr. Liam Davis, DOT
Ms. Natawna Austin, Council Services
Ms. Shelonda Stokes, Downtown Partnership of Baltimore



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Sean D. Davis, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

March 9, 2021

REQUEST: City Council Bill #22-0200/ Urban Renewal – Central Business District – Amendment 2 – For the purpose of amending the Urban Renewal Plan for the Central Business District to revise the signage provisions; waiving certain content and procedural requirements; making the provisions of this Ordinance severable; providing for the application of this Ordinance in conjunction with certain other ordinances; and providing for a special effective date.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

STAFF: Caitlin Audette

PETITIONER: Downtown Partnership of Baltimore

OWNER: Multiple Properties

HISTORY

The Central Business District Urban Renewal Plan (URP) was initially approved by Ordinance No. 01-170 on May 25, 2001. On November 8, 2006 Amendment No. 1 was approved by the Mayor and City Council by Ordinance No. 06-348.

ANALYSIS

The amendment proposes the following language;

(1) On page 4, in D.3, delete “general outdoor advertising signs;”. Text below shows the context of this amendment to the Urban Renewal Plan for the Central Business District:

3. Prohibited Uses: Notwithstanding any other provision of the Renewal Plan, the following uses and facilities are not permitted within the Project Area:

Any drive-in commercial establishments except those contained entirely within structures; [general outdoor advertising signs;] motor vehicle rental establishments except those contained entirely within enclosed structures or parking garages; highway maintenance shops and yards; mobile home sales; animal hospitals; automobile accessory stores including repair and installation services except those contained entirely within structures; automobile paint shops; boat sales, rental and repair establishments; contractor and construction shops and yards; and motor vehicle sales.

The prohibition of uses specified above must be included, where appropriate, in agreements, leases, deeds, and other instruments whereby land or interests in real property in the Project Area are disposed of by the City to developers, and must be incorporated where appropriate in covenants running with the land or interests in real property.

(2) On page 10, in E.4.b {“Treatment of Other Areas – Signs”}, amend to read as follows:

“All [private] signs must be approved by the Department according to criteria established in the Renewal Plan OR APPROVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION IN A SIGNAGE PLAN PURSUANT TO § 17-505 {“SIGNAGE PLAN APPROVAL AND AMENDMENT 26 PROCESS.”} OF THE ZONING CODE OF BALTIMORE CITY. The exceptions are signs for the purpose of advertising properties for sale, rent, or temporary purposes not exceeding 30 days. Any signs that remain for more than 30 days lose their temporary exception and must be approved by the Department OR APPROVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION according to these same criteria.”

(3) On page 26, in A.5 {“Appendix – Property Rehabilitation Standards – Signs”}, amend the first paragraph to read as follows:

“All new signs must be in accordance with the Zoning Code of Baltimore City and subject to the requirements for a minor privilege permit. IN THE EVENT OF A CONFLICT BETWEEN THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION 5 AND A SIGNAGE PLAN APPROVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION UNDER § 17-505 OF THE ZONING CODE OF BALTIMORE CITY, THE PROVISIONS OF THE SIGNAGE PLAN SHALL PREVAIL. In addition, except as may be permitted in such Signage Plan, the following provisions apply:”

(4) On page 27, delete Section A.5.d in its entirety and replace with “Reserved.” Text below shows the context of this amendment to the Urban Renewal Plan for the Central Business District:

d. [“Temporary signs” may be displayed within storefront windows only, provided that these signs do not cover more than 20% of the area of the window in which they are displayed and are on display not more than 30 consecutive days.]

The proposed changes remove conflicts between the URP and the NoHa ASSC and removes temporary signs from the URP, which brings it into compliance with the updated Zoning Code.

The URP includes Section N: Procedures for Changes in Approval Plan, which states the following;

1. The Renewal Plan may be amended from time to time upon compliance with the requirements of law provided that prior to passage of any ordinance amending the Renewal Plan, a public hearing must be held.

2. The Department must notify affected site occupants and developers of all proposed amendments to the Renewal Plan at least 30 days prior to the public hearing. 18

3. No substantial change or changes may be made in the Renewal Plan after approval by Ordinance, without such change or changes first being adopted and approved in the manner required by law for the approval of a renewal plan.

Staff has found that the procedures for changes in approval plan are being met as the amendment is going through the Ordinance process. As the changes do not affect a specific site or developer as required in item #2, the posting notice and sharing of the amendment with community stakeholders meets this intent.

Equity:

- Impact:
 - How might the proposal impact the surrounding community in the short or long term?
 - Will allow for billboards to be installed within the boundaries of the URP.
 - How would this proposal impact existing patterns of inequity that persist in Baltimore?
 - The proposal would have not impact to existing patterns of inequity.

- Engagement:
 - Has the community been meaningfully engaged in discussing this proposal?
 - The Downtown Partnership of Baltimore has met with a variety of stakeholders throughout the ASSC designation and Signage Plan process. The need for this minor amendment was discussed during those meetings.
 - How are residents who have been historically excluded from planning processes being authentically included in the planning of the proposed policy or project?
 - Downtown residents, who have not historically been large in number, have been included in outreach completed by Downtown Partnership.

- Internal Operations:
 - This change to the URP will not have an impact on staff workload or operations.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Commission recommend approval of the amendment to the Central Business District Urban Renewal Plan to City Council.

Notification: Email notifications were provided to Downtown Partnership, Downtown Residents Advocacy Network, City Center Residents Association, and those who had previously contacted staff regarding the NoHa ASSC. Additionally, the applicant had posted three notices throughout the URP boundaries and included the posting in the loop on their 15 kiosks around downtown.



Chris Ryer
Director