


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 / 1615-1637 Thames Street		

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

DATE: January 7, 2015

REQUEST

The Department of Planning has received Caroline Hecker's Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA) application, on behalf of Brown's Wharf LLC, to construct a 23-slip marina adjacent to existing buildings on this property. The Zoning Administrator has determined that a marina is a conditional use in a B-3 Zoning District. We understand that this appeal is scheduled for hearing on January 13, 2015.

SITE

1615-1637 Thames Street is located on the south side of the street, approximately 93' west of the intersection with Broadway. This property measures approximately 252'8" along Thames Street and 234' along the waterfront and 152'9" along Broadway, and is currently improved with a group of two-, three-, and four-story buildings and a waterfront promenade. This site is zoned B-3-2 and is located within the Fells Point Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan area and the Fells Point Historic District.

ANALYSIS

Conditional Use: In this zoning district, marinas: recreational boat launch/ tie-up, are a conditional use, requiring approval by the Board (§6-408). In this case, the property was last authorized for use as a grocery store and offices, which are permitted uses in this B-3 Community Commercial District.

Urban Renewal Plan: This property is located in the Fells Point Waterfront Urban Renewal Area, where the Urban Renewal Plan (approved in 2007) does not prohibit the proposed use in this district. The Plan does establish a series of public access corridors, including one from the foot of Broadway connecting to the Pedestrian Promenade (also referred to as the "Waterfront Promenade") which runs along the waterfront of this property. Within the Promenade, standards prohibit any obstacles to the pedestrian. The applicant has worked with Planning staff to ensure that details of the proposed marina would be consistent with these standards.

Although not an Urban Renewal Plan, the Baltimore City Marina Master Plan does recommend development of up to 32 boat slips in a marina at this location.

Historic District: The subject property is located within the Fells Point District, a locally and nationally designated Baltimore City historic district. All exterior changes, including additions, demolitions, and alterations are subject to review and approval by the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP). It is recommended that the applicant contact CHAP to determine the review process applicable to their project.

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). In this zoning district, recreational marinas require one off-street parking space per 2 slips (§10-405.5.v). For 23 boat slips, 12 parking spaces are required. The applicant has a lease covering 200 spaces in the Thames Street Parking Garage near this property, and is currently utilizing 84 of those spaces to satisfy requirements relating to the other existing uses of this property. This leaves 116 spaces from which the 12 required to serve the marina boat slips can be provided.

TransForm Baltimore: This property would become part of the C-1-E District (Proposed Zoning Map Area 7-D) in which marinas: recreational, would be prohibited uses (Table 10-301).

RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Planning recommends approval of this appeal, subject to final approval of the proposed marina by the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation.

TJS/wya/mf

cc: Caroline Hecker, Appellant