


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 / 2000 East North Avenue		

TO

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

DATE: March 14, 2012

REQUEST

The Department of Planning has received Nathaniel Greene's Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA) application, on behalf of Columbus School Limited Partnership, to consolidate this property's lot and 14 other lots in the same block, and develop 50 dwelling units in existing buildings and an addition, with 29 on-site off-street parking spaces. We understand that this appeal is scheduled for hearing on March 20, 2012.

SITE

2000 East North Avenue is located on the northeast corner of the intersection with Washington Street and extends along the east side of Washington Street to 20th Street. This property measures approximately 112' along North Avenue by 250' along Washington Street and is currently improved with an historic two-story former school building and a three-story school annex building. A 9' wide alley separates this property from Block 4167, Lots 53 – 66, known also as 1900-1926 North Castle Street, with which the applicant proposes to consolidate this property in order to provide the majority of off-street parking spaces required to service this proposed redevelopment of the property. This site is zoned R-7 and is located within the Baltimore East/ South Clifton Park National Register Historic District.

ANALYSIS

Use: In this zoning district, multiple-family dwellings are a permitted use, and so are allowed (§4-1001). In this case, the property at 2000 East North Avenue was last authorized for use as multiple-family attached dwellings, which is a permitted use in this R-7 General Residence District. The original school buildings were previously renovated as the Schoolhouse Apartments, a Federally-subsidized rental development, in the 1980s, but were abandoned by their former owner. The former row-house dwellings across the 9' alley from this property front on Castle Street, but are vacant; most are owned now by the City of Baltimore due to abandonment by their former owners.

Conversion of Dwellings: In all districts except the R-2, R-4, R-5, R-6, and R-8 Districts, the Board may authorize, as a conditional use, the conversion of a building for use by more than one family, as long as the number of families permitted conforms with the applicable bulk regulations for the district in which the building is located (§3-305.b.1).

Insufficient Lot Area: In this zoning district, multiple-family dwellings require 1,100 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit (§4-1006.a.). In this case, for 50 dwelling units, 54,450 square feet of lot area is required. The lot only encloses 33,440 square feet, and so does not meet this requirement. To address this insufficiency, consolidation with the 8,072 square feet of to-be-consolidated Block 4167, Lots 53-66 and with the 1,440 square feet of the to-be-closed alley is proposed, to bring the total consolidated lot area to 42,952 square feet.

Lot Area Variance: The Board may grant a variance to reduce the applicable minimum lot area requirements by no more than: (1) 25% of the applicable regulation (§15-202). In this case, the proposed amount of variance would be approximately 21%. The variance requested is within the discretionary range of the Board and so may be allowed.

Floor Area Ratio Variance: The Board may grant a variance to increase a basic floor area ratio factor by no more than 75% of the applicable regulation (§15-204.b). In this case, the proposed floor area ratio is 2.1 which exceeds the permitted ratio of 1.2 by 75%. As the request is within the variable range the Board may apply, the appeal may be approved.

Historic District: The property is located in a designated historic district, and so may be eligible for historic tax credits for restoration and renovation. The appellant is encouraged to contact the Baltimore Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation before proceeding with any improvements which may be authorized as a result of this appeal.

Off-Street Parking: ... if the intensity in use of a structure or premises is increased through the addition of dwelling, efficiency, or rooming units, floor area, seating capacity, or other units of measurement, off-street parking facilities must be provided for that increased intensity, as required by this title (§10-202.a). If the structure was lawfully erected before April 20, 1971, additional off-street parking facilities are mandatory only in the amount by which the requirements for the new use exceed those for the existing use (§10-203.b). In this zoning district, multiple-family dwellings require one off-street parking space per dwelling unit (§10-405.1.iv). For 50 dwelling units, 50 parking spaces are required; 29 are proposed to be provided, primarily on the lots on Castle Street that are to be consolidated with 2000 North Avenue and cleared.

Off-Street Parking Variance: ... the Board may grant a variance to reduce by no more than 75% the number of off-street parking spaces otherwise required by the applicable regulation (§15-208.b). In this case the reduction proposed is 42%, which is within the variable amount the Board may authorize.

Land Use and Urban Design: This proposed development requires Site Plan Review, and the applicant needs to work with the Site Plan Review Committee to obtain final approval of the site plan. The proposed parking area will require landscaped buffering and screening as it is located on a residential street. The area of disturbance necessitates stormwater management.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Planning recommends approval of the appeal, conditioned upon the applicant receiving Site Plan Review Committee approval for the entire site that is to be consolidated, and upon closure and acquisition of the 9' alley and consolidation of all the lots.

TJS/wya/mf

cc: Nathaniel Greene, Appellant