

Mayor
Sarah Franklin

Commissioners
Derrick Brooks
Charles Colbert
Karen Lott
Alma Prevatte



Wednesday, March 6, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

I am writing to you as the Mayor of the Town of Upper Marlboro to express our position for House Bill 376, which we support with amendments that we believe are crucial for the well-being and development of our town.

HB 376, which proposes a comprehensive study on the feasibility of relocating the County Board headquarters, is a step in the right direction. However, without further specification on the future use and remediation of the potentially abandoned Prince George's County Public School System Headquarters, our town faces the risk of being left with another vacant and unmaintained property.

The Town is one square mile and 60% of this is government-owned untaxable property. This puts an undue burden on the 650 residents that live in this area. These 300 households that make up 40% of the land in Upper Marlboro pay the costs for all. When the County abandons these buildings the residents of the Town are left with the impacts of a large vacant building with no financial support to maintain or redevelop the land.

The Town of Upper Marlboro is favorable towards the bill but suggests the following amendments to ensure that should the School Board headquarters relocated it does not negatively impact our community:

1. **Pg. 1, Line 15-16 Amendment:** We propose that the bill explicitly require the hired independent consultant to not only complete a study on the feasibility of studying options for location the County Board headquarters but also to make recommendations on the future use and remediation of the headquarters site, should another location be chosen.

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2. **Pg. 3, Line 10-11 Amendment:** It is essential that if the current Upper Marlboro site is not chosen for the School Board the Prince George's County Council cover the cost of the site's remediation, as chosen by the Upper Marlboro Town Council. This ensures that financial responsibility is clearly defined, and that the town is not burdened with the cost of revitalizing a property made vacant by county-level decisions.

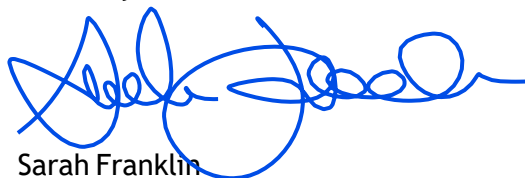
The potential departure of the School Board from its current location raises significant concerns about the creation of additional unmaintained and vacant properties within our town. It is imperative that any move made by the County Board includes a plan for the properties they leave behind. The absence of such a plan could lead to negative consequences for the aesthetic, economic, and social fabric of Upper Marlboro.

Our amendments aim to ensure that the transition is not only smooth but also beneficial for all stakeholders involved, especially the residents of Upper Marlboro. By considering the future use and remediation of the abandoned property from the outset, we can prevent potential negative impacts on our community and instead turn this change into an opportunity for positive development.

We appreciate your consideration of our amendments to House Bill 376 and urge the committee to adopt these changes to protect and enhance the interests of the Town of Upper Marlboro and its residents. We believe that with these amendments, HB 376 can truly reflect a forward-thinking and community-focused approach to the challenges and opportunities presented by the relocation of the Prince George's County Public School System Headquarters.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Franklin', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Sarah Franklin
Mayor of the Town of Upper Marlboro