



Howard County Government News Release

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Executive Kittleman submits legislation to establish committee on use of the Harriet Tubman School site

ELLICOTT CITY, MD – Howard County Executive Allan H. Kittleman has submitted a resolution to the County Council establishing a School Surplus Use Committee as the next formal step in the transfer of the former Harriet Tubman High School site to county ownership.

Kittleman's legislation is required by County Code when a school site is no longer needed for educational purposes. The committee would be comprised of 10 voting members of the public who represent the areas of human services, education, government, arts and culture, housing and the community, as well as county officials.

"We have been waiting for more than 20 years for this center to become a reality," said Kittleman, who negotiated the ownership transfer of the property with the Howard County Public School System. "This project is near and dear to my heart, and I look forward to Sept. 16, 2017 when, for the first time, we will celebrate Harriet Tubman Day at the Harriet Tubman High School."

Kittleman has advocated for years for the school to be transformed into an African-American cultural and educational center. Earlier this year, the Howard County Public School System declared the Tubman building surplus and agreed to transfer the site to Howard County government.

Voting members of the committee would include Bessie Bordenave, Herman Charity, Willie Flowers, Roberta Kelly, Doris Ligon, Howard Lyles, Dorothy Moore, Douglas Sands, Maurice Simpkins, and Patricia Thorne. Many of the members have been personally involved in the effort to preserve the building as a center to share African-American history.

Non-voting officials or the official's designee on the committee include James Irvin of the Department of Public Works; Jackie Scott of the Department of Community Resources and Services; Peter Engel of the Howard County Housing Commission; Kelly Cimino of the

Kittleman asks County Council to approve resolution establishing committee on Tubman School use

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Department of Housing and Community Development; Larry Twele of the Howard County Economic Development Authority; John Butler of the Department of Fire and Rescue Services; Holly Sun of the Office of Budget; and Jessica Feldmark, Administrator to the County Council.

“We are excited about the transfer of this building, a very historical one for the African-American community, as it was the only school that the African-American students could attend during the late 1940s, 1950s and 1960s,” said Bessie Bordenave, president of the Harriet Tubman Foundation. “This will be an excellent opportunity to share our rich history with all citizens of Howard County as much of our history has gone unknown and unheard for many years. This also will be an opportunity to learn the history and culture of the many other citizens of Howard County.”

The Harriet Tubman School opened in 1949 and served as the county’s only all-black high school until it was closed through desegregation in 1965.

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