



WHEATON URBAN DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Ana L. van Balen
Director

February 20th, 2014

County Council President Craig Rice
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Council President Rice:

As consistently stated in previous letters, the Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee (WUDAC) does not support historic preservation of the Wheaton Youth Center and respectfully urges this Council to reject the Planning Board's recommendation to add the Youth Center to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

The 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 counterbalanced with the effect on the surrounding community. The Wheaton community has been asking and waiting for a modern facility for years. It is ironic that the historic preservation effort of a center built to serve Wheaton's youth in 1963 has already delayed and may further compromise the modern facilities that would best serve Wheaton's youth of 2014 and beyond. Ultimately, WUDAC fears that the result of historic preservation would be retention of a structure for the benefit of those in other communities at the expense of those surrounding the Wheaton area. This is particularly telling when, as in this case, the nomination of the Wheaton Youth Center did not originate from within the local Wheaton 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 are very concerned that approval of this nomination will unacceptably delay construction of the new Wheaton Library/Recreation Center. In addition, we see no evidence that this Council is prepared to expend taxpayer dollars if historic preservation of the current structure and its incorporation into the new Wheaton facility would require additional financial resources.

Thank you again for allowing WUDAC to present its views to the Council. And, we appreciate the efforts of the Planning Board and this Council to accommodate our request for an open, transparent, and convenient process, ensuring that the public was well informed on the historic preservation process. We look forward to working with the Council,

the County Executive and others to expedite the construction of a new facility that truly fulfills the needs of the Wheaton community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Henri St. Gerard". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

Henri St. Gerard

cc: Executive Leggett, Montgomery County Council