

Planning Commission approves two proposals

Residents voice concerns
about projects slated
for Canton, stadium site

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Over the objections of several residents, the Planning Commission approved yesterday proposals for senior housing on the Memorial Stadium site, and a townhouse complex on the largest remaining available waterfront parcel in Canton.

Plans for senior housing and a YMCA facility on the East 33rd Street stadium site were presented by Julia Pierson, executive director of the Govans Ecumenical Development Corp., which city officials chose over two other proposals last year.

Eleanor Montgomery, a community representative from nearby Waverly, praised GEDCO's willingness to work with the neighborhood. She also pointed out that a further delay in improving the site would hurt property values.

But Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, a former 3rd District city councilman who lives nearby, said

more productive and profitable uses for the 33-acre site could be found. "We're squandering a real resource here," he said.

Commission Chairman Peter E. Auchincloss seemed to agree, asking, "Is this the best thing the city of Baltimore can do with this?"

He and other commission members raised questions about GEDCO's ability to pay for the \$43 million project — only \$5 million in federal housing funds has been committed. Nevertheless, the commission approved the plans.

In considering the Canton proposal, the commission heard from a dozen people opposed to the North Shore project on a 3.4-acre site at 2301 Boston St., most of them concerned about losing their waterfront views.

Signal Corp., the developer, requested an urban renewal plan amendment to allow its \$25 million project — townhouses, a parking garage, and retail and office space — to reach 75 feet at its highest point. The commission gave its conditional approval to the project's concept, asking the developer to return after determining whether the buildings could be lower and whether state funds could be used in part for the waterfront promenade.