



<http://www.baltimoresun.com/business/realestate/bal-md.county18jan18,1,6726433.story?coll=bal-realestate-headlines-1>

## Balto. Co. Council votes to expand preservation tax breaks

By Josh Mitchell  
sun reporter

January 18, 2006

The Baltimore County Council voted last night to expand a program that gives tax breaks to people who renovate historic buildings.

The county has offered the tax credits for years, but few people have applied for them. County officials blame the dearth of applications on a requirement that renovation costs equal a quarter of a property's value.

Under the new legislation, approved by unanimous vote, owners of residential properties will get a tax rebate equal to 20 percent of the cost of improvements that exceed \$1,000. Owners of commercial properties who perform renovations will be protected from property tax increases for 10 years.

Councilman Stephen G. Samuel Moxley said a number of property owners have expressed interest in the tax credit.

"The cost of rehabbing a house that's historic is extremely expensive," said Moxley, a Catonsville Democrat, adding that the tax credit will provide a "boost" for residents considering such renovations.

Preservationists, who have often accused the county of not doing enough to save historic buildings from demolition, hailed the new tax-credit program as among the best in the state.

The tax breaks will apply to buildings on the county landmarks list, on the National Register of Historic Places or in a national or county historic district - more than 3,000 residential and commercial buildings, according to the county.

The legislation was recommended by a task force commissioned by County Executive James T. Smith Jr. It comes several months after an uproar over the way the county handled the demolition of the 19th-

century Elizabeth Gardner House in Hunt Valley and consternation over the razing of the 18th-century Samuel Owings House in Owings Mills a decade ago.

In other business, the council voted, 6-1, to allow a plan for 29 townhouses in Cub Hill to be reviewed as a planned unit development. T. Bryan McIntire, a north county Republican, voted against sending the proposal to the county Planning Board for review, saying many residents in his district oppose the project because of traffic concerns.

.....  
[josh.mitchell@baltsun.com](mailto:josh.mitchell@baltsun.com)  
.....

Copyright © 2006, *[The Baltimore Sun](#)* / *[Get Sun home delivery](#)*

> [Get news on your mobile device at www.baltimoresun.com](http://www.baltimoresun.com)