

confirming my thought on this matter. My request and the Attorney General's opinion follow:

November 22, 1966

Honorable Robert C. Murphy
Acting Attorney General
State Law Department
1200 One Charles Center
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Dear Mr. Murphy:

As you are aware, at the election of November 8th there was a constitutional amendment on the ballot which would abolish the office of the Commissioner of the Land Office (Question No. 16, Chapter 489, Acts of 1966). This question received the approval of the electorate of Maryland, which brought into effect Chapter 488, providing that the Hall of Records take over the duties of the Commissioner of the Land Office. This posed a problem in record keeping which the Hall of Records Commission has directed me to submit to you for an opinion.

When the Land Office moved from the Hall of Records Building some years ago, to the New State Office Building, they left the abstracts of conveyances with us. These abstracts formerly were required of every clerk of court. He sent them in in May or June and they were indexed by the Land Office. This is a collection of approximately 1,500 volumes.

Now, with the consolidation of the two offices, we should like to bring the old records of the Land Office (patents, warrants, chancery, etc.) back to the Hall of Records. In order to provide space for them, we should like to get rid of the abstracts. These abstracts are of no further use to anyone because, in addition to the original land records which are for the most part still in the county courthouses, we have microfilm copies at the Hall of Records. They are of so little value that the Land Office did not consider moving them to their new quarters.

It is our feeling that these records should be disposed of, either by destruction or otherwise. The Hall of Records Commission is loath to destroy them and suggested that we might find a home for them in the various counties in the county historical society. I was agreeable to that, but then we questioned whether either I or the Hall of Records Commission had the authority to dispose of them in this fashion.