

**GWCA Development Committee  
Monthly Meeting Minutes  
11/19/18**

**Location:** Open Works, 1400 Greenmount Ave.

**ATTENDEES**

**Committee Members:** Adam Kutcher (co-chair), Brian Levy (co-chair), Kim Schulke, Lauren Kelly-Washington, Lou Linden, Lowell Larsson, Monika Graves, Patricia Denver Yactayo

**Committee Partners:** Peter Duvall (Strong City),

**Community Members:** Allison Schechter (Montessori Charter School), Andre Stone, Aamir Yousufzai, Jamie DeSalu, Mason Lareuse, Sarai King, Timothy Ford

**Presenters:** Ted Rouse & Jake Wittenberg (Station Arts Homes LLC), Stefan Popescu (Popescu Investments), Al Barry (AB Associates), Yonah Zahler (Zahlco).

**AGENDA**

**Letter of Support Request - Subdivision of 229 E. Lafayette Street** (Former Sherman's Liquors)  
Review of plans for subdivision to create apartments & single-family home (Ted Rouse, Station Arts Homes LLC)

**Background:** Ted Rouse provided brief background about his development history with Greenmount West and distributed plans for the buildings at Lafayette and Guilford. The preliminary plans call for the Lafayette address to contain a commercial venture on the basement & first floor (is discussing option for a wellness center with his friend Jessica Straus) and 3 market rate residential rental units on the 2nd and 3rd floors. The Guilford address will be separated from the parcel and established as a single-family house for resale. These plans require subdivision and various variances. Station Arts Homes, LLC is requesting the GWCA to write a letter to the City in support of the variances to support this redevelopment.

**Discussion**

- Committee noted that the commercial space in the former Sherman's Liquors is of key importance to the community; the hope had been to provide a benefit to the community (ex: bodega with fresh food). Various other options were identified and prioritized. The proposed use doesn't meet any of those.
  - Ted Rouse: Willing to present at a full general meeting. Had been advised that because of limited traffic, the site is not suited for retail (grocery); a café / restaurant is a possible option.
- Committee noted that one of the variances is for an efficiency unit that is less than the minimum dwelling size required by code.
  - Al Barry: The site presents challenges that require variances. Subdivision would address the non-conformity that isn't part of the City's New Zoning Code (per unit size of 700 sf.)
  - Ted Rouse: Is confident that the smaller unit will rent - market is robust for smaller size units; wanted to provide housing at different price points
  - Community noted that there are small units (~400+ sq. ft) that rent quickly
  - Committee noted that code requirements would only allow 2 units, rather than 3, if they kept to the square footage requirements; Committee is concerned about parking and precedent.
- Committee asked about parking plan, given that neither the house nor the mixed use building have any off-street parking.
  - TR: Will speak with Boundary Sq. Apts to discuss availability of parking spaces.

- Developer noted that the next zoning committee meeting is on 11 December and they would like to include this on the agenda

**Action items:**

- Developer to provide GMW Development Committee with parking solution
- GMW Development Committee to create letter of support or non-support in time for 11 Dec hearing

**Industrial Roll Building (1639 Guilford Ave) redevelopment update.** Progress and timeline on brewery, restaurant/cafe (Stefan Popescu, Popescu Investments)

**Background:** Stefan Popescu & financial advisor share first draft of plans for the site. They plan to make minimal changes to the building—taking advantage of the existing 2-story floor plan and investing in lighting and windows. Plans include taking advantage of Opportunity Zone for job creation, CHAP historic credits. The brewery will include a café/restaurant with combined seating on 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> floors for approximately 100. They plan to open early for breakfast and intend to control hours of deliveries for least negative impact on community—especially the Montessori School across the street. Employees will be sought from the neighborhood—beginning with about 20 in the first year and ramping up to 30-50. Build-out may begin in February, brewing operations begin in May/June, bierhall opening by end of 2019. There will be some retail on-site (growlers, etc).

**Discussion**

Committee asked about production size.

- SP: Will be brewing in excess of what will be needed on-site; initial distribution will be focused on Baltimore, including existing restaurants.

Committee asked about experience with projects like this

- SP: Most projects are residential & mixed use at Cathedral St, Butcher's Hill, former Red Emma's.

Allison Schecter: The Montessori School appreciates consideration of the hours for deliveries and brewery operation.

Committee asked about parking plans, and whether there will be parking on or off-site

- SP: Plans call for van-sized delivery on-site, which will be inside the building compound. There will be parking for ~4 employees inside the compound. Patrons will be parking on-street; will be exploring options for special event off-street parking at Social Services, Amtrak, Montessori School, & BDS.

Committee reiterated request for job positions so we can advertise locally and identify neighborhood candidates

**Action items:**

- Schedule time at General Meeting for project brief-out and timeline discussion
- Developer to provide job positions to GMWCA so community can advertise jobs locally and identify neighborhood candidates
- Developer to follow up with neighborhood entities to find off-street parking

**Bell Foundry Building (1539 N. Calvert St.).** Review renovation and apartment building concept (Yonah Zahler, Zahlco & Al Barry, AB Associates).

**Background:** The original Bell Foundry building is currently used by the Baltimore Rock Opera Society (BROS) on first floor; other floors are not licensed for use. Building will be retained and renovated for expanded use by BROS and other artists. The fenced area that currently serves as

a skateboard park will be developed as a residential building. Proposed plans show 50 small 1-bedroom, market rate units around 500 sf. Rents will be less than \$1,000; probably \$800-\$900.

The developer plans to infill the entire vacant lot and anticipates the need to drive 50'-60' pilings into the soil. The site rests on poor quality fill dirt up against a retaining wall - subsurface levels will not be possible on this site. No plans for any parking on the site—only on street. Alternative forms of transportation (bicycles, scooters) will be explored and encouraged. Noted that community may have need for additional investment in Calvert-Federal Park, which could be done in partnership.

**Discussion**

Committee shared GMW parking survey data and explained the purpose of the study & the response from the city.

- Al Barry: Parking is an issue during the day, not at night. Emphasized support for bikes & zipcars.
- Committee pointed out that first floor parking inside the building envelope could be used

Committee noted that this project is population dense and has very few amenities. Committee pointed out that building lacked social spaces for targeted “artist” population to connect and that the link to the Bell Foundry space (not the physical proximity to the building) was not well understood.

- Developer noted that proximity to Penn Station would attract some commuters

Committee noted that the street-level facade described as being “open/embracing of graffiti” was not necessarily something that other building owners in the vicinity wanted to encourage

Committee noted that there’s no space inside the building devoted to bike storage

- AB: Discussed building an external shed for bike storage behind the building; no data on how many bikes could fit, area was small.

**Action item:**

- Schedule a follow-up to discuss design as it matures to address concerns noted above.

**1803 Guilford Warehouse (1803 Guilford).** Review renovation & build-out concept (Yonah Zahler, Zahlco & Al Barry, AB Associates).

**Background:** Yonah Zahler, the developer presented plans to add 2-4 floors to the former supermarket. Apartments will consist of 4BR/4BA suites with shared common areas. Target is the MICA student population. The first floor would have workspaces and retail (developer conducted an informal survey; unclear who was surveyed). Limited parking on-site may be redeveloped into a lobby for the building.

**Discussion:**

Committee raised concerns about density and fit. Suggested that it might make more sense to swap the Bell Foundry apartment set-up (1BR units) with that of the Warehouse (4BR suites) thereby concentrating the CopyCat model of shared living in that part of the neighborhood. Also, the Committee believed that the suite setup may yield a smaller overall number of cars since there is a stronger roommate network for car and ride-sharing by nature.

- Developer: Open to ideas & reconsideration of plans.

**Action item:**

- Schedule a follow-up to discuss design as it matures to address concerns noted above

**New Contacts:**

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***\*\*Reminder to pay annual GWCA dues\*\****