



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

August 27, 2015

REQUEST: City Council Bill 15-0549/ Release of Right-of-Way – a 20-Foot Wide Right-of-Way through the Former Bed of Tyson Street

For the purpose of authorizing the release and surrender by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore of all its interests in and to the 20-foot wide right-of-way heretofore granted the City of Baltimore through the former bed of Tyson Street, extending from West Franklin Street northerly 380 feet, more or less, to West Centre Street, in the vicinity of North Howard Street and Park Avenue, the location and course of the 20-foot wide right-of-way to be released being shown on a plat numbered RW 20-36387 in the Office of the Department of Transportation; and providing for a special effective date.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Martin French

PETITIONER(S): The Council President, on behalf of the Administration (Department of Transportation)

OWNER: Mayor and City Council of Baltimore

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: The right-of-way is in the former bed of the 500 block of Tyson Street, and was created to provide access to a subterranean sewer line. This former bed of Tyson Street has been built upon at its northern section by the western portion of a six-story structure, the former Hochschild-Kohn Warehouse now known as 520 Park Avenue; the southern section is unimproved and used as part of a surface parking lot.

General Area: This area is primarily mixed-use residential and commercial, but re-use of properties has introduced office use also. Three blocks northwest of this site is the Midtown Campus of the University of Maryland Medical System.

HISTORY

This site is in the northern portion of the Market Center Urban Renewal Area, established in the Market Center Urban Renewal Plan originally approved by Ordinance no. 579 on November 16, 1977. This Plan was last amended by its Amendment no. 15 dated June 7, 2002 and revised July 19, 2002, approved by the Mayor and City Council by Ordinance no. 04-653, dated March 25, 2004. The site is also at the northern end of the Market Center National Register Historic District established in February 2000.

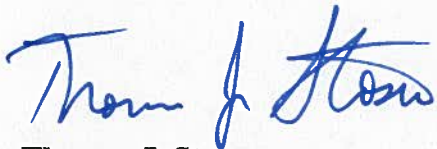
CONFORMITY TO PLANS

The proposed action is consistent with LIVE EARN PLAY LEARN, the Comprehensive Master Plan for Baltimore, LIVE Goal 1, Build Human and Social Capital by Strengthening Neighborhoods, Objective 2: Strategically redevelop Vacant Properties Throughout the City. Although a surface parking lot is not technically a vacant property, in the context of the Market Center Urban Renewal Plan it is not the highest and best use of property such as the former bed of Tyson Street between Franklin and Centre Streets. The proposed action is consistent with urban renewal objectives contained in the Market Center Urban Renewal Plan, such as facilitating a public and private partnership for the purpose of revitalizing the project area as a mixed use neighborhood, and encouraging private investment. No historic resources would be affected by this proposed action.

ANALYSIS

The real estate referred to as “the former bed of Tyson Street” was closed by Ordinance no. 463 approved by the Mayor and City Council on May 9, 1941. For over 70 years the City’s right-of-way through this real estate, a sewer line easement for an 8-inch sewer, has remained. Recently, a residential mixed-use structure known as 520 Park Avenue was created over the northern portion of the 500 block of the former bed of Tyson Street. Development of the southern portion of this same block with a new structure to be known as 500 Park Avenue would require relocation of the sewer line now under the former bed of Tyson Street. The developer of this proposed 153-unit residential mixed-use building is in agreement with the City of Baltimore concerning payment for this sewer line relocation. Once the relocated sewer line is in place, there will no longer be a need for continued existence of the right-of-way through the former bed of Tyson Street, hence this bill authorizing its surrender.

Notification: Staff notified the Mount Vernon – Belvedere Association, Council President Young, and Councilman Costello of this action.



Thomas J. Stosur
Director