



Greater Harrisburg Association Of REALTORS®

For Immediate Release

Contact: Kathy Ludwig, Executive Vice President or
Sherri Pursel, Government Affairs Director
Phone: (717) 763-0200
e-mail: kathy@ghar.info
sherri@ghar.info

LOCAL REALTORS® SUPPORT MIDTOWN SITE FOR NEW FEDERAL COURTHOUSE

Association Opposes Two Downtown Harrisburg Locations Proposed by GSA

HARRISBURG (Sept. 7, 2007) – The Greater Harrisburg Association of REALTORS® (GHAR) today announced its support of the Sixth and Reily Streets location for the new federal courthouse in Harrisburg. GHAR maintained that the midtown Harrisburg location would be in the best interest of property owners, the City of Harrisburg, and taxpayers.

“Locating the new federal courthouse at Sixth and Reily Streets in midtown Harrisburg will require a much less drastic use of eminent domain,” says Jerrod Paterson, President of the Greater Harrisburg Association of REALTORS®. “Using eminent domain on this [Sixth and Reily] site will not require a large number of property owners and tenants to relocate to new sites.”

While GHAR acknowledged that there are instances when the government must use eminent domain, it strongly encourages governments to practice restraint with this power. Using eminent domain on the midtown site, rather than the two U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)–preferred sites in downtown Harrisburg, will provide the opportunity for the federal government to practice restraint with the use of eminent domain.

-more-

G HAR also strongly believes that the new courthouse will further enhance the economic activity of the growing midtown Harrisburg area. A vast number of commercial and residential development projects are already underway or completed. Constructing the \$100 million courthouse in this area will add to this existing activity.

“As many of us are aware, midtown Harrisburg is in the midst of an economic renaissance,” Paterson says. “Constructing the new courthouse in midtown will further compliment this already booming area and contribute to the overall economic vibrancy of the City of Harrisburg.”

While having a positive economic impact, a midtown federal courthouse also will minimize the negative fiscal impacts on the City.

“The two GSA-preferred locations in downtown Harrisburg will displace multiple commercial properties and create a large tax-exempt property,” says Paterson. “Removing tax-paying, commercial properties will further hamper a city that already contains an abundance of tax-exempt federal and state government properties.”

In its announcement, G HAR explained that it submitted a letter to the GSA strongly supporting the midtown Harrisburg location and opposing the two proposed downtown locations.

“Overall, it makes sense for the courthouse to be located in midtown,” concluded Paterson. “It is good for the economic welfare of the City, it is good for taxpayers, and it is a prudent use of eminent domain.”

###