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**GWCA Development Committee  
Monthly Meeting Minutes  
2/19/18**

**ATTENDEES**

**Committee Members:** Adam Kutcher (co-chair), Shea Frederick (co-chair), Lowell Larsson, Jessie Nedrow, Nancey Kinlin, Lauren Kelly-Washington, Monika Graves, Brian Levy, Dave Thack

**Committee Partners:** Peter Duvall (Strong City Baltimore), Ashley Wallace (Central Baltimore Partnership), Cat Willis (Hidden Harvest Farm)

**Community Guests:** Nate Pretl, Derese Getnet, Jeffrey Thompkins, Susan Findlay, Asha Jordan, Saleh Satti, Carl Capelletti, Kim Schulke, Sean Guy, Roxanne Smith, Dan Sparaco

**Location:** OpenWorks, 1400 Greenmount Ave.

**AGENDA**

1. **Letter of Support Request:** 417 E Lanvale conversion (Derese Getnet, Nate Pretl)
2. **Developer Briefing:** Timothy 618, Inc. (Chuck Davies, Kevin Heardt)  
Current projects, HABC vacant redevelopment, 310 Lanvale St (OHAAT), Pitman Place strategy, Affordable housing for legacy residents, Sales of rental units, Path toward homeownership.
3. **Central District Code Enforcement:** 1808 Barclay, 131 E North, 141 E North, 210 E Lanvale, 319 E Lafayette (Peter Duvall, Adam Kutcher)
4. **North Avenue Rising Update** (Lowell Larsson, Ashley Wallace) **AGENDA**
5. **Updates**
  - Parking Committee: Boundary Sq MOU, Community Survey (Jason Hill)
  - Greenspace Committee: Hunter's Lot (Adam Kutcher); Spruce-Up Grant (Brian Levy, Monika Graves, Dave Thack)
  - Pitman Pl: 430, 432, 450 (Adam Kutcher)
  - DevCom authorities (Shea Frederick)
  - Legacy Resident program (Jessie Nedrow)
  - MOU: 231 E. North Ave (Adam Kutcher)
6. **Open Discussion**

**Letter of Support Request:** Derese Getnet purchased 417 E Lanvale St in October 2017 and is requesting a letter of support from the community for conversion of 417 from a single-family home into two units. Mr. Getnet and his wife plan to live in the upstairs unit while his wife's parents would live on the first floor. Nate Pretl, a planning and land-use consultant for Mr. Getnet explained that the conversion from single to multi-unit counters Baltimore City's campaign to increase single-family homeownership and necessitates an appeal before the City Council.

**Comments**

(Peter D) Notes that the City previously allowed the conversion without a special application.

(Lowell L.) Cites other examples of similar conversions.

(Jessie N.) Asked whether there would be 2 parking spaces in the rear. Mr. Getnet replied that ordinarily there would be sufficient room for 2, however one of his in-laws needs handicapped accessibility and that requires more space. Adam called for a committee vote, and a majority supported the proposed conversion of 417. **Adam will draft a letter of community support for Board approval.**

**Developer Briefing:** *\*The Development Committee has petitioned Baltimore City to convert all HABC properties in Greenmount West to the Vacants to Value program.*

Chuck Davies and Kevin Heerd (Timothy 618, Inc.) passed out a handout that summarizes their current projects in Greenmount West, their efforts to acquire HABC properties, ideas to develop affordable rental housing for legacy residents with first floor accessibility, strategies to create a path to homeownership for their current tenants, and a strategy for Pitman Place that would stabilize and increase homeownership (not discussed).

Chuck Davies stated that they are approaching the new commissioner of HABC, Ms. Abrahams, about acquiring additional vacant properties (specifically 1803 and 1815 Barclay and two houses on Lanvale) and requested a letter of support from the Development Committee to both push these properties along and encourage their disposition to Timothy 6:18, who has a track record of quick and responsible renovation. Roxanne shared that when she first purchased 4 houses in the neighborhood that the city would call her to ask her to take more properties, as they were desperate for responsible owners. Adam shared that his Vacants to Values house was not contested 4 years ago; fast forward to this year and the most recent Vacants to Value property (blank lot at 1701 Guilford) received eleven bids. With market competition clearly present, it is not in the community's best interest to shortcut the process; the committee declined to support the request for a letter of support and informed Chuck and Kevin that all of the properties they identified were currently in the process of being transferred to Mayor and City Council ownership (Vacants to Value program), with 1803 and 1815 Barclay getting ready to go V2V this quarter.

Chuck Davies further discussed his thinking about accessibility for older residents. Are there legacy residents who have moved to the first floor of their house and no longer go upstairs? He and his partner are interested in creating affordable, age-in-place units with an emphasis on ownership.

#### **1815 Barclay: Demolition notice decision**

The Committee was informed by the city that 1815 Barclay was about to be transferred to Mayor and City Council but it has a demolition notice; if the community wants to stay the demolition, it needs to say so quickly. The Committee discussed whether 1815 should be demolished or preserved for re-development. (Jessie N.) Since her house abuts the inside wall of 1815 and her house was damaged when 1811 Barclay was re-developed, she is very concerned that the situation be addressed ASAP. If all agree to preserve the building, the roof must be replaced—stabilized immediately. Adam noted that the existing structure is eligible for historic tax credits, lowering the cost of the construction job, and that it has an Open Walls mural on its north face. The Committee discussed the best option for 1815, which would be to weigh in with the City on bids to the property to emphasize speed of reconstruction, most likely with a proven developer. **The Committee voted to support preservation of 1815 Barclay and recinding of the demolition notice.** Adam will contact the City and request that it be stabilized and relate the committee's concerns about roof stabilization and speed of renovation when it goes V2V. (NB: This was completed after the meeting and 1815 will not be demolished)

**Code Enforcement:** Meeting on 2/22/18 will consider 11 properties. One of the properties on the list is 201 E. Lanvale. Ms. Susan Findley was present to address concerns that the renovations regarding on her property seemed to have stalled. She spoke to the length of time it has taken her to do the renovation because she is focusing on historic preservation (windows, etc) and indicated that, of the four units, only the first floor unit remains to be completed. She intends to occupy the house and live on the first floor. Ms. Findley asked about why her property was on this list; Adam related the length of construction time, the apparent lack of progress, and the broken windows which have not been repaired. The committee was satisfied that the owner is present and working and will convey that to the Code Enforcement attorney.

319 E. Lafayette is up for a hearing in March; the city is requesting to appoint a receiver. The city attorney noted that the owner will likely fight this, and a letter of community support was requested to appoint a receiver. **Jessie agreed to draft a letter, rehashing the committee's last letter sent to Code Enforcement on this property.**

(Peter D.) Should Development Committee ask the city to foreclose on the property and then move to the Vacant to Value program? Is the owner behind in taxes? Find out before requesting foreclosure. This property may wind up at OHAAT auction and then stay there. Adam pointed out that there is not much to

prevent bad bidding at auction, but the house is open to the elements, which points to its condition. **Peter to inquire about back taxes and foreclosure options on behalf of the Committee.**

**North Avenue Rising Update:** This is a \$27.3 million program to revamp the North Avenue streetscape. Lowell, Jason, and Ashley attended the Open House and design review. The proposed plan includes two trees near Rite Aid and curb improvement and bus shelter improvements, but it also eliminates 80 parking spaces in favor of creating a rapid bus path. The budget is insufficient to address community needs in terms of sidewalks and pedestrian-scale lighting and appears to be driven by political expedience. Advocacy groups like Bikemore are urging that the process be slowed down and the project be re-considered—*quickly*.

(Lowell L.) The greatest concern is pedestrian safety—lighting and sidewalk conditions—the proposed plans are inconsistent. The Station North communities need to convene.

(Ashley) Will convene a meeting of the Station North communities (GMW, Charles North, Goucher, Barclay) to discuss and lobby together.

(Lowell) Encouraged all to view the [North Avenue rising website](#) and submit feedback on the proposed plans.

**Hunter's Lot:** Adam reported that the community has succeeded in its request for the city to foreclose on the property; the city will purchase the tax sale and foreclose over the course of the next year. This will pave the way for the property to become permanent green space following the trajectory of Brentwood Commons and McAllister Park. The Hunter's Lot team (Brian, Dave, Sela) is continuing to work on applying for Spruce-Up Grant funding to improve the lot. Took a community walking tour to view other greenspaces to think of complementary (non-redundant) Hunter's Lot amenities. Will be putting a survey together for residents who are immediately adjacent to the lot to ask about amenities desired and prioritization - will be putting flyers into mailboxes.

**Legacy Resident Program:** Jessie summarized her efforts in coordination with Linda Harrington of Jubilee Baltimore, that include: homestead tax workshop, "office hours" to help legacy residents, and support as they prepare for repairs. Details to be announced at the next GW General Meeting.

**Pitman Place: 430, 433, 434:**

Shea provided an update on the Pitman Place development by the NYC developers. The plans remain consistent with the original. Shea will be meeting with contractors next week.

**OPEN DISCUSSION**

- **Hidden Harvest Farm:** Cat Willis introduced herself as the new farm manager. Announced that there will be a farm cleanup day on Saturday, also posted to NextDoor. Wanted to introduce herself to the community and work on continuing community engagement.

**New Contact Info**

Nate Pretl: (planning & land-use consultant) [npretl03@gmail.com](mailto:npretl03@gmail.com)

Derese Getnet (new property owner) [get.derese@gmail.com](mailto:get.derese@gmail.com)

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Cat Willis (new Hidden Harvest Farm manager) [HIDDENHARVESTFARM@GMAIL.COM](mailto:HIDDENHARVESTFARM@GMAIL.COM)

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