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Baltimore City Department of Planning eNewsletter - January 2018

A Message from the Director



This month, our Food Policy team released a report on [Baltimore's Food Environment](#), in collaboration with the Center for a Livable Future. This research and report build upon the 2015 report: *Mapping Baltimore City's Food Environment* by providing an update on the Baltimore City food retail environment, including an in-depth analysis that identifies geographic areas that should be prioritized for healthy food policy and programmatic activities, and strategies and opportunities to address healthy food access.

New this year, the report also features quotes from Resident Food Equity Advisors — a resident group that informs Baltimore City food policymaking — to provide context of lived experiences related to the data presented on the food environment.

What can you do to get involved? There are a number of options. First, advocacy-oriented briefs were released in conjunction with the report - these contain the data and information that advocates need to push for more focus on food at the local and state level. Second, if you are interested in a deeper dive, please keep an eye on our webpage and Facebook for more information about applying to be an Equity Food Advisor in the coming year.

Thomas J. Stosur

Thomas J. Stosur, Director

Submit Your Ideas for Surplus Schools

In 2012, Baltimore City Public Schools announced that it would close 26 school facilities over the course of 10 years, approximately 16% of all schools in the City. The closures were identified in the [21st Century Schools Buildings Plan](#), an initiative to provide new investment for school facilities throughout the City. Under Phase I of the plan, BCPS will leverage nearly \$1 billion of funds to renovate and modernize two dozen public school buildings in Baltimore. As part of this modernization, the BCPS must right size its capacity – match the number of “seats” in schools to the number of students in the school system.



These sites provide large-scale opportunities for new land uses that can transform neighborhoods. [Profiles of potential uses](#), such as market rate housing, affordable housing, charter schools, community centers, and office space, are available to help inform and inspire discussion.

The City is committed to conducting stakeholder engagement so that the City (and any potential future users of the facilities) can understand community desires and concerns. Public meetings will be scheduled and announced over the coming months on the [Surplus Schools webpage](#) and on the Department of Planning's [Facebook page](#).

The City has created a [website](#) to provide community stakeholders, potential buyers, tenants, and other interested parties with information about each of the available school sites and the process to facilitate their reuse.

Developers, individuals or organizations are invited to submit an expression of interest through the website. These will be shared with the Surplus Schools Task Force, and integrated into the forthcoming public engagement process.

Safe Routes to School Grant Awarded



Baltimore's Department of Transportation and the Department of Planning's [INSPIRE program](#) was awarded grant funding through Safe Routes to School, a program of the State Highway Administration.

The funding will go to comprehensively address transportation safety by improving conditions for pedestrians and students walking and bicycling to the school in the Pimlico EMS INSPIRE area of northwest Baltimore.

A full list of projects that will be funded through this program at Pimlico is available via [this link](#) to the Pimlico INSPIRE Plan (see Appendix C).

A press release from the State is available [here](#).

2018 Food Environment Map Available



The 2018 Food Environment Report, corresponding maps and briefs for the city, council districts and state legislative districts were released on January 17th, 2018. BFPI will use these documents to drive the eight point Healthy Food Environment Strategy to address food access in Healthy Food Priority Areas, formerly known as food deserts. The report, maps, and briefs are available on the [website](#).

If you are interested in deeply engaging around these issues in your community, consider applying to be a 2018 Food Equity Advisor. More information forthcoming on the [website](#).

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Planning Underway

Information about the CIP process for Fiscal Year 2019 and beyond is available [here](#).

The full schedule of Planning Commission briefings and work sessions is available [here](#) and this [webpage](#) contains all presentations made thus far to the Planning Commission as well as a [map](#) of FY18 projects.



Take our Compass Reader Survey!

How are we doing?

We want to make the Compass monthly e-newsletter as useful as we can to readers.

Please take a look at this quick 5-minute [survey](#) (or click on the image below) and tell us what you think!



Latest Housing Milestones, as of January 2018:

↑ Since 2010, over 18,500 housing units have been completed,

↑ 4,306 additional housing units are under construction,

↑ 2,357 additional housing units have been approved, but have not yet received building permits.

Meet Sean Davis, the New Planning Commission Chairman



Where are you from and what brought you to Baltimore?

I was born in Westfield, NJ and grew up largely in Warren, New Jersey until high school when I moved to Houston, TX -- the land of no zoning.

When I was finishing up college at Texas Tech, a great friend from Lubbock, Texas who had moved to Baltimore invited me for a visit over Spring Break – I immediately loved Baltimore and decided to move up shortly thereafter. My wife Donna and I never plan to leave!

What do you look forward to the most about your new role as Chair of the Planning Commission?

The opportunity to work with a great team at the Department of Planning. When I speak with Tom, Laurie, and Stephanie (*DOP Executive leadership*), I hear their passion for Baltimore and when the Commission hears a presentation from staff - you know they are as passionate about Baltimore as we are.

I am also really excited about the diversity of representation we have on our Planning Commission. There are a lot of new faces, including me, and there is broad representation from the business, non-profit and institutional communities. The Mayor pulled together a great group to help guide planning in Baltimore for years to come.

What recent development projects in Baltimore have inspired you?

All of them! It is wonderful to see so many companies and people investing in our city. From the large projects such as Harbor East, Harbor Point, and Port Covington to the small – but incredibly powerful projects - like the Motor House, City Arts 2, and Open Works, it proves to me that Baltimore is clearly on everyone's radar.

I must provide a personal shout out to Fred Lazarus, the past President of MICA. Under President Lazarus's leadership MICA stepped over an imaginary line on North Avenue and invested in several institutional projects east of I-83.

20 years from today, how do you envision Baltimore?

Stronger, vibrant, more diverse, complete, growing, energetic, hip, foodie, young and old, historic, Smalltimore: the example of how things get done right.

Upcoming Events

1/23 - Inconvenient Truth film screening and discussion

Join us for a screening of "An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power," featuring former Vice President Al Gore as he travels the world uncovering issues related to climate change and human interaction with the natural environment. Following the film, attend a panel discussion, featuring professionals that focus their work on climate resiliency, air quality, and public awareness in Baltimore City. [Click here to register!](#)

1/23 - Public Hearing on Baltimore's Sewer System Challenges

Attend a public hearing on Baltimore's aging sewer system. Baltimore City faces many water quality challenges from sanitary [sewer overflows](#) as a result of failing infrastructure. Learn more about this issue from experts at Baltimore City's Department of Public Works. You'll also learn about preventative measures and future plans for the city's sanitary sewer system

1/25 - UDARP

The Urban Design and Architecture Review Panel's goal is to achieve the highest quality for the planned and built environment of Baltimore City by providing design review expertise in the areas of urban design, architecture, and landscape design for all proposed master planning efforts and significant development projects.

More information can be found [here](#).

1/31 - Sustainability Commission

The Commission on Sustainability is made up of members representing environmental groups, community organizations, labor unions, public health and environmental justice interests, and private industry.

The Commission welcomes the community to public meetings every 3rd Tuesday at 4pm in the Baltimore City Planning Office, 417 E. Fayette St., 8th Floor.

For more information on meeting materials, visit [this site](#).

2/1 - Planning Commission

The Planning Commission meets regularly each month. All meetings are held in the Phoebe B. Stanton Boardroom of the Department of Planning, located on the 8th floor of 417 East Fayette Street and are open to the public. Live streaming [is available](#).

The agenda and staff reports are available on [this website](#).

2/7 - Food PAC

Established in 2010, Food PAC members work actively to improve food access and the food system. Facilitated by the Baltimore Food Policy Initiative, Food PAC provides opportunities for collaboration and idea sharing around food-related organizations in Baltimore.

More information provided [here](#).

2/5 - 2/8 - North Avenue Rising Workshops

MDOT MTA and Baltimore City DOT are excited to host a series of public workshops in February 2018.

These workshops will be built around informal discussions and activities designed to capture your ideas and suggestions for North Avenue and transportation.

Visit <http://northavenerising.com/> for more information.



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