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ECO

EdmondsonCommunity.org

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EDMONDSON COMMUNITY CENTER BUILDING PUT TO AUCTION
COMMUNITY GROUP SEEKS COURT ACTION**

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Today marks what may be the final chapter in the ECO's decades-long relationship with its community center at 2114-2116 Edmondson Avenue in Baltimore. An auction begins this morning, June 10th, and ends June 14th, in which the ECO building is being offered for sale by the tax certificate holder, after such person had received a foreclosure judgment in Baltimore Circuit Court. The sad and sorry end of another victim of Baltimore's disastrous tax sale system is upon us.

To those who know the city's tax sale system, the story is a familiar one. In 2018, the building was placed in the sale for the meager sum of \$2,543 in back taxes owed; the auction was won with a bid of just \$5,115. When contacted this year by the ECO leadership, the certificate owner offered to sell the building for \$80,000. Unfortunately, the ECO was not able to raise the money quickly enough - and city and state elected leaders made little to no effort to get it back on the community's behalf. Observers now believe the building will sell at auction for as much as \$150,000.

The irony is that the ECO had just circulated a proposal to state and federal funding entities in which the tax sale certificate owner would be bought out (at a tremendous profit), and the building would be entirely renovated and reimagined as a shining new community anchor for the neighborhood - one of the most disinvested areas of the state, and an area that's 95% Black and a quintessential example how misguided government policies and projects like Redlining and the Highway to Nowhere can destroy a community. The tax sale was yet another one of those unfortunate government initiatives. That community center proposal, by the way, was well-received and well-reviewed, but alas, the auction goes one.

But the ECO announces today that this is not the end of the fight for us. **The ECO has reviewed the court documents pertaining to the building's auction and has found an extension in those documents which we believe may be worthy of review by the court, and potentially reversible, so that is what we're seeking.** We think we have a good case, but even if the court doesn't agree, rest assured the ECO will never stop fighting - for rapid, equitable, transformational revitalization in Midtown-Edmondson and beyond, for the end of this terrible tax sale system, and for a spot for our new community center. We know a few good ones.