



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

December 5, 2013

REQUEST: City Council Bill #13-0286/ Zoning – Conditional Use Convalescent, Nursing, and Rest Home – 5124 Greenwich Avenue:

For the purpose of permitting, subject to certain conditions, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a convalescent, nursing, and rest home on the property known as 5124 Greenwich Avenue, as outlined in red on the accompanying plat.

RECOMMENDATION: Amendment and approval, subject to the following condition:

- That the residential capacity of the facility is limited to 50 beds.

STAFF: Eric Tiso

PETITIONER: Baltimore Crisis Response, Inc. c/o Edgar Wiggins

OWNER: American Baptist Mission Center Inc.

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: 5124 Greenwich Avenue is located on the west side of the street, approximately 280' north of the intersection with Charing Cross Road. This R-5 residentially zoned property contains 2.19± acres, and is currently improved with a three-story residential building that was previously used as a nursing home, and then as the American Baptist Conference Center.

General Area: This property is located within the Westgate neighborhood, and the western end of the property is located about 200' from the western boundary of the City. The immediate area is residential in nature, with the housing stock represented by a mix of apartment buildings, duplexes, townhomes and single-family detached homes. Baltimore National Pike is located a long block to the north.

HISTORY

There are no previous legislative or Planning Commission actions regarding this site.

CONFORMITY TO PLANS

This project supports the Comprehensive Plan's LIVE Goal 1: Build Human and Social Capital by Strengthening Neighborhoods, Objective 3: Maintain and Create Safe, Clean, & Healthy Neighborhoods, specifically, item #5: Increase Substance Abuse Treatment City-wide.

ANALYSIS

Project: Baltimore Crisis Response, Inc. (BCRI) is one of the two large crisis response organizations in the City of Baltimore. BCRI has over twenty years of service providing crisis intervention and addictions treatment services throughout the City. While they have been currently located at 2041 East Fayette Street for the past three years, the lease for their existing location is expiring at the end of this year, and so an alternate location is needed to support this service. Their program only uses a portion of the building in their existing location, but they will have exclusive use of the new facility proposed for 5124 Greenwich Avenue.

BCRI offers several services from in-patient residential treatment for both clients facing crisis, as well as for those needing detox programs to treat addictions before they can continue to other treatment programs, 24-hour crisis hotlines, and mobile crisis teams. For the residential component, 21 beds will be offered for adults needing full-time treatment which averages about nine days per individual. There will be an additional ten beds for the detox program, which lasts about five days on average. Staff in the facility includes nurses, psychiatrists, and licensed counselors, on a typical ratio of one staff member per four clients. All clients are picked up and then they are brought to their facility; no walk-ins are accepted. The 24-hour crisis hotlines answer over 30,000 calls annually, and provide both counseling as well as referrals to other services and organizations, as needed. Mobile crisis teams are headquartered at the facility, but are then dispatched to any Baltimore community for assessment, intervention and treatment, and have averaged about 2,000 responses per year.

Conditional Use: Staff has reviewed this proposal, and finds that it meets the required findings of §14-204 in the Zoning Code, in that:

- (1) the establishment, location, construction, maintenance, and operation of the conditional use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, security, general welfare, or morals;
- (2) the use is not in any way precluded by any other law, including an applicable Urban Renewal Plan;
- (3) the authorization is not otherwise in any way contrary to the public interest; and
- (4) the authorization is in harmony with the purpose and intent of this article.

Likewise, staff finds that among the several required considerations under §14-205 in the Zoning Code, that:

- The proposed site is sufficient in its size, shape, and capacity for the proposed use;
- The proposed use will not create a negative impact to existing traffic patterns and volumes, and that there is sufficient parking available on the site (23 parking spaces);
- It is unlikely that the proposed use will impair the present and future development of this property or the surrounding area;
- That there will not be any undue impacts resulting from its proximity to any dwellings, churches, schools, public structures, and other places of public gathering;
- That the site is adequately served by police and fire protection;
- That there accessibility of light and air to the premises and to the properties in the vicinity, as there are no proposed changes to the current property configuration.

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the appeal, subject to one condition, a maximum residential capacity of 50 beds. This will provide for the immediate needs of BCRI, and will allow for a modest capacity expansion in the future, if needed.

Community Notification: The Ten Hills Community Association and the Westgate Community Association have been notified of this action.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas J. Stosur". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "T".

Thomas J. Stosur
Director