

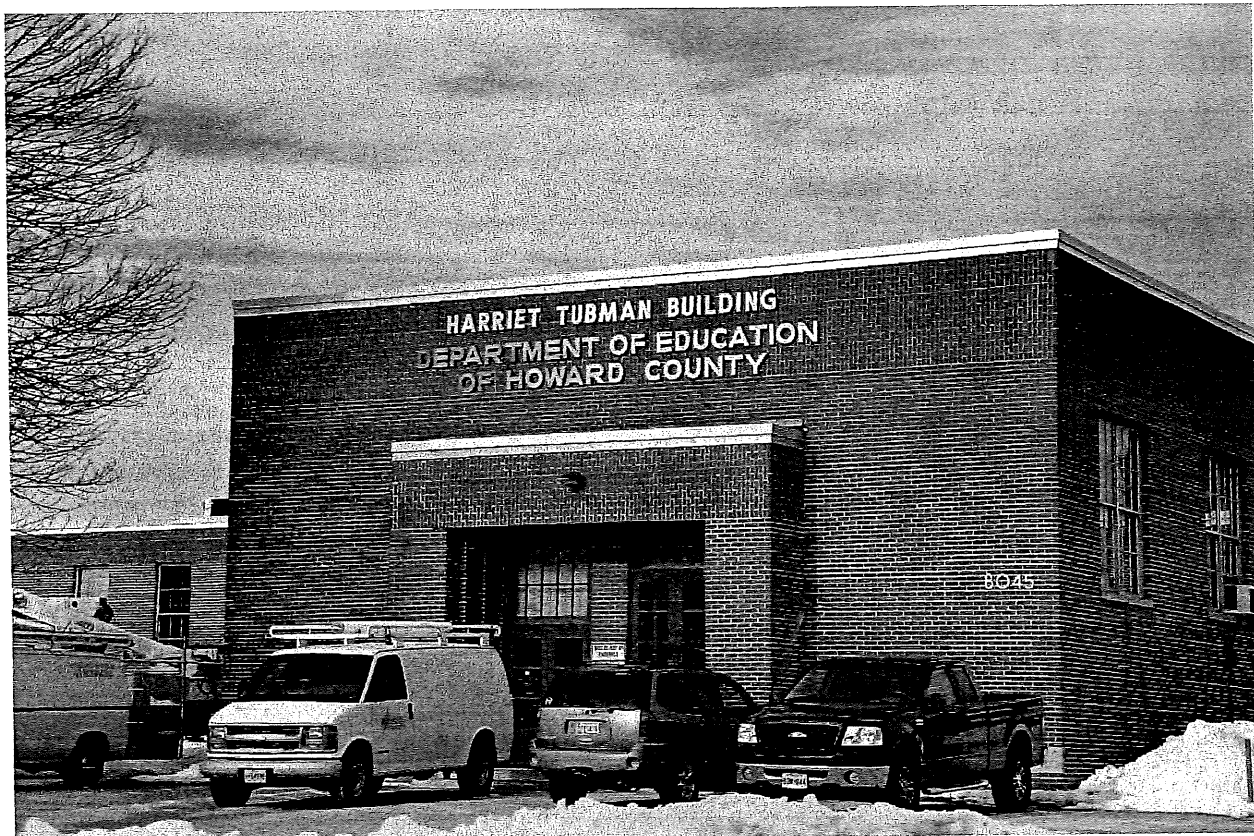
PRESERVATION HOWARD COUNTY

March 20, 2017

My name is Fred Dorsey and I live at 10774 Judy Lane in Columbia. I am President of Preservation Howard County. Preservation Howard County is supportive of TA 03-FY 2017, Transfer of Appropriations Ordinance No. 3 Fiscal Year 2017. Your approval of this transfer will provide the funds to purchase the Mendenhall Property for the relocation and use of the Howard County Public School System personnel now located in the Harriet Tubman School.

This purchase and relocation of personnel will set in motion the long awaited transfer of the building to the Harriet Tubman Foundation to be used as the Harriet Tubman Community Center and Museum. The Center and Museum will offer opportunities to learn about Howard County African American history.

Preservation Howard County appreciates the role and recognition of this building's history and heritage by the County Executive in moving this project forward. We also appreciate the cooperation of the Howard County Public School System, the tenacious work of the Harriet Tubman Foundation and certainly will appreciate the favorable vote by the County Council.



Good Evening, and thank you for this opportunity to share my comments and thoughts with you.

As President of the Harriet Tubman Foundation, again, here I am testifying on behalf of the "historic" and endangered site as indicated by the 2016 Preservation Howard County's listing -- "The Harriet Tubman Building". Preservation Howard County stated in their listing, "Accomplishment of this long waited promise would provide for an African American Cultural Center exhibiting the history and heritage of Howard County African American contributions ", and we the members of the Harriet Tubman Foundation wholehearted agree with Preservation Howard County.

We have viewed the Harriet Tubman project as being a very long and difficult journey. We have witnessed the support from Preservation Howard County, Howard County Historical Society, the Howard County NAACP, many other community citizens, groups and organizations as well as from two former county executives. James Robey and Ken Ulman and now our current County Executive, Alan Kittleman, and the Howard County Board of Education, to turn this building over to the county to be used as a cultural center for the community. We observed this with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding by the County Executive and the Superintendent of the Howard County Public School System, to both vacate the Harriet Tubman Building and to sell building to the Howard County government so that may be preserved and used as a cultural, education and community center.

We have waited more than fifteen years to see results and as we looked down this tunnel, we saw a dim light of hope, sometimes it seemed as if the light was getting brighter and brighter, when only to witness the light returning to its original state, dim, almost off.

As an alumni of the Harriet Tubman High School, along with the other alumnae, we were not discouraged -- disappointed yes -- however, since we were educated and trained by the best of the best, Mr. Silas Craft, Mr. Morris Woodson, Mr. Elhart Flurry, Mr. Nathaniel Gibson, our parents and teachers, we have preserved, we have stood the test of time for we know, at the end of this tunnel the light will shine, shine so bright that you will need sunglasses on to really enjoy the view. We want to show all of the Howard County citizens that we have a place in our county where they can come, research, and enjoy viewing the rich and diverse history of our residents.

We are here in support of Legislative Bill #SAO3-2017. It is hope that with the approval of this bill, additional funds required for the purchase of the new property to accommodate the HCPSS maintenance staff and operation, which is now in the Harriet Tubman Building can be accomplished. It is our understanding that an adequate site has been identified and we are hopeful that the annual Harriet Tubman Day event to be held on September 16, 2017, can be held at the Harriet Tubman Building.

We need your vote so that we can move forward with the project. Please, please don't make us wait another 5, 10 or 15 years to see this project completed. To paraphrase a quote by the former president of the United States of America, Barack Obama, "Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time..." "To you, our Howard County Councilpersons, You are the ones we've been waiting for. You are the change that we seek!!

Thank you

Bessie Bordenave, President

Harriet Tubman Foundation

Good evening members of the Howard County Council

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you to support the passage of TA03-FY2017. I am Douglas B. Sands, a native of Howard County. I was born and raised in Cooksville. I live in Mt. Airy. I graduated from Harriet Tubman High School in 1952. I have served on the Board of Directors of the Harriet Tubman Foundation since it began in 2000 under the leadership of Mr. Howard Lyles, the president at that time, who is still serving also. The current president is Mrs. Bessie Bordenave, who is an active community historian on African-American History in Howard County.

We are here tonight to continue to support efforts to provide a suitable site for the relocation of the current occupants of the Harriet Tubman building and grounds. The Harriet Tubman facility has always been a small monument to great progress in Howard County. It has been our steadfast hope and expectation that the facility will become a community resource of significant historical, cultural and social value again.

We ask that you pass favorably on TA03-FY2017. Thank you for your consideration of our request.