

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
PUBLIC OVERSIGHT HEARING
Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development**

Wednesday March 2, 2016

Testimony of Beth Purcell on behalf of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society

My name is Beth Purcell, and I am testifying as Chair of the Historic Preservation Committee of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS), the largest civic organization on Capitol Hill. Since 1955 CHRS has advocated for the welfare of Capitol Hill.

DC government owns an important building on Capitol Hill, the Boys and Girls Club at 261 17th Street, SE. It's a Classical Revival building constructed in 1937 as a recreational facility. The building is vacant. In 2015, responsibility for the building was transferred from the DC Department of General Services to the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED). This is an important building in our neighborhood that could be put to productive use, possibly as affordable housing for seniors. We need DMPED to engage with Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6B and the community and make adaptive use of this building a top priority.

DMPED has completed award-winning projects to convert other older buildings, such as the Boys and Girls Club, into affordable housing. DMPED helped to make the House of Lebanon at 27 O Street, NW a success as a tax rehabilitation project converting a school building into housing for seniors. That project won many awards. The Boys and Girls Club should be eligible for the federal rehabilitation tax credit because it should be eligible to be listed on the DC Inventory of Historic Places. This building could help to meet the need for affordable housing. If there is community support, we urge DMPED to also consider the low-income tax credit.

We urge that DMPED to make the Boys and Girls Club a top priority, and work with Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6B, CHRS, and the community to create another award-winning project.

Thank you for considering our testimony.

Boys and Girls Club, 261 17th Street, SE, owned by DC government, under DMPED jurisdiction.

