
Request for Assistance Regarding Acquisition and Stewardship of Vacant Lot 2422 Lakeview Avenue

Selia Monroe <seliamonroe@gmail.com>

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To: <James.Torrence@baltimorecity.gov>

Cc: <Brittany.cole@baltimorecity.gov>, zeke.cohen@baltimorecity.gov <zeke.cohen@baltimorecity.gov>

Bcc: <danielle.burton@baltimorecity.gov>, crcintake@baltimorecity.gov <crcintake@baltimorecity.gov>, Keondra Prier <president@reservoirhillassociation.org>

Dear Councilman Torrence,

I am writing as a resident of Reservoir Hill to request your assistance regarding the vacant lot located at 2422 Lakeview Avenue. For several years, members of the community have attempted to work through the appropriate Baltimore City channels to acquire and maintain this property in a manner that would improve neighborhood safety, beautification, and quality of life. Unfortunately, despite repeated efforts, the process appears to have stalled.

A portion of the connected land is owned by Baltimore City, while another portion is privately owned. Residents have attempted to pursue legal acquisition and stewardship of the lots, including participation in adoption and maintenance efforts. However, the process has been hindered by a lack of communication regarding the property's disposition and by the inability to obtain clear guidance on how to proceed with the purchase of the remaining parcel. Multiple attempts to communicate with Mr. Howard Tutman regarding the property's status and the purchase process have gone unanswered, leaving residents without a clear path forward.

The consequences of this prolonged uncertainty have become increasingly serious. The lots are routinely used for inappropriate purposes, including the accumulation of dog waste and other nuisances. The condition of the property has contributed to ongoing disputes among neighbors and has become a source of tension within the community. Most concerning, there has been at least one arrest related to activity around the lot in the past month, demonstrating that the issue has evolved beyond a simple maintenance concern and now poses a public safety risk.

This situation also raises broader concerns regarding equitable access to land acquisition opportunities in Baltimore City. Baltimore has a long and well-documented history of racial disparities in housing, land ownership, redlining, and barriers to wealth-building opportunities for communities of color. Numerous local and national studies have documented how historic discriminatory housing and land-use practices have limited property ownership opportunities in predominantly Black neighborhoods and have contributed to persistent inequities in neighborhood investment and redevelopment. These historical challenges make it especially important that current land disposition processes are transparent, responsive, and accessible to residents seeking to improve their communities.

Residents who are willing to invest their own time and resources to stabilize and improve vacant properties should not encounter years of uncertainty without meaningful communication or resolution. The current situation creates the impression that community members seeking to improve their neighborhood cannot access a fair and transparent process for acquiring publicly controlled land.

Accordingly, I respectfully request your assistance in obtaining:

1. A complete ownership and disposition status for 2422 Lakeview Avenue.
2. An explanation of any pending applications, restrictions, or legal barriers affecting the sale or transfer of lots on Lakeview Avenue.
3. Clarification regarding whether previous side-yard or lot adoption applications have expired and, if so, what steps are required to reapply.
4. A timeline for resolution so that residents may move forward with improving and securing the property.
5. Consideration of the public safety concerns associated with the current condition of the lots.

Our community is seeking a lawful, transparent, and equitable path toward stewardship of these properties on Lakeview Avenue. We are committed to improving Reservoir Hill and transforming these vacant parcels into assets rather than ongoing sources of conflict and neglect.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and attention to this matter. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further and provide additional documentation, photographs, incident reports, and records of prior correspondence.

Respectfully,

Selia Monroe
Reservoir Hill Resident

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