


FROM	NAME & TITLE	THOMAS J. STOSUR, DIRECTOR	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET, 8 TH FLOOR		
	SUBJECT	BMZA / 4003 Elderon Avenue		

TO

Mr. David Tanner, Executive Director
Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals
417 East Fayette Street, 14th Floor

DATE:

January 23, 2015

REQUEST

The Department of Planning has received Charles Gray's Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA) application, on behalf of Mount Carmel Church of God in Christ #5, Incorporated, to construct a 8' wide by 4' high free-standing directly illuminated identification sign in the front yard of the church. (The top of the sign would be 6' above ground.) The Zoning Administrator has determined that this sign would exceed the limitations on identification signs in a R-2 Zoning District. We understand that this appeal is scheduled for hearing on January 27, 2015.

SITE

4003 Elderon Avenue is located on the south side of the street, approximately 117' west of the intersection with Belvedere Avenue. This property measures approximately 50' by 136' and contains approximately 0.156 acre, and is currently improved with a one-story detached building measuring approximately 30' by 50'. This site is zoned R-2 and is located within the Rogers Avenue Transit Station Urban Renewal Plan area and the Greater Northwest Community Coalition Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan area.

ANALYSIS

Use: In this zoning district, religious institutions are permitted uses, and so are allowed (§4-501). In this case, the property was last authorized for use as a church, for which the proposed sign would be an identification sign.

Urban Renewal Plan: This property is located in the Rogers Avenue Transit Station Urban Renewal Area, where the Urban Renewal Plan does not prohibit or further restrict the proposed use in this district.

Use: Any use that is not expressly allowed in a district is prohibited (§3-106). The proposed sign is a type of directly-illuminated sign (§11-101.c.) and a free-standing sign (§11-101.d.). The proposed sign would be a standard internally-illuminated sign with a fixed message upper section identifying the church and a back-lit variable message lower section that would take up approximately 2/3 of the sign face. Four rows of 4" high letters and numerals could be displayed on the lower section. §11-319 of the Zoning Code limits directly illuminated identification signs for non-residential buildings in R-1 to R-8 Districts to 12 square feet of sign face area, and to a height of 6 feet if free-standing. The proposed sign would exceed the sign face area limit and comply with the height limit.

TransForm Baltimore: This property would remain part of the R-2 District (Proposed Zoning Map Area 1-D) in which Places of Worship would be conditional uses (Table 8-301). Free-standing signs would be allowed for non-residential uses, subject to requirements that include a minimum of 100 feet of frontage along the public right-of-way for the lot on which they are

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erected (§17-804 (B)). The proposed sign could not be erected on this property as it does not have the minimum 100 feet of frontage on Elderon Avenue.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Planning recommends disapproval of this appeal because the sign face area of the proposed sign would be more than double the limit established in the Zoning Code, an amount of signage that is inappropriate for a R-2 Zoning District.

TJS/wya/mf

cc: Charles Gray, Appellant