



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

**COMMISSION FOR
HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL
PRESERVATION**

Tom Liebel, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

July 11, 2017

REQUEST: Federal Hill Local Historic District—Boundary Revision
(Council Bill 17-0073)

APPLICANT: Baltimore City Council

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Walter W. Gallas, AICP

SUMMARY: Council Bill 17-0073 (introduced May 15, 2017) creating the Federal Hill local historic district includes a change to the boundaries of the January 10, 2017, CHAP- approved proposed district, removing the Cross Street Market. The Commission must prepare a report to determine if the change complies with the Secretary of the Interior's *Guidelines for Selecting Boundaries*, with City Code Article 6—Historical and Architectural Preservation, and meets the requirements of *Baltimore City Historic Preservation Rules and Regulations' Designation of Districts and Landmarks*.

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT:

Summary Description

Situated on a street grid with street names retained from its original development, Federal Hill demonstrates distinctive characteristics of a significant place combining various architectural styles and workmanship well-preserved over the course of its long history. Federal Hill comprises about 24 city blocks just south of the Inner Harbor. At its northeast corner, Federal Hill Park rises steeply from Key Highway overlooking the downtown skyline and providing open recreational space for the community.

The neighborhood retains remarkably intact streets of largely residential properties reflecting the building eras from 1788 to 1945 and the economic status of their early residents. Early houses were built of wood with side gables, and the form continued in Flemish bond brick with gabled roofs and dormers. Simple Greek Revival rowhouses are found throughout the district, along with many Italianate rowhouses, and a few detached houses, some with small front gardens. Details include stained glass, bracketed cornices, and iron fencing.

Commercial structures, some with ornate storefronts, along the two primary thoroughfares, Light Street and Charles Street, reflect a range of 19th and early 20th century styles. A few churches, a fire station, and an adaptively re-used high school are examples of institutional buildings in the district.

BACKGROUND

- November 9, 2016—At Hearing One for the designation of Federal Hill as a local historic district, CHAP approved the staff determination that the proposal met CHAP Criteria for Evaluation 1 and 3; the proposed boundaries were supported by findings of fact; and outreach to property owners and property owner responses are sufficient. The Commission requested that staff prepare a full and proper study with findings of fact for presentation at Designation Hearing Two.
- January 10, 2017—At Designation Hearing Two, CHAP approved the staff recommendation for designation. The period of significance was determined to be 1788 to 1945. The proposed boundaries were generally Hughes Street/Key Highway to the north; Covington Street to the east; Cross Street including the Cross Street Market to the south; and Hanover Street to the west.
- May 15, 2017—Council Bill 17-0073 designating the Federal Hill local historic district was introduced. Ordinance language amends the boundaries of the district to exclude Cross Street Market.
- May 18, 2017—Bill was referred to CHAP and City Planning Commission.
- June 13, 2017—CHAP tabled proposal to consider boundary revision, requesting information from City Councilmember Costello.

PROPOSAL AND APPLICATION OF FEDERAL GUIDELINES, CITY CODE, AND CHAP RULES & REGULATIONS

The proposal is to amend the boundaries of the Federal Hill local historic district to remove the Cross Street Market. Staff consulted the Secretary of the Interior’s *Guidelines for Selecting Boundaries*, City Code Article 6—Historical and Architectural Preservation, and the *Baltimore City Historic Preservation Rules and Regulations’ Designation of Districts and Landmarks*.

Secretary of the Interior’s *Guidelines for Selecting Boundaries*

(from National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*. U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service. Revised 1986, p. 56.)

ALL PROPERTIES

- Carefully select boundaries to encompass, but not exceed, the full extent of the significant resources and land area making up the property...
- Leave out peripheral areas of the property that no longer retain integrity, due to subdivision, development, or other changes.
- “Donut holes” are not allowed. No area or resources within a set of boundaries may be excluded from listing... Identify nonhistoric resources within the boundaries as noncontributing...

HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL DISTRICTS

- Select boundaries to encompass the single area of land containing the significant concentration of buildings, sites, structures, or objects making up the district. The district’s significance and historic integrity should help determine the boundaries.....

The boundaries proposed in the January 10, 2017, staff Designation Report generally followed those of the 1970 Federal Hill National Register District boundaries with two exceptions: The proposed local historic district did not include properties east of Covington Street, and it included the Cross Street Market. Properties lying east of Covington Street today were the result of late 20th and early 21st century redevelopment of former industrial and shipyard operations. Their character differs from that of the proposed Federal Hill local district, and so—in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior guidelines above—were not included. The Cross Street Market was somewhat of an orphan, not being included in either the Federal Hill National Register District or the later Federal Hill South National Register District, and therefore the local district boundary proposal included the market. Nevertheless, staff recognizes that the current market, having opened in 1952, falls outside of the period of significance for the district, which is 1788 to 1945. It could remain in the local historic district as a non-contributing building; however, being on the edge of the district, its removal would not go against the Secretary of the Interior guidelines, because this would not create a “donut hole” in the district.

City Code Article 6—Historical and Architectural Preservation

§ 3-9. Council action – Limitations.

The City Council may not take any action described in subsection (a) ...[which includes any modification to the boundary lines set forth in an ordinance proposed by the Commission] without first referring that action to the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation for...the Commission’s written report and recommendations....

Because the district boundary in the ordinance introduced is different from the boundary approved by CHAP on January 10, 2017, City Code requires that this change be referred back to the Commission for its review and recommendation.

§ 8-13. Municipal structures.

(a) “Municipal structure” defined.

In this section, “municipal structure” means any structure that:

- (1) is owned by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore; and
- (2) either:
 - (i) has been or is being used for a municipal function, including offices and other work places, schools, fire stations, police stations, monuments, water and waste water facilities, and the like;...

(b) Submission of plans to Commission.

Before any City action is taken to approve or otherwise authorize the reconstruction, exterior alteration, interior alteration of an area customarily open or accessible to the public, or demolition of any municipal structure, the agency responsible for preparing the plans must refer the plans to the Commission for a report....

Article 6 defines municipal structures and goes on to state that any plans affecting these structures must be referred to CHAP. The Cross Street Market is a municipal

structure. Therefore, any plans for alterations, additions, or demolition must be referred to CHAP for review—whether it is inside or outside of the boundaries of the local historic district.

Baltimore City Historic Preservation Rules and Regulations

2.3 Designating a Historical and Architectural Preservation District

Step 3: Designation

- CHAP staff will work with the Mayor and City Council to prepare a proposed ordinance that sets forth the boundary lines of the area being proposed and includes findings of fact.
- The proposed designation will follow the procedures of City Council Ordinance process.

Upon the Commission’s approval of the Designation Report, CHAP staff on January 17, 2017, forwarded the report with findings of fact and proposed boundary lines to the City Council. Staff worked with City Council to prepare an ordinance for introduction. In keeping with the Rules & Regulations, CHAP is following the City Council ordinance process with this hearing regarding the amended district boundaries.

3.5 Review Procedures for City-Owned Structures

Plans for the reconstruction, alteration, or demolition of any structure which is owned by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, shall, prior to City action approving or otherwise authorizing the use of such plans, be referred by the agency having responsibility for the preparation of such plans to the Commission for a report. Such report shall be submitted to the Mayor and to the requesting agency within forty-five (45) days after such referral.

CHAP’s Rules & Regulations regarding review procedures for municipal structures are consistent with Article 6 of the City Code, laying out CHAP’s responsibility to review plans for reconstruction, alteration, or demolition. Plans affecting the Cross Street Market will also require CHAP review, whether or not it is in the local historic district.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

The Federal Hill Neighborhood Association has been informed of the proposed boundary change.

ANALYSIS

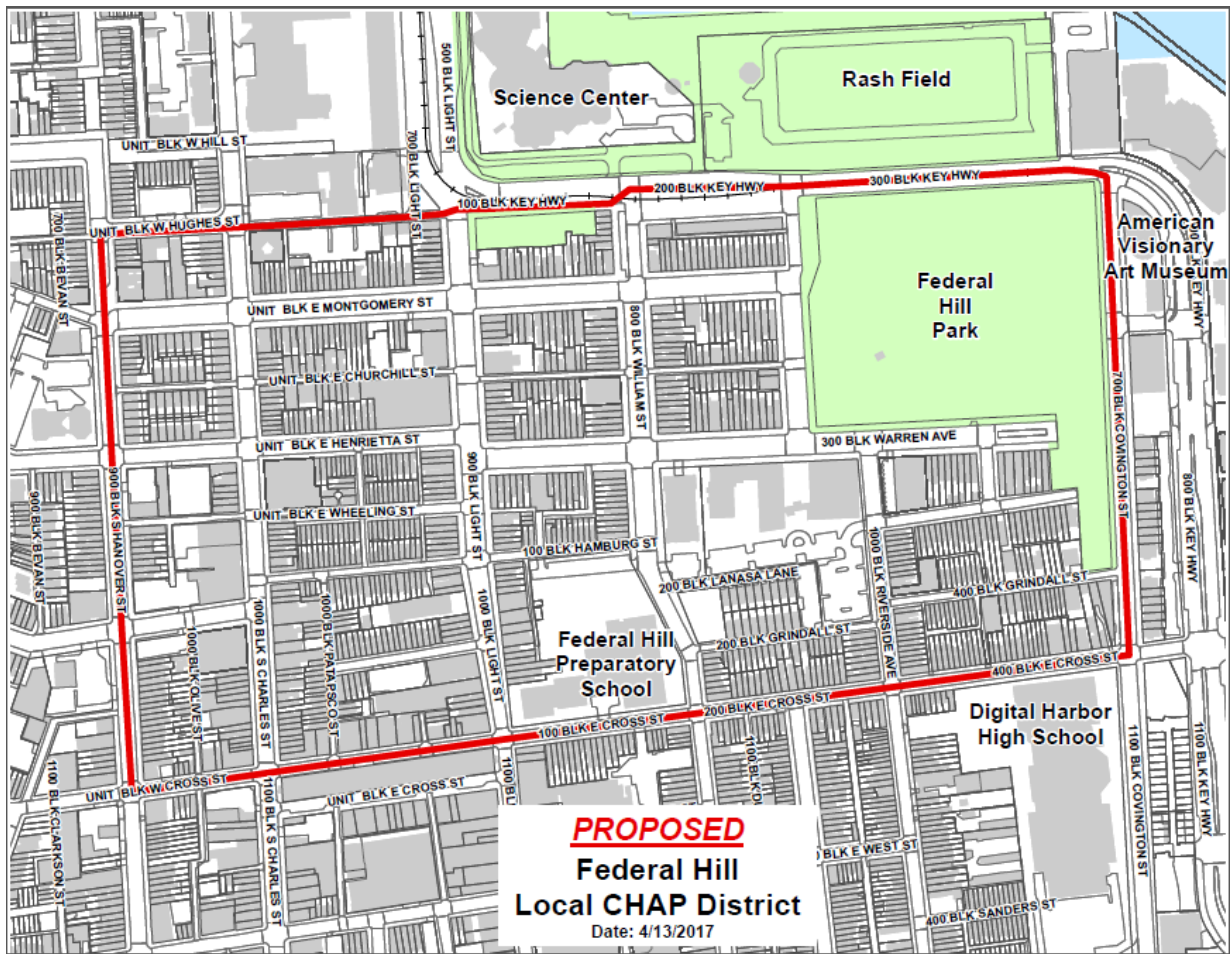
Staff determined that the proposed boundary amendment complies with the Secretary of the Interior’s *Guidelines for Selecting Boundaries*, with City Code Article 6—Historical and Architectural Preservation, and meets the requirements of *Baltimore City Historic Preservation Rules and Regulations’ Designation of Districts and Landmarks*.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the boundary amendment removing the Cross Street Market from the proposed Federal Hill local historic district.



Eric Holcomb
Director



Amended Boundaries—Proposed Federal Hill Local Historic District, April 13, 2017