



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

June 11, 2015

REQUESTS:

- Major Subdivision Final Plans/ 2000 – Block East Eager Street- 45 Townhome Lots
- Minor Amendment/ New East Baltimore Community (EBDI) PUD #129- 2000 Block East Eager Street

RECOMMENDATIONS: Approval

STAFF: Tamara Woods

PETITIONER: Forest City/New East Baltimore Partnership (FC/NEBP)

OWNERS: Same

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: The approved New East Baltimore Community PUD area is bounded by East Chase Street to the north, East Madison Street to the south, and roughly by North Washington Street to the east and North Broadway to the west. The total site area is 33.98 acres. This particular project is located on the north and south sides of the 2000 block of East Eager between Washington Street and Chester Street.

General Area: The general project area lies at the convergence of several distinct neighborhoods that are also Urban Renewal Areas in the central portion of East Baltimore. Those are the Middle East, Johnston Square, Broadway East, Oliver, and Gay Street I Urban Renewal Areas. Though predominantly Residential (either R-7 or R-8), there are also smaller areas of Office-Residential, Commercial, and Industrial zoning. With the exception of Johnston Square, all of the neighborhoods, or portions, thereof, are in the Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition (HEBCAC) Village Center of the Eastside Empowerment Zone. Institutional and Public facilities in the area include several elementary schools, Broadway Court Elderly Housing, the Johns Hopkins Drug Treatment Facility, One Stop Career Center, East Baltimore Medical Center, and Collington Square and Oliver Recreation Centers. This project is located within the Middle East Urban Renewal Plan area.

CONFORMITY TO PLANS

The proposed development plan is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Baltimore City Comprehensive Master Plan, specifically: LIVE Goal 1, Objective 2: Strategically Redevelop Vacant Properties Throughout the City.

HISTORY

- On November 30, 1979, Ordinance #1202 was approved, establishing the Middle East Urban Renewal Plan.
- On August 12, 2004, the Planning Commission recommended approval of various street and alley closings within the New East Baltimore Community (Part I).
- On June 2, 2005, the Planning Commission granted Final Design Approval to the first Life Sciences building to be constructed at 855 N. Wolfe Street.
- On October 26, 2005, Ordinance #05-159 was approved by the Mayor and City Council, to rezone multiple properties in the project area from the B-2-3 zoning district to the R-8 zoning district.
- On October 26, 2005, Ordinance #05-160 was approved by the Mayor and City Council in order to establish the New East Baltimore Community Planned Unit Development.
- On December 1, 2005, the Planning Commission recommended approval of various street and alley closings within the New East Baltimore Community (Part II.)
- On March 23, 2006, the Planning Commission approved the Final Subdivision and Development Plan for the R2 and R3 residential buildings.
- On August 9, 2007, the Planning Commission approved a Minor Amendment for the primary residential area north of Eager Street and a Final Design Approval for the R1 development parcels.
- On December 20, 2007, the Planning Commission approved the Final Subdivision and Development Plan for the residential area north of Eager Street.
- On April 3, 2008, the Planning Commission approved the Final Design for multiple blocks comprising Pennrose's Phase I area.
- On April 15, 2010, the Planning Commission approved the Final Design for the R9/R10 Graduate Student High Rise.
- On November 18, 2010, the Planning Commission approved the Final Subdivision and Preliminary Development Plan for 1746 Ashland Avenue.
- On February 10, 2011, Ordinance #11-417 was approved by the Mayor and City Council, to rezone 1746 Ashland Avenue from R-8 to B-2-3.
- On February 10, 2011, Ordinance #11-418 was approved by the Mayor and City Council, for Amendment #1 to the New East Baltimore Community PUD.
- On March 24, 2011, the Planning Commission approved a Minor Amendment and Final Design for the Maryland Public Health Laboratory.
- On June 16, 2011, the Planning Commission approved a Minor Amendment and Final Design Approval for the P1 Parking Garage.
- On August 25, 2014, the Mayor and City Council approved Ordinance #14-279 (Rezoning) and Ordinance #14-280 (Planned Unit Development).
- On August 7, 2014, Planning Commission approved a Minor Amendment and Final Design Approval for Eager Park and 1024-1042 McDonogh Street Rehabilitations.
- On October 2, 2014, Planning Commission approved a Minor Amendment and Final Design Approval for 1812 Ashland Avenue and Final Design Approval for the Eager Park Signage Plan.

ANALYSIS

The New East Baltimore Community is a mixed-use project consisting of residential, retail, and office uses established under a Planned Unit Development (PUD), which was enacted as City Council Ordinance #05-160 and amended by Ordinance #11-418. The second major amendment, Ordinance #14-280, was approved on August 25, 2014 by the Mayor and City Council. The major amendment modified the boundaries of the PUD, the permitted height limits in certain areas of the PUD, and the parking requirements for certain uses. The amendment also simplified the overall Development Plan.

This request is for a major subdivision for the creation of 45 townhome lots and for a minor amendment to the existing PUD.

Project: This subdivision proposes to create 45 lots for the future development of 45 new townhomes. The builder is not currently on-board, so the action is for the creation of the lots only, anticipating future build-out. The properties are currently unimproved. The development will have lots that front both the north and south sides of the 2000 block of East Eager between Washington Street and Chester Street. On the north side of the street, the lots will be bisected by North Castle Street, which will terminate at the north side of East Eager Street. The lots on the south side of the street will be a continuous row. Lots 37/38 and Lot 38A, however, will have a Use in Common H.O.A Easement placed on them in anticipation of a future green space. An existing 15' wide public alley is provided on the rear of the north side of East Eager Street and a 16' foot wide private alley will be provided on the rear of the lots on south side of East Eager Street for access.

In its consideration of the proposal, staff reviewed the following factors:

Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC): This project was approved by SPRC on January 7, 2015. A final review of the plans will be done prior to the final design of the future development being brought back to the Planning Commission for Development Plan approval. The final lots are aligned such that any future development will allow for frontage along Eager Street and rear access via a sixteen foot wide private alley.

Elevations: The approval is for subdivision for the creation of the lots for disposition purposes only. The elevations will return to Planning Commission as a separate approval under the Planned Unit Development.

Zoning Regulations: The resultant lots of this subdivision are developable based on the Zoning Code and subdivision regulations. Once the builder is selected and the design of the townhomes moves forward on the lots, the project will be re-evaluated to make sure that the design of the future townhomes conforms to both the underlying zoning bulk regulations and the Planned Unit Development.

Subdivision Regulations: The subdivision is for the creation of the lots as new development parcels only. This project will return to Planning Commission for Final Design Approval under the provisions of the Planned Unit Development.

Street Closings

There are several street closings that are in process for Block 1587, which is the block for the south side of East Eager Street. The street closings are for Castle Street and several alleys within Block 1587. This portion of Castle Street and the alleys on Block 1587 are no longer needed for public purpose and are being closed concurrently with the subdivision process. Staff is recommending that the street closing for Castle Street and alleys within Block 1587 be approved as part of the subdivision request for 2000 East Eager Street. The request is consistent with Ordinance #14-280, the Major Amendment to the New East Baltimore Community PUD, which the Planning Commission acted on in December 2013. The approved Development Plan for this major specifically outlines the streets and alleys to be closed.

Minor Amendment

The lots on the north side of Eager Street are currently shown as building sites 32 and 33 on the currently approved PUD and are zoned R-8. The lots on the south side of Eager Street are currently shown as building site 15 on the currently approved PUD and is zoned B-2-3. The proposed use is a permitted use under the PUD. The Minor Amendment is necessary to reflect the new lots on the PUD Development Plan.

Future Actions

This project will require several future actions after the recordation of the new lots. The project will have to return to Planning Commission for Revised Development Plan Approval, as this subdivision approval is for the disposition of the lots only. As previously mentioned, the future development will also require Final Design Approval by Planning Commission per the PUD.

As part of the Revised Development Plan approval, a landscape plan will be included. Per a letter dated April 17th, 2015, Forest City/New East Baltimore Partnership (FC/NEBP), has committed to planting an eight foot wide lateral landscaped buffer south of the east-west property line behind the rear private alley on the south side of East Eager Street. The purpose of the landscaped buffer will be to screen the residential properties from the planned future commercial development on Block 1587 to the south. The developer is also committing to provide either a fence or a wall to better obscure the commercial development from the residential development.

Notifications:

In advance of a hearing on this matter, staff notified the following community groups: Northeast Market Merchants Association, Reclaiming Our Community, Madison East End Neighborhood Improvement Association, Madison East End Improvement Association, Inc., Monument Street Merchants Association, Monument Street Renaissance, Milton-Montford Improvement

Association, Inc., Washington Wolfe Gateway Community Association, McElderry Park Community Association, Inc., C.A.R.E., Save Middle East Action Committee, Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition, Inc. and The Community Housing and Relocation Workgroup.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas J. Stosur". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "T".

Thomas J. Stosur
Director