

**GWCA Development Committee
Monthly Meeting Minutes
10/15/18**

ATTENDEES

Committee Members: Adam Kutcher (co-chair), Dan Sparaco, Kim Schulke, Lauren Kelly-Washington, Lena Leone, Lou Linden, Monika Graves,

Committee Partners: Kathy Christian (Stokes/City Council), Peter Duvall (Strong City), Robert Stokes (City Council)

- **Community Guests:** Brice Lankford (CopyCat), Carol Higgs (Cork Factory), Frank Yantos (CopyCat), Kate Thomas (Cork Factory), Lori Ferrara (Cork Factory), Nancy Linden (Cork Factory), Robert Levine (Cork Factory), Stewart Watson (Oliver Street Studios), Ted Rouse (Station Arts LLC)

Presenters: Al Barry (City), Jake Wittenberg (Station Arts LLC), Matthew DeSantis (City Planning Dept.),

Location: OpenWorks, 1400 Greenmount Ave.

AGENDA

1817-1819 + 1821 Barclay Street (Adam Kutcher)

Background: At present, 2 lots that are owned by Baltimore City (1817-1819 Barclay) and 1 by a private individual (1821 Barclay) are being maintained as green space. With Vacants to Value inventory depleted, is there any community benefit to retaining the site at 1817-1819 Barclay as green space or should development be encouraged?

As an FYI: The owner of the individual lot is asking an above-market price for the single lot, but interested in selling.

Discussion:

- Chair concerned that all three properties are developed or not developed as a coherent whole; wants to figure out a way to have the three parcels hang together. City does not (and will not) have funds to purchase the third lot, so ownership will remain fractured. Iterating ways to bring the owner's lot into the conversation if the properties go for sale – no method yet identified, but City is in contact.
- Is there any urgency to deciding on future purpose of site?
 - Chair noted that there is not programming for the site, and that the Greenspace Committee is prioritizing programming for other spaces; Brentwood Commons crew not interested in supporting a larger greenspace.
- If the City is asking the Community what it wants done with the land, interest by outside parties has been expressed. Waiting to weigh-in may nullify preferred options.
- As the Penn Station development rolls out, development pressure on GMW may increase causing neighborhood real estate prices to rise. If we want development at a more affordable price point to appeal to artists, legacy residents, and young families, sooner development is better.

Chair called for a straw vote: in favor of development vs. in favor of holding space green.

- The majority voted to support development
 - Sense of the community was that the 3 lots must be developed in concert (same building type (in keeping with the “look & feel” of the street), structure (3-4 stories), and function (ownership vs. rental).

Proposal to Repeal or Amend GMW Planned Unit Development (Matt DeSantis, Baltimore City Planning Department)

Matt DeSantis distributed a spreadsheet that compares the permitted uses of the PUD (Planned Unit Development) with the Planning Department's newly proposed I-MU. Explained how the need to subdivide and then develop the 7 lots for the Station Arts LLC homes at Lanvale & Guilford triggered a Major Change designation and then the need for the PUD to be repealed or amended. Explained that the PUD was written pre-Transform (new Baltimore City code, implemented 2017), so would need to be entirely re-written if desire was to keep it.

Greenmount West PUD Map



History of PUD: (Stewart Watson) presented the point of view of long-time owners who established the PUD and the reason why & how it was formed. Discussed the time, expense, and lobbying efforts needed to create it and what it has done for the arts community in GMW. She explained that when the Baltimore Design School (BDS) was proposed and developed, the former industrial site was removed from the PUD without any controversy.

PUD repeal proposal: (Adam Kutcher) presented an overview of the Station Arts LLC project at Guilford and Lanvale and how it had developed with GMW Community support beginning in 2013. The project plans that Station Arts LLC submitted to Baltimore City were approved under the existing R-8 zoning of the lots.

In late April 2018, the Planning Dept met with developer and informed them that some form of corrective legislation would need to take place, because, in the view of the Planning

Dept, their proposed development constituted a “major change” to the intent and purpose of the PUD. Any 10% or greater change to the PUD development plan constitutes a “major change”.

The intention and reasoning behind the City Planning Department's proposed city-wide application of a streamlined and simplified zoning system was incomprehensible to Community residents—except that it was not intended to help residents.

Open Discussion: Key point of contention was that the City and developer had met 6 months ago about a need and are now presenting a significant change with two weeks notification to the GMW Community Association (DevCom). PUD property owners need more time to review change in usages and other rights guaranteed under the PUD and under Transform; will likely incur lawyer expenses to understand impact. Concerned about losing existing rights, leaving excessive discretion on conditional uses permitted in Transform to the Planning Dept. Clarity emerged that the community was not going to support repeal in any short time frame, which would hold up the Station Arts development. Clarity also emerged that the current owners would not be responsible for creating a Transform-compliant PUD, but

would incur legal review costs if one was created. The developer would likely then bear the cost to develop the Transform-compliant PUD, which would also create a time delay to their project.

The Councilman pledged that he would not move forward with any change to the PUD (repeal or amend) without community support.

Discussion ensued concerning the difference between major vs. minor changes in zoning, and it was understood that this designation was a discretionary decision made by the acting director of planning, Laurie Feinberg. A minor amendment would leave the PUD intact without requiring a new PUD or a delay to the developer. Community members identified the 10% change as the key metric with 7 new single family homes being created as the trigger and then counted over 80 existing dwelling units in the current PUD district. Consensus emerged that requesting the Acting Director of Planning revisit the decision in light of these numbers would be the most expedient way to forward to not delay Station Arts LLC, avoid saddling the PUD District members with additional cost, and preserve the existing rights of the PUD District members.

Conclusion: Community members agreed that asking the Acting Director of Planning to reconsider the change (as a minor change rather than a major change) was the best way forward for all involved. Councilman Robert Stokes was asked by the community to get in touch with the Acting Director of Planning to relay the events of the meeting and request her revisit her decision in favor of a minor change designation. The Chair offered to create a community perspective in a letter addressed to the Councilman to be relayed to the Acting Director of Planning. It was noted that the Acting Director of Planning was out of the office until Wednesday; all agreed to move with haste this week to seek resolution.

The meeting adjourned.

****Neighborly reminder to pay GWCA dues****