



February 9, 2023

Councilman Eric Costello
Council District 11
100 Holliday Street
Room 509
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Dear Councilman Costello:

I am writing to support the U.S. Sulpician Fathers' request to rezone St Mary's Spiritual Center at 600 N Paca St from Open Space to its previous R-8 Residential zoning. The U.S. Sulpician Fathers have designated St. Mary's on Paca Street as the site of the Blessed Father Michael McGivney House of Formation and hope that approximately 8-16 young men and two priests will reside on the site in a renovated convent building. The Seton Hill Association welcomes the limited return of residents at the Spiritual Center and looks forward to further engagement as the renovation proceeds through CHAP. It is the Seton Hill Association's understanding that the property was rezoned in error in 2017 as part of new Transform Baltimore zoning code and rezoning to R-8 would allow for the opening of the McGivney House of Formation on Paca St.

The Seton Hill Association is a nonprofit community organization that serves as the advocate for Seton Hill, the neighborhood that surrounds the Spiritual Center. We work with government representatives, businesses, and institutional leaders to further the cause of a diverse, beautiful, and vibrant community. The Association places emphasis on maintaining and improving St. Mary's Park and the neighborhood's historic character.

Seton Hill is an area rich in religious, architectural and African-American history that was built around the St Mary's Seminary and University grounds, which is the site of the first Roman Catholic seminary in the United States, founded in 1791. The neighborhood is architecturally significant as one of Baltimore's oldest intact row house neighborhoods and was designated as an Historic and Architectural Preservation District of Baltimore City in 1968 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

The U.S. Sulpician Fathers, owners of the property, have proven to be outstanding community participants and stewards of the remaining historic structures on the property that are surrounded by St. Mary's Park.

My contact email is president@setonhill.org

Sincerely,



Carl Shapiro

President