



Howard County Council

George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

COUNCILMEMBERS

Christiana Rigby, Chair
District 3

Deb Jung, Vice Chair
District 4

Liz Walsh
District 1

Opel Jones
District 2

David Yungmann
District 5

Capital Budget Work Session #3 Meeting Minutes – Approved

Web-based Hybrid Meeting

Video Streamed on <https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/Online-Tools/Watch-Us>

Wednesday, April 26, 2023

9:30 a.m.

Chair Rigby opened the meeting at 9:33am.

Members Present: Christiana Rigby, Chairperson; Deb Jung, Vice Chairperson; Liz Walsh; Opel Jones; and David Yungmann.

Staff Present: Michelle Harrod, Council Administrator; Gary Kuc, County Solicitor; Amanda Mihill, Assistant County Solicitor; Craig Glendenning, County Auditor; Owen Clarke, Deputy County Auditor; Lori Buchman, Auditor's Office; Brenda Smith, administrative support; Theo Wimberly, Administrative Manager; Jeff Meyers, Lynne Rosen, and Owen Kahn, Legislative Analysts.

Administration Staff Present: Noted below.

Agenda:

Overview of Downtown Columbia

The Department of Planning and Zoning gave an overview of the proposed FY2024 capital projects for Downtown Columbia, neighborhood by neighborhood: Warfield; the Mall; Symphony Overlook; Merriweather-Symphony Woods; the Crescent; and the Lakefront. The Department responded to questions from the Council on implementation of the Downtown Columbia plan post COVID; the status of the Bannker fire station; the potential for housing on top of the transit center; the minimum and maximum levels of residential and commercial development in downtown Columbia and potential headwinds on office space; and the definition of a new project and how the new proposed library complies with planning requirements.

There was a discussion about how the budget requests are aligning with various plans and if a longer conversation is necessary to understand changes in downtown Columbia plans.

Council Requested:

- *Please provide a copy of the presentation that was included in the overview of Downtown Columbia.*

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- *Please indicate if there will be a public meeting to discuss the changes that have occurred in Downtown Columbia since 2010.*
- *Please indicate the plan for transferring Banneker Station to the Housing Commission.*
- *Will the transfer of the Banneker Station to the Housing Commission require amendments to the current agreements to accommodate senior housing?*
- *Has consideration been made to put senior housing in the Crescent area where the library was originally planned to be located?*
- *Is there still a plan to place housing above the Transit Center?*
- *Will the number of residential units in Downtown Columbia change as a result of the delay in commercial construction?*
- *What market impediments are preventing development from being completed in the original timeframe?*
- *Please confirm the length of time the governing agreements/plans from 2010 cover.*
- *At what point does the DRRA need to be amended to reflect the changes that have occurred from the original plan?*
- *Confirm if the change in sight and scope of the library is required to be presented to the Planning Board.*

New HCLS Central Branch & Relocation (L0020) and Tax Increment Financing (C0319)

The Howard County Library System gave a presentation on examples of libraries worldwide, the needs of the HCLS, an overview of the proposed HCLS Central Branch Library in downtown Columbia, and the Tax Increment Financing. The Library System responded to questions from the Council on the process for recommending the new library site and the need for new space; why a bidding price was not used and why the cost has changed from the proposal last year; how the project would change if the funding amount is decreased and constraints on less expensive designs; how other examples compare with their local systems; the history of HCLS and evolving quality; why the expected costs have increased and why the process has been presented to the public and the Council in the way that it was; the timeline of developing the project; the funding sources for the project and the percentage that the County is funding compared to private and State sources; public and private parking at the Lakefront; expected price increases in future years; why Howard Hughes isn't contributing to the parking; alternative options for creating new services at existing sites; the land swap between Howard Hughes and the County; discussions with other third party developers for options at the Lakefront, as well as philanthropic and private input; the operating cost of the new library; the placeholder \$40 million in previous budgets; the \$80 million in the TIF and if it is in line with previous proposals, and a similar question for GO bonds; who the primary customer is for the new library and if HCLS is looking for out of County visitors; how the library is going to benefit downtown Columbia as a public amenity and how Howard Hughes views the lakefront plan; the educational role of the library in the County; pedestrian routes to nearby recreational options; why the project is a soul source contract and not a bid contract, and generally the planned procurement process; the justification for a DRRA project versus a standalone County library; how the assessed value of the land compares to the developer fees; the process for getting planning approval; and the projected square footage of the library.

Council Requested:

- *Please provide the Bloomberg article that was mentioned in the presentation.*
- *Please provide data related to the 5 stars and factors related to this ranking.*
- *Please provide the guidelines for the State recommendations of square footage for libraries.*
- *When was the proposal for the new Library made to the County Executive?*
- *How much was the County contributing towards parking at the original Merriweather site? How many spaces were proposed at this site?*
- *Please indicate what land swaps are required by the DRRA.*
- *What are the additional costs that are being added to the project, in addition to those required by the DRRA.*
- *Please provide an itemization of costs that are covered by the developer.*
- *Please provide appraisals on all three properties, Merriweather location, Lakefront location and current location of the Central Branch.*
- *Please provide the economic benefits of building the library at the Lakefront (Tonya mentioned she would provide this)*
- *Please provide an analysis for how the amount of philanthropic donations were estimated.*
- *Please list the conditions for the developer fees.*
- *Please indicate what about this project makes it a profit generator for Howard Research and Development.*
- *Please provide the economic report that shows the return on investment for construction of a library.*

New Cultural Center (Project C0364)

The administration gave an update on the cultural arts center. The administration responded to questions from the Council on the effect of the redesign on the dinner theater; the new cost of the scaled back building and the budgeting process; programming that could be moved to other County facilities such as the new library; the number of units at Artist Flats; prior year funding and the developer contributions; the contractual commitments of the developer; and the possibility for combining the cultural center with the new Lakefront library.

Council Requested:

- *Please provide changes in square footage, as mentioned in the work session.*
- *Please provide the split between County space and Toby's Dinner Theater space.*
- *Will the financial contribution for Toby's be reexamined?*
- *Please share the drawings of the revised plan for the New Cultural Center.*
- *Please provide the revised sources and uses of the funding. Please include an itemization of the contingency included in the uses of funding.*
- *Please prepare an overview of the three components (art gallery, blackbox/classrooms, dinner theater) of the New Cultural Center for the Council monthly meeting, to be determined.*
- *Please provide the costs of the three components (art gallery, blackbox/classrooms, dinner theater), indicate the changes that were made to each component, indicate how the decision was made for the changes and why this version is the right choice.*

Ellicott City Improvements and Enhancements (C0337)

The Department of Public Works gave an overview of the proposed FY2024 capital projects for Ellicott City improvements and enhancements, including the Ellicott City Safe and Sound program. The Department responded to questions from the Council on expected total costs and cost increases; the scope of future projects; the plan for the tunnel if CSX declines the County's request; changes in plans for flood water after shifting focus to the tunnel; the effects of time delays since 2016; the negotiations with CSX and a potential replacement of the bridge; the permitting process for the buildings in Ellicott City and the discussions with MDE; HPC approval that was contingent on CSX approval; the design philosophy behind the "bowls;" the modeled effect of the North Tunnel on downtown Ellicott City; the status of projects for the Tiber watershed; and return on investment for these projects and reconfiguring plans for old Ellicott City that would decrease risk instead of moving water. There was a general discussion about how project funding balances needs of the County and why these projects are necessary. The Department answered further questions on the Roger Avenue project; and the Courthouse parking lot.

Council Requested:

- *Please provide a copy of the presentation that was included in the overview of Ellicott City.*
- *Please provide the velocity of the water that was in the prior Ellicott City plan.*
- *Please provide the economic benefits and return on investment that will be generated by the investment in the North Tunnel.*
- *Please provide an updated economic impact of not doing the tunnel.*

Chair Rigby adjourned the meeting at 3:25pm.

4/26/2023 CIP Work Session Attendee List:

Budget

Holly Sun
Brook Mamo

DPW

Yosef Kebede
John Seefried
Susan Voyce

Finance

Rafiu Ighile
Angie Price
John Vu

Overview Downtown Columbia

Brian Shepter
Angela Cabellon
Carl DeLorenzo

Municap

Keenan Rice
Emily Metzler
Lizzy Rice

New HCLS Central Branch & Relocation (L0020) and TIF (C0319)

Angela Cabellon
Carl DeLorenzo
Peter Engel
Alastair Smith
Kristin Perry

Facilities

Sharon Walsh
Tae Jung

OoT

Bruce Gartner
David Cookson

Libraries

Tonya Aikens
Angela Brade
Christie Lassen

Howard Hughes

Greg Fitchitt

Community Foundation of Howard County

Beverly White-Seals

New Cultural Center (Project C0364)

Angela Cabellon
Carl DeLorenzo
Peter Engel
Alastair Smith

Safe and Sound (C0337)

Mark Deluca
Mark Richmond
Zach Hollenbeck
Brain Shepter
Bruce Gartner

Visit the Council's website (<http://cc.howardcountymd.gov>) to view legislation, send written testimony, and sign-up electronically to testify at public hearings.

Persons needing accommodations to fully participate in the meeting, please contact the Council Office, 410-313-2001.