

MidTown, Inc. Board Update, 4-23-2018
Hilton Property

MidTown, Inc.'s mission is to *sustain and enhance the neighborhoods and businesses within MidTown Columbus with respect to community, conservation and diversity*. With respect to this mission we recognize that homes are the building block of neighborhoods, and that healthy, stable neighborhoods are the foundation of a thriving community. A neighborhood encompasses people and their places of residence, businesses, parks, schools and places of worship. We value and strive to foster quality of home and place for our community and our diverse residents.

Recent discussion surrounding proposed development of the Hilton property has elicited passionate responses befitting personal attachments to home and place. We wanted to update you on the facts as we know them.

The **Hilton property**—5.8 acres bounded by Wynnton Road, Hilton Avenue and 15th Street— is a cornerstone of MidTown. Since 1972 Hilton has been an individually listed Landmark Property on the National Register of Historic Places. For a generation, residents and visitors have taken for granted this wooded gateway that encompasses the grounds and remnants of the historic home that burned in the early 1980s. The property is currently zoned RMF2 (approved for development of up to 16.5 units per acre), as it has since the 1970s.

At this time, it is our understanding that the entire 6 acre site is under the jurisdiction of the **Board of Historic and Architectural Review (BHAR)** as it has been since the passage of local preservation ordinance many years ago. Any changes on the site would be subject to BHAR review and approval.

In late March, 2018, MidTown, Inc. was advised of a potential mixed-income housing development proposed for the property by TGB Residential developers. Since early April, the Board of Directors of MidTown, Inc. has listened, met with property owners and potential developers, heard from concerned residents and variously been asked to:

- Support TBG Residential's proposed project and their application for Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. TBG proposes to develop approximately 90 units with an estimated cost of some \$16 million. The property is properly zoned for the development and lies within the MidTown West TAD District.
- Oppose the proposed mixed-income housing development for a range of reasons.
- Support a rezoning request from the current property owners (Eakle/Dobbs family) and local developers as an alternative to residential redevelopment. They propose rezoning the property to Neighborhood Commercial (NC) for redevelopment as a commercial center.

- Oppose rezoning for commercial redevelopment over concerns that it “could be worse” than the proposed, currently zoned residential use.
- Support a concept to purchase the property and retain it as greenspace or develop it as a Food Forest, dependent upon raising funds to purchase the property (+/- \$2.5 M) and support long-term maintenance and management by entities unknown at this time.

We have not seen site plans for any of the proposed potential uses and share concerns over the proposed housing project’s density, quality and scale of building design and construction, siting and setbacks of any development on this property, ingress and egress and other traffic impacts, and the extent of landscape design and tree canopy retention and planting, among other possible concerns.

Although the MidTown, Inc. Board of Directors has not voted at this time to either support or oppose the concept of a mixed-income housing project on this site (or of any particular type of site development already authorized by the zoning currently in place), we appreciate the opportunity to work with property owners and developers to influence any development at this gateway site, with a common goal of insuring that such development seamlessly and successfully integrates into the surrounding established neighborhoods and historic districts.

Timeline

Tuesday, April 23, 5:30 pm: Columbus Council Meeting, Hilton Project Update on City Manager’s Agenda

UPDATE: Columbus Council declined action to support TBG Residential’s request for support through HOME funding or an extension of the Metra Bus Route 8 that will be eliminated the first week in May.

End of May, 2018: Tax Credit Application due to Georgia DCE from TBG Developer

October, 2018: DCA notifies developer re: tax credit funding