

CITY OF BALTIMORE

BERNARD C. "JACK" YOUNG, Mayor



OFFICE OF COUNCIL SERVICES

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HEARING NOTES

Bill: 20-0522

Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals - Repeal of "Physically Present" Requirements

Committee: Judiciary
Chaired by: Councilmember Eric T. Costello

Hearing Date: May 14, 2020
Time (Beginning): 2:20 p.m.
Time (Ending): 2:50 p.m.
Location: Webex Virtual Hearing
Total Attendance: Approximately 30 people
Committee Members in Attendance:

Eric Costello Mary Pat Clarke John Bullock Leon Pinkett
Edward Reisinger Robert Stokes Shannon Sneed

Bill Synopsis in the file? [X] YES [ ] NO [ ] N/A
Attendance sheet in the file? [ ] YES [ ] NO [X] N/A
Agency reports read? [X] YES [ ] NO [ ] N/A
Hearing televised or audio-digitally recorded? [X] YES [ ] NO [ ] N/A
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file? [X] YES [ ] NO [ ] N/A
Evidence of notification to property owners? [ ] YES [ ] NO [X] N/A
Final vote taken at this hearing? [X] YES [ ] NO [ ] N/A
Motioned by: E. Reisinger
Seconded by: L. Pinkett
Final Vote: Fav. with Amendments

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

Derek Baumgardner, Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals
Eric Tiso, Department of Planning
Hilary Ruley, Law Department

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**Major Issues Discussed**

1. Chairman Costello called the hearing to order.
2. Councilman Schleifer explained the purpose and need for the bill.
3. Hilary Ruley confirmed that the Law Department can approve the bill for form and legal sufficiency.
4. Eric Tiso confirmed the recommendations in the Planning Commission’s written report and explained the proposed amendment to eliminate the sunset provision in the bill.
5. Derek Baumgardner confirmed BMZA’s recommendation that the Council pass the bill with the amendment to eliminate the sunset provision. He explained that the bill will clarify that BMZA can hold hearings virtually during the emergency and noted that BMZA plans to resume normal, in-person hearings as soon as possible.
6. Councilwoman Clarke noted that BMZA hearings often draw many concerned residents and that many of them could have difficulty participating in virtual hearings. She further noted that many Baltimoreans lack internet access.
7. Councilman Reisinger noted that removing the sunset provision would give BMZA flexibility and that the COVID-19 emergency may not be over by the sunset date in the bill.
8. The Committee considered and adopted the amendment to eliminate the sunset provision, with five members voting yes and two members voting no.

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**Further Study**

**Was further study requested?**

Yes     No

**If yes, describe.**

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**Committee Vote:**

E. Costello: ..... **Yea**  
M. Clarke: ..... **Nay**  
J. Bullock: ..... **Yea**  
L. Pinkett: ..... **Yea**  
E. Reisinger: ..... **Yea**  
S. Sneed: ..... **Nay**  
R. Stokes: ..... **Yea**

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Matthew L. Peters, Committee Staff

Date: May 14, 2020

Cc: Bill File  
OCS Chrono File