

Wilmington, Delaware
April 17, 2025

#0041

Sponsor:

**Council
Member
Darby**

WHEREAS, the Wilmington City Council 2022-2025 Strategic Plan seeks to foster a “Stabilized Wilmington,” as well as a “Transparent and Well-Representend Wilmington.” There have been numerous attempts to preserve and maintain the Gibraltar Mansion, the accompanying land, and accessory structures; and

WHEREAS, the Gibraltar property, which is located at 2505 Pennsylvania Avenue, was built in the 1840s by John Rodney Brinckleon. On January 25, 2023, the property was purchased by the City of Wilmington for \$900,000, with the intent to preserve and restore this well-known landmark; and

WHEREAS, subsequently, the City transferred ownership of the Gibraltar property to the Wilmington Neighborhood Conservancy Land Bank (WNCLB) to facilitate development and improvements; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the WNCLB is to return vacant, dilapidated, abandoned, and delinquent properties to productive use, while strengthening and revitalizing neighborhoods and inspiring economic development; and

WHEREAS, the community and stakeholders have a vested interest in understanding how the acquisition and planned development of the Gibraltar property align with the WNCLB’s mission and the broader goals of the City; and

WHEREAS, transparency and public engagement are essential components of responsible governance and foster trust between public entities and the communities they serve; and

WHEREAS, this Council supports and encourages collaborative efforts between the WNCLB, community stakeholders, and the public to ensure the successful preservation and revitalization of the Gibraltar property in a manner that honors its historical significance and benefits the community at large. Public dialogue, in the form of a hearing, is an effective tool for informing members of the community about significant public matters, soliciting feedback, and providing a forum to consider the perspectives of members of the community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that this Council requests that the Wilmington Neighborhood Conservancy Land Bank (WNCLB) hold a public hearing within sixty (60) days of the adoption of this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council encourages the WNCLB to address matters including, but not limited to, how the Gibraltar property was acquired and the process involved in its transfer to the WNCLB; the alignment of the acquisition with the WNCLB's mission statement and strategic objectives; the details of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or any agreements pertaining to the transfer and management of the Gibraltar property; and current and future plans for the development, restoration, and utilization of the Gibraltar property.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council encourages the WNCLB to provide public notice of the hearing at least thirty (30) days in advance through: publication in local newspapers and digital media platforms, on the official websites of both the City of Wilmington and the WNCLB, and direct communication with neighborhood associations, historical societies, and other relevant community organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in the interests of transparency, all documents related to the acquisition, including the MOU and any other pertinent agreements, should be made available to the public at least fourteen (14) days prior to the hearing and made accessible both online on the WNCLB and City websites and in print at designated public offices.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council encourages the WNCLB to solicit feedback from the public during the hearing and consider community input in the planning and development process of the Gibraltar property. The Council further recommends that a summary of the public hearing, including questions raised and responses provided, should be published within thirty (30) days following the hearing, along with quarterly updates to the City Council on the status of the Gibraltar property, including development plans, project timelines, and any changes to the proposed use of the property.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: The Wilmington City Council 2022-2025 Strategic Plan seeks to foster a “Stabilized Wilmington,” as well as a “Transparent and Well-Represented Wilmington.” This Resolution requests that the Wilmington Neighborhood Conservancy Land Bank (WNCLB) hold a public hearing within sixty (60) days of the adoption of this legislation to ensure the successful preservation and revitalization of the Gibraltar property in a manner that honors its historical significance and benefits the community at large.