


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 / 107 West Heath Street		

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

DATE: March 31, 2015

REQUEST

The Department of Planning has received Jack Andrews' Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA) application, on behalf of Verizon Wireless, to install 12 antennas and related equipment to be hidden from view by a "stealth" four-sided screening wall on the rooftop of the existing structure. The Zoning Administrator has determined that this is a conditional use in a R-10 General Residence District. We understand that this appeal is scheduled for hearing on April 7, 2015.

SITE

107 West Heath Street is located on the southeast corner of the intersection with Race Street. This property measures approximately 80'3" along Heath Street by 182' along Race Street, and is currently improved with a 4-story former manufacturing building covering the entire lot. This building is joined over a public alley to another 4-story former manufacturing building covering an entire 62' by 58'1" lot at the southwest corner of Heath and Clarkson Streets. This L-shaped site is zoned R-10 and is located within the Riverside National Register Historic District.

ANALYSIS

Conditional Use: In this zoning district, antenna towers, microwave relay towers, and similar installations for communications transmission or receiving, are a conditional use, requiring approval by the Board (§4-1303). In this case, the property was last authorized for use as a wholesale establishment and a parking garage, which are nonconforming uses in this R-10 General Residence District. Conversion of the premises to 59 apartments (52 dwelling units and 7 efficiency units) was approved by the Board (appeal no. 2013-520) on February 24, 2014.

Neighborhood Impact: There should be minimal impact, if any, on the surrounding area or community, due to the height of the existing combination building on the subject property (the L-shaped property formed by the joining of two structures above a public alley), the size of the antennas, and the height at which they will be placed.

Co-location: In order to minimize the number of antenna towers and monopoles constructed throughout the City of Baltimore, the Department of Planning has adopted a policy of co-location. When our Department receives applications for antenna towers or monopoles, staff encourages the applicant to design a structure that can accommodate several other wireless technology providers. This co-location of antennas minimizes the number of antenna towers or monopoles needed throughout Baltimore City.

Historical and Architectural Preservation: The Historical and Architectural Preservation Division of the Department of Planning has reviewed the application and determined that the proposed location is:

- A local landmark structure (the Raffel Building)
- A property, or within a district, listed on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties
- A property, or within a district, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

TransForm Baltimore: This property would become part of a I-MU District (Proposed Zoning Map Area 11-A) in which wireless telecommunications antennas that comply with stealth design standards would be permitted uses; if not so complying, they would be conditional uses (Table 11-301). "Wireless telecommunications antenna" means "a device, the surface of which is used to transmit or receive radio-frequency signals, microwave signals, or other signals transmitted to or from other antennas, but excludes satellite dish antennas (§1-314 (A)). "Wireless telecommunications facility" means "an unstaffed structure used to house and protect the equipment necessary for processing telecommunications signals" and includes air conditioning equipment and emergency generators (§1-314 (B)).

RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Planning recommends approval of this appeal, subject to these conditions in addition to any conditions which the Board may establish:

- The "stealth" enclosure for antennas and related equipment must be painted to match the building, to ensure it is visually unobtrusive, and all must be installed as directed in the Notice To Proceed issued by the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation; and
- The panel antennas and related equipment will remain mounted as illustrated in the plans and elevations submitted to Planning; and
- The applicant will adequately mitigate any adverse effect as specified in the report of the Historical and Architectural Preservation Division of the Department of Planning in accordance with that report's recommendations.

TJS/wya/mf

cc: Jack Andrews, Appellant