

CVCA Land Use Committee: 25th Street Station Update by Sharon L. Guida, Chair

On May 16, 2013 Bruce Mortimer, the owner of most of the properties that make up the 25th Street Station PUD, invited reps from Charles Village, Old Goucher, and Remington to a meeting to update us about that development. Matthew Compton, Reggie Parker and I were there to represent the CVCA Land Use Committee.

In March 2013, Bruce told us that he had terminated his agreement with the developer, Rick Walker and WV Developers, for 25th Street Station project in October 2012 and that he had filed suit to have the contract declared terminated because the developer was disputing Bruce's interpretation and considered the contract still active. Bruce said he was looking for other developers and would let us know when he had made other plans.

Bruce has now signed an agreement with Seawall Development, the developer behind Miller's Court at 2601 N Howard Street, Miller's Square in Hampden, and the forthcoming theater/restaurant/butcher at 2600 N Howard Street. Instead of only redeveloping his properties south of 25th Street, Bruce will also sell to Seawall two properties: the old Honda Service Center at 2607 N Howard and the body shop at Remington and 29th Street. There are two other properties at 24th and Sisson which are owned by a 3rd party, who may still be in contract with the original developer, and which are included in the 25th Street Station PUD. Seawall plans to purchase those two parcels as well. Bruce's one condition under this expanded redevelopment is that he wants to continue to operate a body shop, although it could be anywhere in the redevelopment. He would lease the property from Seawall, not own it.

Seawall has only been discussing this new arrangement with Bruce for a short time and plans to spend a lot of time in the next two weeks gathering information. When the litigation with the current developer is concluded, Seawall will begin regular meetings with the community to discuss its plans and to obtain more community input. They will consider having a special website dedicated to collecting resident comments. Once that process is completed, Seawall will know whether to amend the PUD, apply for change in current zoning by City Council Bill, or to request a change in the Comprehensive Rezoning Map and Ordinance currently before the City Council. The 25th Street Station PUD remains in effect until amended or terminated by City Council.

Since Seawall has really only just started, all they could tell us was that they intend to create some mix of residential, retail and office uses, and do a combination of rehabilitation and new construction. They asked me to provide them with a copy of the current developer's agreement, the traffic calming matrix, and our retail "wish list" so that they could review those documents to get up to speed on what the community has invested its time in over the last 3 ½ years. Seawall plans to reach out through its contacts and to hire a Realtor to locate prospective retail tenants for the 25th Street Station. I will circulate that retail "wish list" with Patty's next CVCA email update so to solicit comments from the broader community, and report back to you before delivering it.