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BDC approves development backed by Ray Lewis in closed session

Baltimore Business Journal - by [Daniel J. Sernovitz](#) Staff

The **Baltimore Development Corp.** voted behind closed doors Thursday morning in favor of a development team led by the Cormomy Company and linked with **Baltimore Ravens** linebacker Ray Lewis to redevelop a group of waterfront properties in the Carroll Camden section of the city.

The vote appeared to have taken place under the same circumstances as another redevelopment project which was challenged in the courts and ultimately required the city's economic development arm to open its meetings to the public.

Following the meeting, board Chairman Arnold L. Williams and BDC President M.J. "Jay" Brodie said they consulted with an attorney from the city's law department before taking the closed door vote.

The board allowed members of the public to attend the first half of its 7:30 a.m. meeting held at the BDC's offices at 36 S. Charles Street, but asked them to leave midway through its discussion of the Gateway South redevelopment project.

Williams said the second part of the discussion was closed to the public because the board needed to consider the financial stability of the two development teams competing for the project before making its decision.

The 11-acre project area is just off the Inner Harbor near the M&T Bank stadium, by Russell and Annapolis streets. Several development teams, including the **B'nai Group**, **Manekin LLC**, Transwestern, and **Turner Development** applied to redevelop the site at the BDC's invitation in March 2006.

From the list of six, the BDC selected two for further consideration: **Himmelrich Associates**, which developed the Montgomery Ward project; and Cormomy. Both had proposed to create about 600,000 square feet of office space at the site, and neither plan included any residential uses.

Cormomy has proposed to create about 600,000 square feet of office space, some retail space, and a 90,000 square foot sports complex to include a pair of football fields and other recreational components. Raymaker Sports, which is Lewis' real estate arm, has signed on as a partner in the project. Lewis has also committed to anchoring his proposed Ray of Hope

mentoring center at the complex. The development could also include a 24-hour fitness center also bearing the name of the Ravens linebacker.

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