



PATAPSCO HERITAGE GREENWAY, INC.
P. O. Box 96, Ellicott City, Maryland 21041 | info@patapsco.org |
Patapsco.org

September 6, 2018
Re: HPC 18-46 Advisory comments-
Multiple Properties in the Ellicott City
Historic District

Chairperson Shad and members of the Historic Preservation Commission:

The Patapsco Heritage Greenway's (PHG's) mission is to preserve, protect, interpret and restore the environment, history and culture of the Patapsco Valley. Our organization is the managing entity for the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area.

We appreciate the opportunity to present some comments for the Commission's consideration as it weighs decisions relative to the future of historic Ellicott City. We recognize the role of the Commission and staff, who have been directly involved with the buildings and structures in the Historic District of Ellicott City over the years and appreciate your commitment to historic preservation.

First and foremost, PHG recognizes and supports the urgent, compelling need to take measures to provide for the safety of those who live in, work and visit the Historic District.

The ongoing challenge of water retention and conveyance lies in the fabric of the history of the town. It still is a challenge today and will be into the future. Major projects for water retention and infiltration are immediately needed, some correctly state they needed to be started many years ago. The Historic District faces both the impacts from Patapsco River flooding and upper level run-off into the river tributaries and Main Street.

The authentic streetscape found in the Historic District, which features buildings immediately adjacent to- the National Road, Main Street is rare and evokes much of the town's charm and attracts visitors from around the world. PHG recognizes and empathizes with those who are making difficult decisions about their ability to continue to sustain themselves in these buildings, given the flash flooding threat and reality that we are living with today. Therefore, PHG supports the County in its efforts to acquire these 10 buildings on lower Main Street, as identified in The Ellicott City Flood Mitigation Plan, August 23, 2018. We recognize the importance of these 10 buildings built in the 1830-1930 time frame. That century represents approximately half the Period of Significance for the Historic District, and nine of the buildings contribute to the historic character of the District. .

It is our hope and desire that this acquisition process will provide critical time for questions to be answered, as well as an opportunity to further ensure that consideration has been given to possible alternatives that may minimize the scope of the demolition proposal. Of utmost importance and concern to PHG is the protection of the site of the 1830 Ellicott City Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Station (a designated National Historic Landmark), which also includes its historically significant roundtable and freight house.

PATAPSCO HERITAGE GREENWAY, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization working to preserve, protect, interpret, & restore the environment, history, and culture of the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area.

PHG is confident that the Commission will carefully research the buildings proposed for demolition, their history, significance and visual impact on the historic district streetscape.

PHG is ready, and welcomes the opportunity to explore options with the Administration, its consultants and other partners.

We recognize that further discussion and opportunities for modifications to the proposed flood mitigation solution will become available during the on-going Ellicott City Master Planning process. As we move toward that process, we hope to have the benefit of greater insight into the decisions surrounding the proposed Flood Mitigation Plan for Ellicott City. It is incumbent upon everyone involved in helping to make these important decisions to weigh both the historical implications as well as the overarching public safety concern. What is in front of us now is to engage in ways that best help the County to develop a strategic, long term plan that provides for the continuing economic vitality of the Historic District's Main Street residents, retail and visitors and recognizes its historic features.

Grace Kubofcik
President