



MEMORANDUM

STEPHANIE
RAWLINGS-BLAKE,
Mayor

PAUL T. GRAZIANO,
Executive Director, HABC
Commissioner, HCD

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Karen Randle, *Executive Secretary*

From: Paul T. Graziano, *Commissioner*

Date: September 27, 2010

Re: **City Council Bill 10-0586 - Sharp Leadenhall Historic District**

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 10-0586, which was introduced for the purpose of designating the area located within certain boundaries as the Sharp Leadenhall Historic District.

The Sharp Leadenhall neighborhood is associated with 200 years of African American and European immigration history in South Baltimore. This neighborhood can trace its heritage back to the last decade of the 18th Century when a small colony of free blacks resided approximately where the Baltimore Convention Center stands today. Frederick Douglass attended this community's former Sharp Street AME Church in the 1830s. The neighborhood also became the home to a large German immigrant population that migrated to neighborhood during the 19th Century.

Despite Sharp Leadenhall's historic past, the neighborhood would have ceased to exist had federal, state and local agencies had moved forward with initial plans in the 1960's to construct a massive highway project through the community. Residents rallied successfully to reroute the highway and thus save their neighborhood from oblivion. By approving this historic district designation, the City Council would reward and honor the efforts of those residents.

The Department of Housing and Community Development supports the adoption of City Council Bill 10-0586.

PTG:pmd

cc: Ms. Angela Gibson, *Mayor's Office of Government Relations*
Ms. Diane Hutchins, *Mayor's Office of Government Relations*
Ms. Kaliope Parthemos, *Deputy Mayor*

