
Seaven Gordon Day Remarks - Dec. 5, 2018

Seaven Gordon - a Community Treasure

A half century ago, Seaven Gordon, and the late Lord Nickens responded to violent and discouraging current events, in the battle for Civil Rights, by digging in, with peaceful determination, to improve their world: They founded the Frederick Community Center in 1968 -- after the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, despite, surely, some temptation to turn negative and give up hope.

Instead, they set out to make the change that was needed: to provide social, recreational, and community services to lower-income residents living on the south side of Frederick, our City; we, had neglected our responsibility, and Seaven Gordon, along with Lord Nickens, stepped up.

I am proud to say that we, as a City, do much better today owning up to our responsibility, but we might not be as committed now, if it had not been for Seaven Gordon's persistence then: He didn't spend his time on a soap box.

In 1970, Seaven Gordon and Lord Nickens formed Friends for Neighborhood Progress, as a non-profit to support the work of the Frederick Community Center. Ron Young -- now Senator Ron Young -- was then Mayor of Frederick, and he also served on the Board of Directors of Friends for Neighborhood Progress.

In 1979, Seaven Gordon, Lord Nickens, and Mayor Ron Young formed a partnership with the City of Frederick, and the City purchased the historic B&O Train Station that housed the Frederick Community Center.

In 1993, the City and County governments passed a Joint Resolution designating the Frederick Community Center as the “Community Action Agency” for all of Frederick County. The organization was later renamed the Frederick Community Action Agency, as we know it today.

The Community Action Agency, its soup kitchen and health clinic, feed and care for thousands of people in need.

Seaven Gordon has served on the Community Action Agency Board of Directors (a City-appointed Board) since 1979, and is the immediate past chairman of the Board. He has served on the Board of Directors of Friends for Neighborhood Progress since 1970, and has served as treasurer of the organization for the past 30 years!

Today the Community Action Agency is central to this City’s commitment to serving the most challenged people, whether they suffer from substance use disorder, homelessness, undiagnosed or untreated illnesses or the unavoidable ravages of poverty.

There will always be more that we can – and will try to – do. Thanks to Seaven Gordon, we have come a long way to meeting our responsibilities, as neighbors, as humans. No service could be more aptly described than Seaven Gordon’s on the board of “Friends for Neighborhood Progress.”

Thank you, Seaven, on behalf of the entire City of Frederick.

###