



WHEATON URBAN DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Isiah Leggett  
*County Executive*

Ana L. van Balen  
*Director*

November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013

County Council President Nancy Navarro  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Council President Navarro:

I write on behalf of the Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee (WUDAC) regarding an amendment under consideration by the Planning Board to add the Wheaton Youth Center to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Our purpose with this letter is to notify you of WUDAC's opposition to adoption of such an amendment, should it be forwarded to the County Council for approval, if the amendment would delay the redevelopment of the recreation center site.

As you know, members of WUDAC represent a cross section of the Wheaton community, including residents and homeowners, small and large businesses, and the Wheaton-Kensington Chamber of Commerce. We understand and respect the value in preserving structures that are truly historic. However, preservation in perpetuity must be first counterbalanced with the effect on the surrounding community.

WUDAC does not seek to question the historic significance generally of the Wheaton Youth Center nor its technical fitness for inclusion in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. However, we again stress the fact that such designations do not occur in a vacuum and are very concerned that approval of this nomination will unacceptably slow or possibly derail the construction of the new Wheaton Library/Recreation Center. The Wheaton community has already waited too long for a new, modern facility that would fulfill the needs of current and future residents and compliment the ongoing revitalization of the urban district. The current Wheaton Youth Center does not provide the adequate resources that the community needs and deserves.

Historic preservation of the current structure and associated land would require significant additional financial resources in order to both preserve the existing structure and to follow through on the County's promise for new Wheaton Library/Recreation Center. We see no evidence that the County is prepared for such an undertaking in a timely manner. WUDAC fears that the result will be preservation of a structure for the benefit of those in other communities at the expense of those in the Wheaton community who desperately need a facility capable of fulfilling our community's needs.

Finally, we ask you communicate the concerns expressed in this letter to the Planning Board.  
Thank you in advance for your serious attention to our views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Henri St. Gerard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some capitalization.

Henriot St. Gerard  
cc: Executive Leggett, Montgomery County Council