

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Development

A variety of housing types should be supported within Greenmount West to ensure housing opportunities for a population diverse in age and income level. Housing types should include single-family rowhouses, apartments and efficiency apartments, and live/work space. Housing should accommodate both existing residents as well as new ones, with an approach that specifically addresses concerns about gentrification. Homeownership should be encouraged across housing types and income levels, with condominiums providing a homeownership alternative to the traditional single-family home. Single-family rowhouses should remain the dominant type of development because this development type supports the goals of the community to build homeownership throughout the neighborhood and retains the neighborhood's existing residential character.

The location of specific housing types should respond to the existing building stock. Artist live/work space should be retained in the loft style buildings on the south of Greenmount West because this use requires open, semi-industrial spaces that are difficult to accommodate in other structure types. Similarly, rowhomes should be reverted to single-family homeownership wherever possible as these structures were specifically designed for this use, while new construction could allow for the opportunity to develop new multi-family housing that is harmonious with existing fabric of historic rowhouses. New construction apartment buildings often provide better quality multi-family dwellings than converted rowhomes. Opportunities for both renovation and new construction encourages a variety of housing types at various price points affordable to all income groups, supporting a diverse community.

City-Owned Property

Vacant housing has served as a barrier to infill development and reinvestment in the community because of the visible and persistent blight throughout the neighborhood. One-quarter of the unoccupied buildings and vacant land within Greenmount West is owned by Baltimore's Department of Housing and Community Development, comprised of approximately equal holdings by the Mayor and City Council and the Housing Authority of Baltimore City.



While the City has sought previously to dispose of this property with mixed success, the coordinated and comprehensive approach envisioned in this Plan uses the City-owned properties as the leverage to achieve both the goals of the City and the Greenmount West community.

Achieving the Goals of the Community

The creation of employment opportunities for the residents of Greenmount West community should be supported through encouraging:

- Development that creates new employment opportunities for area residents at locations indicated as appropriate by the land use recommendations of this plan;
- Opportunities for contractors local to Greenmount West or contractors that employ area residents throughout the disposition process; and
- Disposition of City-owned properties within Greenmount West that provides for a variety of development opportunities, ranging from individuals purchasing and renovating a single-family structure for their own residence to large renovation or infill development bundles geared towards large-scale developers.

Another area of specific concern is the creation of homeownership opportunities for existing residents, many of whom are long time renters. Increasing the number of homeowners in the Greenmount West community without displacing existing renters should be achieved through encouraging:

- The renovation of rowhomes as single-family residences and other developments which provide homeownership opportunities; and
- Strategies for creating homeownership opportunities for existing area residents through the disposition of City-owned property to be informed by the Anti-Displacement Task Force, a coordinated effort of the New Greenmount West Community Association and Baltimore City Housing and Community Development.

Except in the commercial block of North Avenue, the community also aims to achieve an owner-occupied rate that is equal to or greater than the City-wide rate of 55% (US Census 2000).

The community recognizes that, as the neighborhood improves, with an increase of moderately priced and market-rate housing, many low-income renters could be displaced through market-driven redevelopment. Thus, it is important to ensure that housing resources are made available for both owner and tenant legacy residents. The community's preferred strategy is to maintain and upgrade the existing affordable housing units for legacy residents.

Community Benefits Agreements

The New Greenmount West Community Association (NGWCA) may pursue the use of agreements between a developer and the community referred to in other jurisdictions as “Community Benefits Agreements” (CBAs) whereby a developer agrees to improvements beneficial to the neighborhood. While such private agreements are beyond the scope of the Planning Commission's formal approval process, the Commission recognizes that CBAs may be an important tool for implementing the recommendations of the Greenmount West Master Plan, subject to all City development policies, laws, and regulations. The community intends to negotiate with interested developers to establish contributions from development project(s) toward community and public space improvements and activities that enhance both the project site and the community. Further information about CBAs and sample agreement language can be found in Appendix C.

Green Building Requirements

Baltimore's Green Building Requirements apply to new and extensively-modified (>50% gross floor area) commercial, mixed-use buildings, and certain multi-family buildings (more than three stories and five units) over 10,000sf (City Council Ordinance 07-0602). Projects that receive a subsidy will be required to follow the City's Green Building Requirements immediately, while projects not receiving subsidy be required to follow the City's Green Building Requirements if their building permits are submitted after July 1, 2009. Additional information on City Council Ordinance 07-0602 that established the Green Building Requirements can be found at the following resources:

- Baltimore City Council's Legislative Reference
<http://legistar.baltimorecitycouncil.com/attachments/1822.pdf>
- The Baltimore City Department of Planning's Office of Sustainability
<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/government/planning/sustainability/>

Residential units not subject to the Baltimore Green Building Requirements should consider integrating the following green specifications:

- Meet the U.S. EPA Energy Star Home standards to reduce occupant energy cost and help Baltimore meet its energy and greenhouse gas emission reduction goals.
http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=new_homes.hm_index
- Use roofing material which complies with the U.S. EPA Energy Star Reflective Roof Products program on roofs with a slope of less than 2:12 to minimize the heat island effect in Baltimore and reduce occupant cooling loads.
http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=roof_prods.pr_roof_products

- Comply with the U.S. EPA Water Sense specifications for all applicable water fixtures (toilets, aerators, and showerheads) to reduce occupant water use and protect water quality.
<http://www.epa.gov/watersense/index.htm>
- Minimize the creation of construction and demolition waste in the project area by diverting a minimum of 50% of "waste" by weight from landfills through utilizing existing recycling, architectural salvage programs and deconstruction.
- Use the LEED-ND qualifications for smart location and linkage, neighborhood pattern and design, green infrastructure and building, innovation and design process, and regional context.
<http://www.usgbc.org/leed/nd>

Preservation of Historic Resources

Although Greenmount West is not currently designated as a CHAP Local Historic District, the historic buildings within the neighborhood contribute greatly to its character and the integrity of the North Central National Register Historic District. For both environmental and historic preservation reasons, the renovation of historic structures is strongly encouraged. Of particular importance are those historic buildings within the neighborhood identified by CHAP staff as landmark eligible, including the properties known as the Copy Cat Building, the Cork Factory and the historic School 32 building. Historic preservation may be a consideration of Baltimore Department of Housing and Community Development when disposing of City-owned properties.

Preservation Review Process

The Greenmount West neighborhood is part of the North Central National Register Historic District, established in 2002. Any project receiving federal dollars must be reviewed by the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), a process known as the Section 106 review. In addition, the MHT also reviews State or State-funded projects. If the MHT determines that a project will have an adverse impact on historic properties, they will enter into negotiations to mitigate the impact on historic resources. Please refer to the following resource for further information:

http://mht.maryland.gov/projectreview_agencies.html#MHTReview

Any project with financial or technical assistance from Baltimore's Department of Housing and Community Development, Baltimore Development Corporation or any other City Agency should consult with the Division of Historical and Architectural Preservation of the Department of Planning in order to coordinate any historic preservation review for their project.

Disposition Strategy

Isolated City-owned properties within Greenmount West that do not contribute to larger land assemblages and are improved with structures that can be renovated should be made available for redevelopment as soon as possible. Currently, there are a number of developers that are already active within the Greenmount West community that may be interested in acquiring and renovating additional properties in accordance with the goals of this Plan.

Concentrations of City-owned properties within Greenmount West that do not contribute to larger land assemblages and are improved with structures should be made available in renovation bundles. This approach allows developers to make the substantial change required to market renovated properties in an area that has a significant number of vacant buildings. It also provides developers with the assurance that they will be able to acquire all of the City-owned properties in an area. Consideration should be given to proposals that provide affordable home-ownership opportunities.



Adjacent vacant City-owned lots should be bundled together to facilitate the assembly of infill development lots. If there are outstanding lots that are under private ownership, City acquisition should be made a priority such that these development parcels can be assembled and made available to interested developers. It has been the desire of the community for the renovation of existing vacant buildings to occur before infill development on vacant lots. This allows the community to preserve the passive open space afforded by these vacant lots as long as possible. Prioritization of the renovation of vacant buildings also addresses the immediate negative impacts of unoccupied rowhouses on the marketability and structural integrity of the adjacent buildings as soon as possible. To the extent possible, however, infill development should be pursued on a short-term basis for sites where additional acquisition is not required.

Extremely large infill development sites, infill development sites that present specific design issues or those in prominent locations may require the additional control provided by the Request for Proposals disposition process. While the specific recommendations for these large infill development sites are detailed later in this chapter, the recommendations predominately consist of multi-family housing where possible and ground level retail where appropriate. The Request for Proposal process should respond to the goals of the community as articulated in this Plan, as well as provide additional opportunity for community input throughout the selection of a proposal.

Anchoring the corners of blighted blocks within Greenmount West through the redevelopment of these strategically located properties may contribute to creating private market demand in Greenmount West. The redevelopment of corner properties may be prioritized as part of a disposition strategy for City-owned properties. Coordinating bundles at a particular intersection such that more than one corner is secured may contribute to a solid core redevelopment approach.

Implementation

Due to evolving market conditions, a specific property-by-property disposition strategy has not been included in this Plan. Rather, a general approach to property disposition has been outlined in the Disposition Strategy narrative and further information has been included for sites of particular importance in the Site-Specific Disposition Recommendations section below.

Furthermore, Baltimore's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will convene the Greenmount West Disposition Advisory Committee with community stakeholders such as the New Greenmount West Community Association, the Greenmount West Community Development Corporation, the Central Baltimore Partnership, Jubilee Baltimore, and the Department of Planning as determined by the Housing Commissioner. Following the general Disposition Strategy laid forth in this Plan, the Housing Commissioner, after consultation with the Committee, will work to the implement the Goals of the Community for redevelopment. Items on which the Committee will consult to the Housing Commissioner include but are not limited to:

- Preliminary advisory recommendations compiled by DHCD on property disposition,
- Final advisory disposition recommendations to Housing Commissioner, and
- Advisory recommendations for the selection of development team for major disposition parcels through Request for Proposal processes or other large disposition bundles (excluding properties disposed of through the SCOPE program).

The advisory recommendation of the Committee will be taken into consideration before any final disposition decisions are made by the Housing Commissioner within the Plan area.

Site-Specific Disposition Recommendations

Specific disposition recommendations that require additional site-specific explanation are provided below. All recommendations reference the corresponding land use and zoning recommendations, but for additional information please see those specific sections of the recommendations chapter, as well as Appendix D. The site plans included in the site-specific recommendations are intended to be for illustrative purposes only.

Historic School Building on the School 32 Site

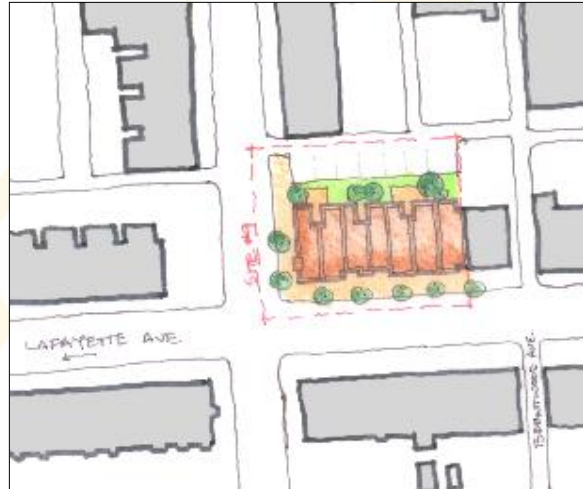
The historic school building located on the same lot as the Baltimore City Montessori Public Charter School is currently vacant. Located in the North Central National Register Historic District, the historic school building has been identified by the Baltimore City Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation staff as eligible for local landmark status. Because of the structure's historical and architectural significance as a rare example of intact Italianate institutional architecture, the preservation of the historic school building should be an integral part of any proposed redevelopment. Restoration of this building may be eligible for Federal, State and/or Local Historic Tax Credit programs (see Appendix A).



The institutional nature of the historic school building, as well as the site's central location within the Greenmount West neighborhood, make it ideal for a community meeting space or a neighborhood center. Additional uses that would be complimentary to the building's location and form include office space or use in conjunction with the adjacent Baltimore City Montessori Public Charter School. Office uses could include non-profits that serve the community or for-profit businesses that provide employment opportunities for area residents. There may be the potential for meeting space to be shared with an office or school and the local community association.

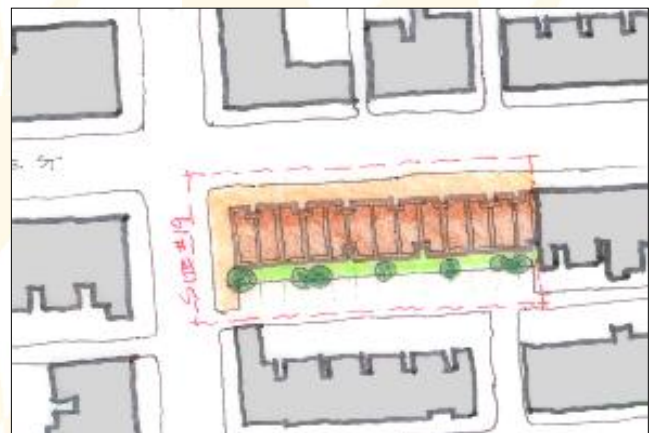
Northeast Corner of Barclay and Lafayette

The northeast corner of the intersection of Barclay and Lafayette, although currently privately owned, provides an opportunity for infill development. This site is of particular concern to the surrounding community because of a previous proposal to develop the site as a community-based correctional facility. Preliminary architectural study suggests that one suitable use for the site would be seven infill rowhomes, approximately 17 feet wide with up to 13 off-street parking spaces at the rear of the properties. This development scheme could feature single-family three-story houses or two dwelling unit structures with a two-story owners' suite on the first and second floors and a rental unit on the third floor. This type of development could meet the community's goals of providing homeownership and affordable housing opportunities.



Southeast Corner of Barclay and Lanvale

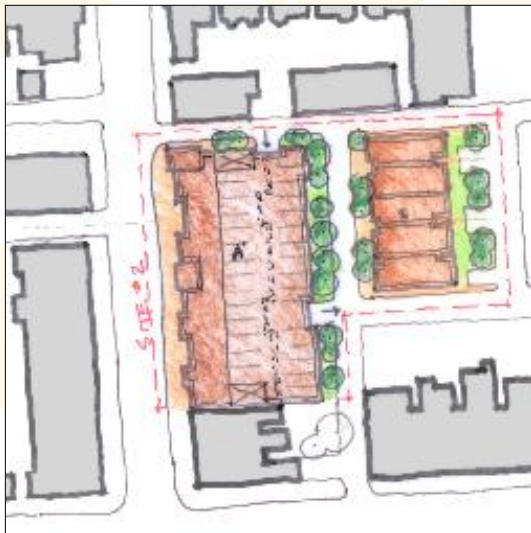
The site at the southeast corner of the intersection of Barclay and Lanvale could provide a similar opportunity for infill rowhomes. The ownership of this site is both public and private and includes a larger parcel which was previously park land. The former park land is poorly situated mid-block for continued open space usage and does not possess any programmed open space or natural features of distinction. The assemblage of the site could allow for 13 rowhomes at 17 feet wide with up to 14 off-street parking spaces at the rear of the lot. Similar to the flexibility of the development scheme shown for the northeast corner of Barclay and Lanvale, this development scheme could feature single-family three-story houses or two dwelling unit structures with a two-story owners' suite on the first and second floors and a rental unit on the third floor. This type of development could meet the community's goals of providing homeownership and affordable housing opportunities.



East Side of the 1800 Block of Calvert

In order to achieve the goal of providing affordable housing for existing Greenmount West residents, smaller housing types such as apartments should be considered when possible for infill development proposals. In contrast to the historic structures that have been converted for multi-family use, new infill development that is designed to accommodate apartments may feature amenities such as elevator access and wheelchair accessibility that historic structures may not accommodate. Condominiums could provide affordable homeownership opportunities to accommodate area residents that either prefer the convenience of the smaller housing option or could not afford one of the larger rowhomes in the area.

One site that can achieve these uses is the vacant lot on the east side of the 1800 block of Calvert Street. The first development scheme (on the left) shows 6,800sf of office space fronting on Calvert Street with 28 off-street parking spaces provided in the back. The upper four stories accommodate approximately 35 dwelling units. The rear garage parcel is shown as five rowhomes, each with an off-street parking space provided at the alley. Although this development scheme envisions the development of the lots fronting Calvert Street occurring in conjunction with the rear garage lots, these developments could be pursued separately.



The second development scheme (on the right) shows the lot fronting Calvert Street developed as a series of smaller three to four story apartment buildings featuring landscaped courtyards. Most of the 24 off-street parking spaces would be provided as surface parking on the rear garage lot. This development scheme would also yield approximately 35 dwelling units.

1700 Block of Greenmount Avenue

The 1700 Block of Greenmount Avenue provides the largest opportunity within Greenmount West for infill development, but also poses a complex development challenge. The site consists of many vacant lots, most of which are City-owned, that would need to be consolidated in order to permit development. While the development scheme presented in this plan does require some acquisition, more aggressive schemes could include redevelopment of the entire square block given the concentration of vacant and abandoned properties.

One of the challenges presented by the site is identifying the appropriate mix of land uses to successfully address the commercial corridor of Greenmount Avenue on the east while transitioning to match the residential character and scale found on Barclay Street. This development scheme achieves this through the development of ground level retail or office space along Greenmount (approximately 6,600sf in Building C and 5,200sf in Building D). Building C could be developed with 17 dwelling units on three upper floors for a total of four stories in height. Building D could be developed with 13-17 dwelling units on three to four upper floors for a total of four to five stories in height. Forty off-street parking spaces could be accommodated in a surface parking lot tucked behind the buildings fronting on Greenmount Avenue.



The proposed height of the buildings along Greenmount Avenue, while taller than what is typical of the surrounding neighborhood, responds to the commercial nature of the street and would capitalize on views over the historic Green Mount Cemetery to the east. These dwelling units could provide mixed-income rental or homeownership opportunities while offering a unit type that may be more attractive to singles, couples and the elderly than the rowhouses found elsewhere in the neighborhood.

On the Barclay Street frontage there is the opportunity for the development of programmed open space that is centrally located within the Greenmount West community. Seven rowhomes would front onto the programmed open space with an existing alley behind this open space providing street frontage for the houses and accommodating five on-street parallel parking spaces. Off-street parking spaces for residents could be provided at the rear of the property either in a garage at the rear of the house or on a parking pad.

One potential management option for the proposed open space would be through a homeowners' association of the rowhomes which benefit from their location directly on this new open space, although the proposed open space is intended to be publicly accessible and serve as an amenity to the entire neighborhood. Another option for managing this new open space could be community managed open space through the neighborhood association if this solution proves effective in other proposed community managed open spaces.



1500 Block Greenmount Avenue

The development in progress at 1500 Greenmount will create 69 affordable housing units for artists and is an example of development in keeping with the goals of this Plan. While this is a productive first step towards ensuring a long-term artist community within the neighborhood, further steps need to be taken to ensure that artist live/work space continues to be available in Greenmount West, supporting the Station North Arts and Entertainment District that includes both the Greenmount West and Charles North neighborhoods.

4.2 Parks, Open Space and Recreation

Greenmount West deserves first rate parks and community open spaces. Much of the existing open space in Greenmount West is poorly situated, resulting in disuse and attracting crime.

The amount of vacant land – both public and private, dedicated open space and future development sites – provides Greenmount West with flexibility in planning for open space as an integral part of the neighborhood. This allows for both new development and the opportunity to take a more deliberate approach in locating future permanent open space. Rather than locating open space where the City cleared blighted properties in the past, open space should be located based on sound community planning principles: parks should be easily accessible to the community, fronted by active buildings, and away from heavy vehicular traffic without being isolated.

Incorporating open space as an integral part of this Plan is important not only for the Greenmount West community but also for adjacent communities that also currently lack open space. Unfortunately, the planning effort for the adjacent Charles North community, the Charles North Vision Plan, does not anticipate the creation of major open space because of the high density of the proposed transit oriented development around Penn Station. Charles North and other communities surrounding Greenmount West would also benefit from improvements to open space amenities in Greenmount West.

Community planning principals that should guide any future development of open space include:

- Plan for a variety of open spaces in both size and uses;
- No additional demolition for open space is necessary because there is an abundant amount of existing vacant land;
- Parking considerations need to be made in all open space locations and developments;
- Private developers will be encouraged to provide open space through the disposition process; and
- A playground and a formal dog park are both existing needs in the neighborhood.

Open Space Strategies

In the short term, augmenting the existing lighting of open spaces and removing any vegetation or fencing that impedes visibility is a strategy to make these spaces safer and more hospitable.

In the long term, reducing the overall amount of vacant land in Greenmount West through infill development will allow the community to focus their efforts to achieve higher quality open spaces that function as amenities. This would allow the remainder of the vacant land to be developed for mixed-use residential uses that would be integrated with and positively impact the surrounding community. Land swaps should be explored where necessary such that open space is designed in optimal locations, such as a series of larger spaces versus small scattered pocket parks, with infill construction knitting back together the urban fabric.

Open space should be fronted by active buildings to foster casual use as individuals come and go. Open space should be programmed to support activities for the range of Greenmount West residents while including adequate visibility and lighting to ensure safety.

Potential tools for achieving these short and long term open space strategies include the installation of way finding signs and temporary, rotating, or permanent artwork and engaging both youth and artist participation.

Community Managed Open Space

Community managed open spaces could include undevelopable parcels and other open spaces that the community wishes to retain as permanent open space. Parcels that could be candidates for community managed open spaces include Hunter's Lot and the McAllister Street open space because these parcels are located in the interior of a square block and require strong community investment to succeed without street frontage.



Stewardship is crucial for community managed open spaces to be established and maintained. A community organization such as the New Greenmount West Community Association should identify a steward for these spaces as well as assist the steward(s) through the organization of events to maintain community managed open space. A steward may include but is not limited to a

homeowners' or community association or another collective of nearby residents, a school, an area community service provider or a similar administrative entity. Additional resources, such as access to tool banks, seminars, and news letter, can be accessed through the Parks & People Foundation Community Greening Resource Network.

Once a community managed open space is established, both an ownership entity and a management plan needs to be developed in order acquire and hold the property, as well as to ensure proper maintenance. The Baltimore Green Space land trust is being developed to serve as an ownership entity for permanent community managed open space, as well as providing liability coverage for the property. If community managed open space can be successfully established at either the McAllister Street open space or Hunter's Lot, acquisition through Baltimore Green Space should be explored as a way to ensure that residents' investments in these spaces are protected and will provide liability protection for the neighborhood association through a group insurance policy.

Creating New Programmed Open Space

There is the potential through the development of the 1700 Block of Greenmount Avenue site to create a new, centrally-located programmed open space within the Greenmount West community. This is an important component of the most significant proposed infill development within this Plan. While infill development promises to bring new mixed-income housing and homeownership opportunities for area residents, it comes at the cost of existing passive open space. Although Greenmount West currently has open space in abundance, this open space is generally poorly maintained and does not feature programmed open space amenities such as walkways, out door furnishings, or play facilities for children. A new open space with these desired amenities is important both to replace some of the open space which will eventually be lost to infill development and to make Greenmount West an attractive place to live for current and future residents.

The proposed location of this new open space is insulated from the heavy vehicular traffic experienced on the commercial corridors of Calvert Street and North and Greenmount Avenues and would benefit from the investment and activity of adjacent homeowners whose rowhomes front the open space. While one potential management option for the proposed open space would be as community managed open space through the neighborhood association, if this solution proves effective in other areas within the community, a homeowners' association of the rowhomes that benefit from their location directly on this new open space could be another management option. It is important that if the space is maintained through a homeowners' association that it remains publicly

accessible, serving as an amenity to the entire neighborhood. Additionally, new public open space can also effectively be created by the community obtaining agreements for shared access to existing or future open or recreational spaces as part of facilities such as the Baltimore City Montessori Public Charter School or new residential development within the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Gateways

In addition to public and community-managed open space, the community recommends creating neighborhood gateways at four strategic neighborhood entry points to create neighborhood awareness for passerby's and to support community awareness and civic support for existing residents. The proposed locations for these neighborhood gateways are:

- Calvert and Federal St. Park,
- Northwest corner of Oliver Street and Greenmount Avenue intersection,
- Southwest Corner of North Avenue and Greenmount Avenue intersection, and
- Southeast corner of North Avenue and Calvert Street intersection (due to the many physical limitations here, the neighborhood gateway may be limited to signage on the existing building or street lamp).

Streetscaping & Traffic Calming

To enliven the neighborhood and create a more pedestrian friendly environment the community recommends streetscaping for all streets in Greenmount West. This could include tree planting, planters, benches, etc.. Traffic calming measures are also key elements when creating more livable streets and may include intersection art, "bump-outs" at intersections, four-way stops at all intersections throughout the neighborhood and the conversion of one-way streets into two-way traffic patterns to help reduce traffic speeds. Streetscaping and traffic calming devices should be addressed in the community's request for a transportation study to Baltimore's Department of Transportation.

Community Recommendations for Existing Open Space

The community's open space planning process led to the following open space recommendations. Detailed recommendations for each open space are guidelines that represent the community's vision for both that individual site and an overall system of open space within Greenmount West.

Calvert & Federal Park

It is community's opinion that the Calvert & Federal Park, the only Department of Recreation and Parks operated open space in Greenmount West, is underutilized due to its insulated feel and physical configuration. The park is primarily used by a small number of residents walking their dog so the community intends to pursue further study of the conversion of this park into a formal dog park while retaining the existing trees. Converting this park into a dog park will also improve community visibility. Also, community art should be incorporated into the future park design. The community is committed to supporting the City by exploring outside funding opportunities for the park's conversion to a dog park and through the formation of a "Friends of Calvert & Federal Park" stewardship group.

McAllister Street Open Space

The McAllister Street Open Space is currently managed by a group of adjacent residents. The community recommends that this open space continue to be maintained as a community-managed space and is currently in the process of formalizing it with the non-profit organization, Parks and People Foundation. Additional site specific recommendations include:

- The installation of a pedestrian alley connection from Lafayette Street to the open space, connecting back out to Barclay Street through the alley, which will join the McAllister Street open space with the two vacant lots at 332 and 334 E Lafayette Street (at the northwest corner of the Barclay/Lafayette intersection); and
- The retention of the existing uses, including the swing set and open space, as the primary uses for this space.

332 & 334 E Lafayette Street and Barclay Street Intersection

The community intends to pursue the conversion of two vacant City-owned lots at 332 and 334 E Lafayette Street into a fenced playground designed for toddler and early elementary aged children. One option for implementation would be for the community to establish a formal Adopt-A-Lot agreement with the City for these properties. The pedestrian alley connection leading from the McAllister Lot, described above, will then connect to the proposed playground, which begins to create an open space network. The open space network is then recommended to continue through the Lafayette and Barclay Street intersection.

Barclay and Lafayette Open Space (Barclay Commons)

Currently, a group of Greenmount West residents operate and maintain Brentwood Commons, fronting on Barclay Street at the northeast corner of Barclay and Lafayette, as community open space. The managing stewards intend to pursue a formal right-of-entry agreement with the private owners since the open space contributes to an overall open space network throughout the neighborhood. The community recognizes that this site is a potential developable site and consultation between an interested developer, NGWCA, and the community stewards is encouraged if these lots are considered for development.

Inner 1800 Barclay Street Open Space

Currently, a group of Greenmount West residents operate and maintain a community garden in the interior of the 1800 block of Barclay Street at the northwest corner of Bowen Alley and Brentwood Avenue. The community recommends that the Inner 1800 Barclay Street community garden be retained and the managing stewards intend to pursue a formal right-of entry agreement with the private owners. The community recognizes that this site is a potential developable site and consultation between an interested developer, NGWCA, and the community stewards is encouraged if these lots are considered for development.

Hunter's Lot

Hunter's Lot currently presents a maintenance issues due to the fact it is privately-owned. However, the open space is currently managed by a group of adjacent residents. The community recommends establishing a process to acquire the lot as a permanent community managed open space. The community also recommends that the existing use as passive open space with gazebo and solar energy powered lighting be maintained. The community does not wish to see this space be made openly available to outside users beyond the immediate neighbors to discourage any negative uses or activities in this relatively isolated open space.

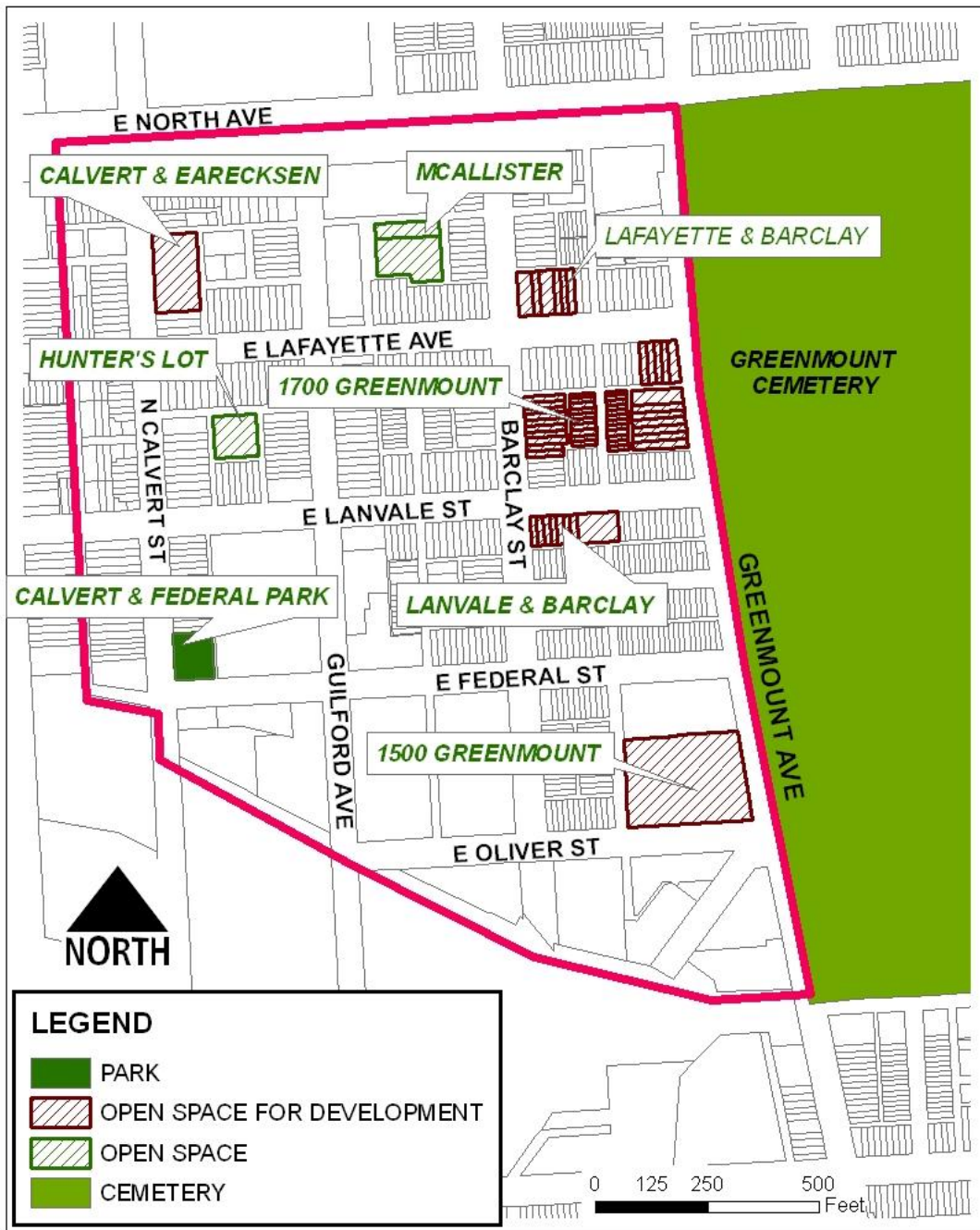
1700 Greenmount Open Space

Currently, there is usage of the large City-owned lot that fronts the 1700 block of Greenmount Avenue as community managed open space, including improvements such as landscaping, picnic tables, and a tent to protect users form the elements. While it is eventually anticipated that this site would be developed, this interim usage as community managed open space should be formalized through an Adopt-A-Lot agreement between the City and the users. This will ensure that the users have predictability regarding the timing of redevelopment.

Open Space Recommendations Map

The following Open Space Map identifies the existing park space and open spaces while designating which open spaces should be maintained and which are identified for future development. The map does not identify specific open space uses or streetscaping and traffic calming elements.

Map 6: Open Space Recommendations



4.3 Transportation

The high volume of vehicular and MTA bus traffic on North Avenue and Greenmount Avenue impedes pedestrian traffic. Many of the existing pedestrian crossings on these major corridors at the northern and eastern boundaries of the Greenmount West community are wide and poorly marked, lacking painted crosswalks or pedestrian crossing signals. This results in an unfriendly environment for pedestrians that does not encourage community based retail, an asset that the Greenmount West community would like to support. Additionally, it makes entering the neighborhood from the transit resources located on these thoroughfares dangerous, detracting from the overall transit experience and discouraging ridership.



Solutions to facilitate pedestrian crossing along North Avenue include improved marking of pedestrian crosswalks and the installation of pedestrian crossing signals and wheelchair accessible curbs at intersections where these features are currently lacking. The width of Greenmount Avenue is excessive given the modest amount of traffic, encouraging unsafe speeds. Traffic calming measures that should be explored include narrowing the road through the installation of “bump-outs” at intersections to reduce the pedestrian crossing road width and the signalization of additional intersections. Reducing traffic speed on Greenmount may also aid in the development of office and retail uses that would respond to the street scale and character.

Conversion to two-way traffic should be studied for roads that are presently one-way where the excess right-of-way exists, improving connectivity within the neighborhood and activating the easternmost blocks of these streets that abut the Green Mount Cemetery frontage of Greenmount Avenue. Streets for which this may be studied at the initiation of the community include Lanvale, Lafayette and Oliver Street. Lanvale and Lafayette currently have two lanes of traffic with parallel parking on both sides of the street, so the right-of-way should accommodate one lane of traffic in each direction with parallel parking on both sides of the street. The easternmost portion of Oliver is currently one-way with angled parking on one side, such that the conversion to two-way traffic would likely result in the loss of some on-street parking.

Greenmount West Master Plan

Currently, on-street parking is utilized by MARC commuters and the staff and visitors of the Department of Social Services, both concentrated in the southwestern portion of the neighborhood, which makes it difficult for residents along Calvert Street to park during the day. To address this issue, a Residential Permit Parking district should be pursued by the New Greenmount West Community Association in conjunction with the Parking Authority. Once a petition by community residents is completed, the Parking Authority will conduct a parking survey to determine the residential blocks eligible for inclusion in the district. For a small fee, residents within the Residential Permit Parking district can be issued one permanent permit per car registered to the resident and up to two guest passes per address, with parking for non-permit holders otherwise limited to two hours during the specified times. As residential development occurs on the east side of the neighborhood with potential additional office and retail space along Greenmount Avenue, it may be desirable to extend a Residential Permit Parking district east.

As mentioned in the Community Vision Statement, Greenmount West aims to balance the mobility, safety, and other needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic. Pedestrian walkways, bicycle lanes and racks, and other amenities shall be incorporated, where feasible, to enhance the possibility and desirability of walking and bicycling throughout the neighborhood. It is also recommended that interesting, landscaped streetscaping provide pedestrians with a safer and more comfortable walking environment, including improvements to bus stops and the installation of lighting, and public art.



4.4 Employment

There are multiple recommendations made by this Plan that are intended to address the high unemployment rate currently experienced by residents in Greenmount West.

Employment Opportunities through Land Disposition Recommendations

The recommended disposition strategy for City-owned properties is intended to provide opportunities for both small and large development companies and contractors to participate in the redevelopment of Greenmount West, as well as for these businesses to employ area residents through encouraging:

- Development to include a component that creates new employment opportunities for area residents those locations indicated as appropriate by the land use recommendations of this Plan;
- Opportunities for contractors local to Greenmount West or contractors that employ area residents throughout the disposition process; and
- Disposition of City-owned properties within Greenmount West through allowing for a variety of development opportunities, ranging from individuals purchasing and renovating a single-family structure for their own residence to large renovation or infill development bundles geared towards large-scale developers.

A tool to formalize the pursuit of these employment goals may be through “Community Benefits Agreements,” (CBAs). The New Greenmount West Community Association may pursue the use of agreements between a developer and the community, referred to in other jurisdictions as CBAs, whereby a developer agrees to improvements beneficial to the neighborhood. While such private agreements are beyond the scope of the Planning Commission’s formal approval process, the Commission recognizes that CBAs may be an important tool for implementing the recommendations of the Greenmount West Master Plan, subject to all City development policies, laws, and regulations. Further information about CBAs is found in Appendix C.

Employment Readiness Programs

The existing high rates of unemployment within Greenmount West, coupled with the low educational attainment rates, point to the important role that employment readiness programs could play in addressing these issues. Job readiness programs should be supported wherever possible through the City’s land disposition process as well as through other mechanisms.

Existing Employment Readiness and related programs active in the Greenmount West area include:

- Civic Works,
- BMOG/Greenmount Deconstruction Pilot,
- The Greenmount Training Program, and
- The Baltimore Traders Guild.

Employment Opportunities through Land Use Recommendations

Another component of addressing unemployment in Greenmount West is through ensuring that the land use recommendations of this Plan provide for uses that create long-term employment opportunities. Proposed land uses that could generate employment opportunities for area residents include community commercial, office and industrial mixed-use land uses. These land uses permit a range of opportunities to accommodate the diverse population of Greenmount West who seek employment within their community. While the industrial land use no longer serves as the employment backbone of the Greenmount West community and is therefore not proposed to be continued in the land use recommendations of this Plan, many of these light industrial uses, such as light manufacturing, accessory commercial uses and artisan-goods production, will continue to be accommodated within the proposed industrial mixed-use land use or as non-conforming uses.

4.5 Land Use

Currently, the Department of Planning is rewriting the Zoning Code through a process called TransForm Baltimore. With the zoning districts in flux, the land use recommendations of this Plan will be increasingly important in informing the Comprehensive Rezoning of Greenmount West in the final stage of the implementation of TransForm Baltimore.

Residential

Residential will continue to be the core land use of the mixed-use neighborhood of Greenmount West. Home occupations are also a permitted accessory use within all residential zoning districts under both the existing Zoning Code and the draft new Zoning Code through TransForm Baltimore. Isolated areas of medium intensity commercial uses that front on predominately residential blocks or streets are proposed for conversion to a residential land use over time, with the existing uses permitted to remain under non-conforming status.

Commercial

Community commercial uses should be concentrated in nodes at the intersections of the major thoroughfares of North Avenue, Greenmount Avenue and Calvert Street. The current proliferation of unmarketable small floor-plate commercial spaces has resulted in marginal commercial users and vacant storefronts. Adjacent commercial spaces on North Avenue could be consolidated to provide larger, more marketable commercial spaces, while some non-complying structures with vacant storefronts within the residential core of the neighborhood may need to be altered to accommodate residential uses on the first floor. Some non-complying structures should be retained to allow for additional neighborhood commercial uses if supported by the increase in neighborhood population anticipated from infill development.

Non-residential uses on the first-floor of structures on Greenmount Avenue would respond to the scale of this corridor, including office, artist live/work or community commercial uses, with the potential for residences on upper floors.

One existing medium intensity commercial use fronting on Calvert Street is proposed to be converted to a low intensity commercial use that would be more appropriate adjacent to residential areas, while another is proposed to be converted to industrial mixed-use because of its historic industrial architecture.

Industrial

Currently, the industrial land use is relatively limited within Greenmount West. It is proposed that rather than maintaining an industrial land use, that moving forward an artist live/work land use would be more appropriate for the historic factory buildings located within this residential mixed-use neighborhood. This new land use would be modeled after the existing Greenmount West Arts and Entertainment District PUD and would permit light industrial, residential, office and select commercial uses. Many of the light industrial uses that are currently permitted would continue to be accommodated by the mixed-use industrial land use proposed for the historic factory buildings. Existing industrial uses that are not accommodated by the industrial mixed-use land use could be continued as non-conforming uses and would only be disallowed once the use had been legally abandoned.

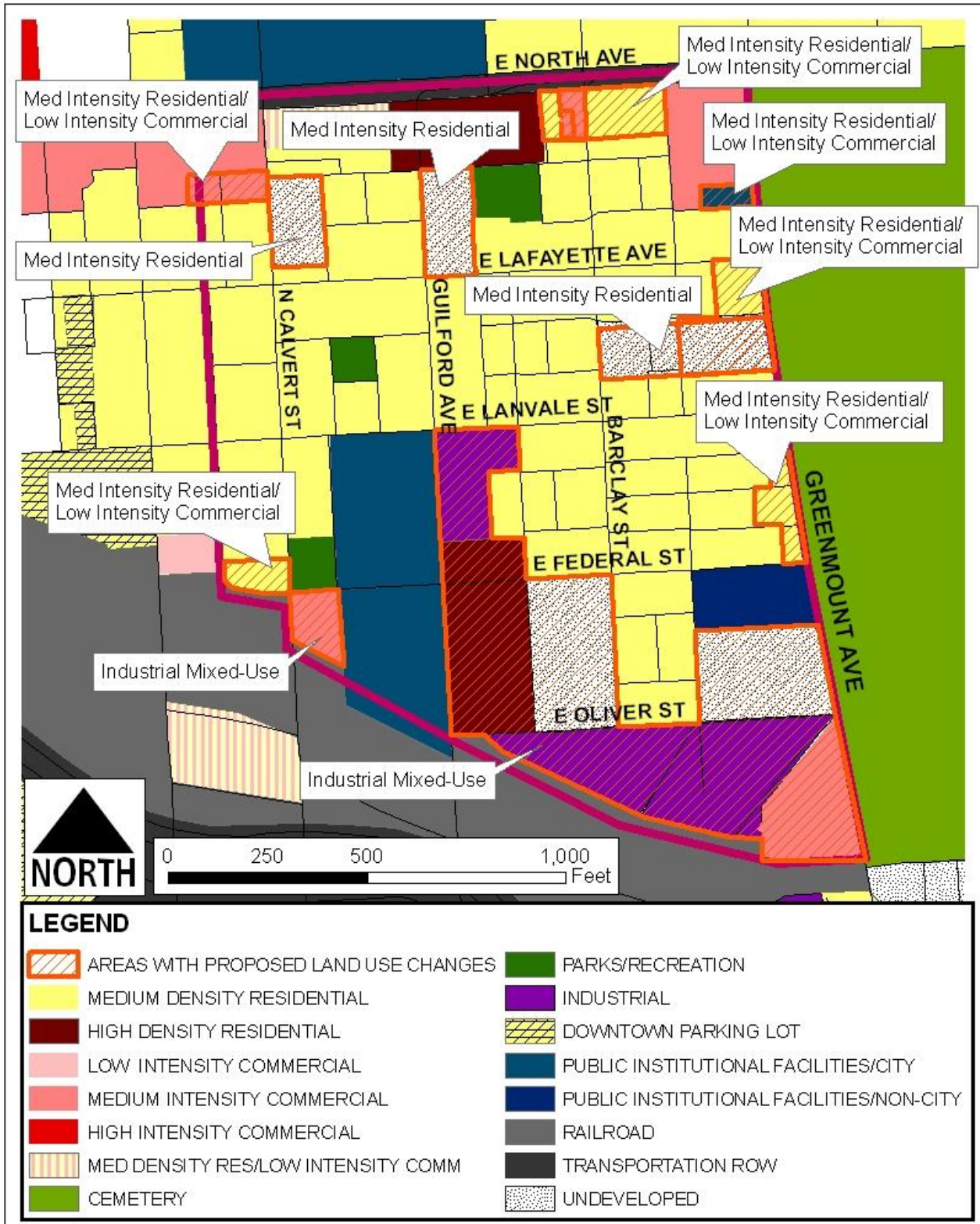
Industrial Mixed-Use

The unique mix of land uses which can be accommodated by the historic industrial structures found within Greenmount West are proposed to be accommodated by a new industrial mixed-use land use. This land use would provide the flexibility to permit light industrial, accessory commercial, offices and/or residential land uses similar to those uses specified in the Greenmount West Arts and Entertainment District PUD. The intention is to continue the potential for light industrial uses without precluding mixed-use development opportunities.

Office

Offices along corridors within Greenmount West that experience higher levels of traffic, such as Calvert Street, North Avenue, and Greenmount Avenue, are an appropriate alternative to residential land uses without compromising the existing rowhouse fabric of the neighborhood. The continuation and expansion of the office/residential land use on Calvert Street is an appropriate way to permit live/work residences for professionals or small personal offices for area residents. Additional office space with ancillary retail could be accommodated along the North Avenue corridor, Greenmount Avenue, or within the industrial mixed use areas. Space for larger office users could be accommodated as a component of infill development along Greenmount Avenue.

Map 7: Land Use Recommendations



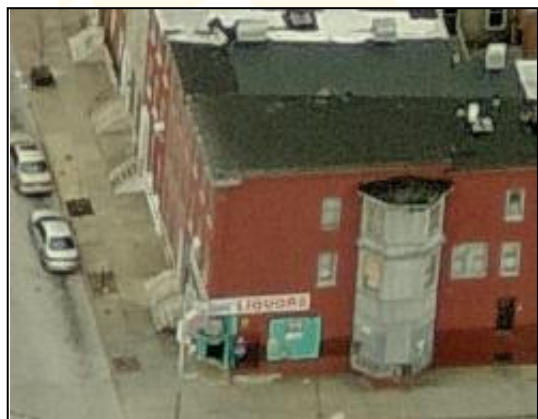
4.5 Zoning

With the TransForm Baltimore process to rewrite the Zoning Code underway, it is problematic in some instances to identify specific zoning district recommendations since the zoning districts are expected to change during this process. Some of the land use recommendations cannot be achieved within the existing Zoning Code (such as industrial mixed-use land use) and therefore will have to wait until the Comprehensive Rezoning component of TransForm Baltimore is complete. The zoning recommendations below, therefore, are meant to be short term recommendations, with the land use recommendations to be fully implemented during the Comprehensive Rezoning process.

Additional information pertaining to the proposed zoning changes, including non-complying structures and non-conforming uses, is provided below.

Non-Conforming Structures

Greenmount West has a number of corner buildings that have historic store fronts and other miscellaneous commercial buildings in otherwise residential areas. The community has expressed their desire to permit these properties to operate as small, community-based businesses while retaining the residential character of these blocks. Although business zoning for these areas would also permit these store fronts to remain in use, this zoning classification would be unable to differentiate between buildings that were designed to accommodate certain business uses and buildings that are strictly residential in character. In these cases where residential zoning is more appropriate given the overall character of the block or street, there exists provisions within the Zoning Code for non-complying commercial structures located within residential zoning districts to continued limited commercial uses (§13-401). This provision permits the establishment of any use permitted in the B-1 zoning district (the least intense business uses) with Zoning Board approval for building that were lawfully erected to accommodate a use which is no longer permitted under the existing zoning (§13-405).



Some uses that could be established in residentially zoned non-complying structures with commercial store fronts through the approval of the Zoning Board under the current Zoning Code include: Art Galleries, Bakeries, Day Care Facilities, Delicatessens, Drug Stores and Pharmacies, Florist Shops, Hardware Stores, Gift and Card Shops, Grocery Stores, Launderettes, Newsstands, Record, Tape, CD or Sheet Music Stores.

Non-Conforming Uses

Non-conforming uses are uses which were legally established but are no longer permitted under their current zoning. As a result of the proposed rezoning, some uses within the Greenmount West community may be classified as a non-conforming use. Generally, non-conforming uses are permitted to continue as long as they have not been discontinued. Under the current Zoning Code, once a non-conforming use has been discontinued for a period of 12-18 months, depending on the class of non-conforming use, it may not be reestablished and only uses permitted under the existing zoning can be established. Under the current Zoning Code, any alteration or expansion of a non-conforming use requires Zoning Board approval and is subject to certain limitations. Regulations pertaining to a particular non-conforming use depend on the existing zoning and the class of the non-conforming use; additional information is available in "Title 13: Non-Conformance" of the current Zoning Code.

Map 8: Zoning Recommendations

