


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 / 500 East Lexington 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 8 antennas, flush-mounted and painted to match the existing exterior of the structure, on the rooftop of the structure, with related equipment to be hidden from view by a screen wall. The Zoning Administrator has determined that this is a conditional use in a B-5 Central Commercial District. We understand that this appeal is scheduled for hearing on April 7, 2015.

SITE

500 East Lexington Street is located on the northeast corner of the intersection with Gay Street. This property measures approximately 107'1" along Lexington Street and 163' along Gay Street and contains approximately 0.356 acre, and is currently improved with a 5-story office building covering the entire lot. This site is zoned B-5-2 and is located within the Central Business District Urban Renewal Plan area.

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 (§6-608). In this case, the property was last authorized for use as professional and business offices, which is a permitted use in this B-5 Central Commercial District.

Urban Renewal Plan: This property is located in the Central Business District Urban Renewal Area, where the Urban Renewal Plan does not prohibit or further restrict the proposed use in this district.

Neighborhood Impact: There should be minimal impact, if any, on the surrounding area or community, due to the height of the existing building on the subject property, 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 not:

- On a Baltimore City Landmark property list or within a Baltimore City Historical and Architectural Preservation District
- 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 C-5-G District (Proposed Zoning Map Area 14-B) 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 10-301). "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 antennas and related equipment must be painted to match the building, to ensure they are visually unobtrusive; 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