



BALTIMORE HOUSING

STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE
Mayor

PAUL T. GRAZIANO
Executive Director, HABC
Commissioner, HCD

MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

From: Paul T. Graziano, Commissioner

Date: November 16, 2015

Re: **City Council Bill 15-0590 – Demolition, etc., of City Structures**

The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 15-0590, for the purpose of prohibiting the demolition or reconstruction of certain City-owned structures unless expressly authorized by an ordinance of the Mayor and City Council; defining certain terms; and requiring that, on introduction of a proposed authorizing ordinance, the bill be referred to certain agencies for their reports and recommendations.

This bill would require an ordinance for the demolition or reconstruction of City owned buildings that have been used for municipal purposes such as office buildings, recreational facilities, schools, fire stations, etc. The bill does not establish criteria for this review, but it does require reports from the Planning Department, controlling agency, Department of Real Estate and any other agency designated by the Council President.

There are currently review mechanisms in place between the Department of Real Estate, HCD, Planning, The Department of General Services and the Law Department about the disposal of surplus City-owned property. In some cases involving demolition and reconstruction, additional overlay of review by the Commission of Historical and Architectural Preservation is necessary or the Maryland Department of the Environment.

The demolition/reconstruction process can be lengthy and costly for the agency. We know that the longer a structure remains vacant, the more costly it is to maintain and the more costly it is for the community to have a large blighting structure in its midst.

While we have no specific recommendation on CC 15-0590, The Department of Housing and Community Development would love to work further with the Council on the intent of the legislation.

PTG:kw

cc: Ms. Angela Gibson, *Mayor's Office of Government Relations*
Mr. Colin Tarbert, *Deputy Mayor*

No recommendation

