

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: November 11, 2011

Re: **City Council Bill 11-0639 - Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation - Review of Plans for City-Owned Property**

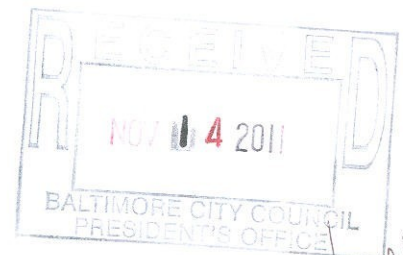
The Department of Housing and Community Development has reviewed City Council Bill 11-0639, which was introduced for the purpose of extending the period for the Commission's review and report on the proposed reconstruction, alteration, or demolition of City-owned property; correcting, clarifying, and conforming related provisions; and generally relating to historical and architectural preservation.

The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is concerned that City Council Bill 11-0639 may have unintended consequences of being overly broad in its impact on review of City-owned property disposition plans. As HCD reads this bill, it may apply to every single property owned by the City, not merely those located in historic districts or listed on a landmark list. HCD is concerned this may lead to unduly delaying or outright jeopardizing important redevelopment projects of City-owned lands, as review by the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) is just one of many numerous agencies that must sign off on a project before it may proceed. Additionally, CHAP currently has forty-five (45) days—about six weeks—to review plans and offer a response; this bill would extend that time period to ninety (90) days, or three months. HCD is committed to streamlining the disposition process of City-owned properties for interested developers and to get them back on the tax role and fears that this lengthening of review time may impede this progress. HCD notes that the Department of Planning has suggested and offered amendments that address both the above concerns.

The Department of Housing and Community Development objects to City Council Bill 11-0639 for the above-noted reasons, but would have no objection to the bill if the amendments proposed by the Department of Planning are adopted.

PTG:nb

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



Woolly J. Hammond