



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

May 21, 2015

REQUESTS:

- Final Design Approval/ Harbor Point PUD #81 – Exelon Building Signage Package
- Minor Amendment and Final Design Approval/ Harbor Point PUD #81 – Temporary Parking Lot – Expansion Parcel 3

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Final Design Approval/ Harbor Point PUD #81 – Exelon Building Signage Package – Approval.
- Minor Amendment and Final Design Approval/ Harbor Point PUD #81 – Temporary Parking Lot – Expansion Parcel 3 – Approval.

STAFF: Anthony Cataldo

PETITIONER: Beatty Development

OWNER: Same

SITE/GENERAL AREA

General Area: The Harbor Point PUD is located on the western peninsula of the Fells Point community. Across Caroline Street to the east of the site is the heart of the Fells Point Historic District, to the north is the Living Classrooms Foundation main campus and beyond is the Harbor East development area. The Ferndale Fence property and The Living Classroom Foundation Frederick Douglas Isaac Myers Maritime Park are located immediately to the southeast.

Site Conditions: To date, the Harbor Point PUD is only improved by the Thames Street Wharf office building at the western end of Thames Street and a facility maintenance building to the north. The rest of the site contains some surface parking or is currently under construction for the Central Plaza parking structure and the Exelon Building. The site is divided by on-cap and off-cap portions that reflect the environmental clean-up that occurred for many years prior to any development.

HISTORY

- Ordinance #93-260, approved August 1993, established the Allied and related sites Planned Unit Development.

- Ordinance #04-0682, approved May 10, 2004, repealed the original Allied PUD and replaced it with the Harbor Point PUD.
- On May 18, 2006, the Planning Commission approved a Minor Amendment and Final Design Approval for the Thames Street Wharf Building and Street Closings for Dock, Willis, Block, and Philpot Streets with the Harbor Point PUD.
- Ordinance #07-429, approved May 17, 2007, implemented the rezoning for Historic Southeast Baltimore
- Ordinance #07-555, approved November 26, 2007, repealed the old URP, and established Fells Point as a Baltimore City Local Historic District.
- Ordinance #07-575, approved November 27, 2007, established the Fells Point Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan
- Ordinance #07-625, approved December 3, 2007 amended the Development Plan of the Harbor Point PUD
- On March 6, 2008, the Planning Commission approved the Final Design for 803 South Caroline Street – the Black Olive Inn
- Ordinance #08-16, signed by the Mayor to the City Council on May 27, 2008, was Amendment #2 to the PUD and expanded the boundaries to include 803 South Caroline Street – the Black Olive Inn
- Ordinance #09-153, signed by the Mayor to the City Council on April 7, 2009 authorized the sale of the property known as 950 South Caroline Street
- On February 18, 2010, the Planning Commission approved the Minor Amendment and Revised Final Design Approval for Harbor Point PUD – Thames Street Wharf
- On October 21, 2010, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the City Council Bill #10-0594/Harbor Point Development District
- On November 18, 2010, the Planning Commission approved the Minor Amendment for US Lacrosse
- Ordinance #13-136, approved June 18, 2013, repealed the previous Harbor Point PUD and designated it anew.
- On October 17, 2013, the Planning Commission approved the Minor Amendment and Final Design Approval for Exelon, Central Plaza, Parking, and Phase 1 Roads.
- On March 12, 2015, the Planning Commission approved the Minor Amendment and Final Design Approval for the Point Street Apartment building.

CONFORMITY TO PLANS

The project is consistent with the Comprehensive Master Plan's LIVE section, Goal One: Objective 2- Strategically Redevelop Vacant Properties Throughout the City of Baltimore; LIVE Goal Two, Objective 3 – Promote Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and Mixed-Use Development to Reinforce Neighborhood Centers and Main Streets.

ANALYSIS

Signage Package: In October of 2013 when the Planning Commission acted on the Minor Amendment and Final Design Approval for the Exelon Building, the development team had completed the design review process on the main building, but the retail, residential, and office tenant signage was still in the early phases. As such, the staff recommendation at that time, which Planning Commission supported, was to approve the building design and return to the

Commission with a complete signage package for the building. This package for consideration includes locations of and design details for all signage aspects of the building. The main office tenant, Exelon will have prominent signs located at the top of the tower building. The main residential entrance signage is located on the north side of the building at the entrance lobby. And a variety of retail signage will be located within the signage band zone at the base of the building. The plan provides a variety of awning and individual lettering for future retail tenants and has identified zones within the base of the building that outline specific sign criteria.

Temporary Surface Lot: As part of the repeal and replacement of the Harbor Point PUD, the existing surface parking lots were accepted as existing conditions. Understanding the development need for temporary parking to account for loss of the existing spaces for laydown area, construction storage, as well as removal of spaces for building sites, the PUD now includes the ability for additional temporary surface parking lots to be created within the PUD area for a time period of 24 months. These temporary surface lots also require Planning Commission approval prior to permits and may only be approved due to existing lot displacement and building construction. With the approval of the Point Street Apartment building and construction seeking a start date, the existing surface parking lot along Point Street will be removed in order to construct the new apartment building. This temporary surface lot on Parcel 3 will be an expansion of the existing lot and will be accessed via a new service drive from the upper plaza level (under construction) as well as a temporary connection via the parking level under the new plaza.

The temporary surface lot expansion will contain 312 new parking spaces (for a total of 527) and will continue the fence/screening which currently surrounds the existing lot, around the new portion. As per the PUD, the 24 month duration shall commence upon the completion of construction of the temporary parking and shall be removed at the end of the 24 months. Should the Development team seek to extend the term of the temporary surface lot due to construction purposes, they would be subject to additional design review and Planning Commission approval.

Community Notification: The Fells Point Residents' Association, Fells Point Community Organization, Fells Point Main Street, Fells Point Task Force, Greenspace Action Partnership, The Preservation Society, Southeast CDC, Waterfront Coalition, Fells Prospect, Upper Fells Point Improvement Association, Perkins Homes Resident Advisory Council, Broadway Area Business Association, and Rich & Henderson, PC have been notified of this action.



Thomas J. Stosur
Director