



Statement on Baltimore County's Proposed Sale of the North Point Government Center By Janice Evans, President and Amy Menzer, Executive Director

DRC's mission is promoting reinvestment in our community, and our organization is always willing to consider proposals from government and developers that may revitalize Dundalk in ways that enhance neighborhoods, grow the local economy, and protect and improve the natural environment.

We believe the possibility of redeveloping the Government Center to help provide better retail choices, while at the same time obtaining new community facilities of equal or better quality, is worthy of consideration.

Regarding the North Point Government Center, DRC has made no endorsement of any particular redevelopment proposal, and we have made no statement supporting the sale of the Government Center. What we have done is:

- 1) urged the County to consider the site's revitalization potential as part Dundalk's broader redevelopment needs;
- 2) identified a number of concerns held by our own organization, and expressed by many others in the community, that must be answered before DRC would take a position on any redevelopment proposal for the Government Center;
- 3) requested in our letter of April 30, 2012 that the County provide the community with more information regarding how the redevelopment of the Government Center would impact surrounding neighborhoods, retail parcels, current users of the services and recreational facilities at the site, and the environment;
- 4) advocated that any proposals make accommodations for current users of the site; and
- 5) should the parcel be sold as the County indicated may happen, advocated that proceeds from the sale of the parcel return to the community to fund other community priorities.

DRC is awaiting a response from the County to our letter. We believe the information we requested would be quite helpful in assessing pending redevelopment proposals as well as in planning for the long-term vitality of our major commercial corridor.

Public input in community redevelopment is essential, and this is a guiding principle in DRC's decision making process. We urge the County to involve the public in the process of evaluating developer proposals in response to the County's Request for Proposals for North Point Government Center and other properties. Should any proposal be deemed worthy of selection, DRC urges the County to include the community in the process of working out further details with the selected developer and the County regarding the site, as well as the replacement and relocation of any of its existing uses.

Regarding the proposals affecting Eastwood and Norwood Elementary and Holabird Middle schools, DRC heard about these when the County issued its press release in December 2012. While we think those proposals are worthy of consideration, DRC has concerns about lack of public input to the County's decision making process. We suggest the County follow the process of deliberation and public input that was used to make decisions for redevelopment of Dundalk and Sollers Point High Schools. That process should serve as a model now.

In any redevelopment opportunity we have one chance to get it right, as a County and as a community. If a proposal is deemed worthy of selection, the community and government should work closely with the developer to pursue whatever measures are feasible to encourage the very best outcome—for the community. However, redevelopment proposals that are not right for the community should be set aside. Dundalk needs good redevelopment proposals.

DRC is ready and willing to listen to those proposals, and to listen, learn, deliberate, and plan for our community's future. We hope the County, the community, and developers can all be engaged in a constructive dialogue on how we get there.

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