

**New Cultural Center (NCC) Workgroup**  
**Meeting Summary**  
*COLUMBIA DOWNTOWN HOUSING CORPORATION*  
**July 16, 2020 at 3 p.m.**  
**WebEx**

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**Members Present**

Jeryl Baker  
Paul Casey  
Carl DeLorenzo  
Bob DeSantis  
Peter Engel  
Greg Fitchitt  
Opel Jones  
Deb Jung  
Colette Gelwicks  
Sameer Sidh  
Mary Kay Sigaty  
Alastair Smith  
Pat Sylvester  
Liz Walsh- Staff  
David Yungmann

**Members Absent**

**Guests (Page 4)**

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**I. Welcome, Introductions & Purpose**

- On behalf of CDHC, Pat Sylvester welcomed NCC Workgroup members and guests to the first meeting. CDHC will facilitate summer workgroup meetings with the goal of reaching consensus to keep the NCC project on schedule for FY2021.
- CDHC's mission is to fulfill the vision of the Downtown Columbia Plan for a full spectrum and diverse mix of housing that includes affordable housing for low and moderate-income families.
- The agenda was adjusted to cover the NCC Development Budget (III. b.) before covering Bond Pricing & Payments (III. a.).

**II. Overview of Development**

- Pat Sylvester provided background information on the 2016 Downtown Columbia legislation and the Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreement (DRRA) and the Four Party Agreement created under that legislation. These documents are posted on CDHC's website at

[www.howardcountymd.gov/CDHC](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/CDHC).

- The approved Affordable Housing Plan for Downtown includes 400 inclusionary units developed by Howard Hughes, 83 LWYW housing opportunities and five tax-credit projects with 417 affordable housing units.

**a. Design**

- Bob DeSantis, *Orchard Development*, gave an overview of the NCC Design Strategy & Goals.
- The New Cultural Center will spur economic development, support visual & performing arts, and provide a new facility for Toby's Dinner Theatre.
- Nick Mansperger, *Design Collective*, gave an overview of the exterior/interior design plan, including revisions made in consultation with the Department of Recreation and Parks (DRP) and the Columbia Center for Theatrical Arts (CCTA).
- Peter Engel gave an overview of the housing project, Artists Flats, which will include 174 mixed-income units, and of the parking garage, which will provide 740 parking spaces for both the residences and the NCC.
- Construction phases:
  - Phase 1A- CCTA Theatre
  - Phase 1B- NCC & Parking Garage
  - Phase 2- Artists Flats apartment building
- NCC current status: The building design & floorplans are complete. Orchard Development will prepare for permit submission as soon as funding is approved.

**b. Cost Overview**

- Scott Armiger, *Orchard Development*, gave a summary of the cost overview: The total project cost is estimated to be \$138 million (NCC \$72.8M + Artists Flats \$65.2M).

**c. Status of Development Approvals & Permitting**

- APFO requirements passed in August 2016.
- Environmental approvals received in 2017 (County, MDE, FEMA)
- The Site Development Plan was approved in March 2018.

**d. LIHTC Approvals & Timing**

- Peter Engel, *Howard County Housing Commission*, shared information about the housing funding deadlines. The Commission was awarded LIHTCs in 2019, with a project completion deadline of December 2024.

**e. Member Discussion**

- Pat Sylvester invited questions from the Workgroup members about the presentations. Discussion of issues related to operations and programming were held for the July 30 meeting. Members discussed other examples of cultural centers contributing to a jurisdiction's success and vitality, transportation arrangements for dinner theater guests during construction,

general design and marketing of the apartment units for artists, and that the 2016 APFO approval means that the current school system projections include the Artists Flats units.

### **III. NCC Cost Issues**

#### **a. NCC Development Budget**

##### **i. Sources & Uses**

- Bob DeSantis shared information about the NCC Development Budget. Financing for the NCC includes: Howard County GO Bonds (\$62M), TIF Bonds \$9.8M), State grant (\$500,000) & personal donation (\$1M).

##### **ii. Costs & Design- Theater, Lobby, Kitchen**

- Measures to reduce cost by \$7M were discussed.
- Reducing lobby costs would require a significant redesign, yielding minimal savings.
- CCTA will be responsible for the cost of the kitchen fit out and both CCTA and the Capital Budget would cover the costs of the theatre fit out.

##### **iii. COVID Impacts/Adjustments**

- Measures being considered due to COVID-19 include use of: higher grade filtration in HVAC systems, antimicrobial finishes and flexible physical spaces to accommodate de-densification of populations.

#### **b. Bond Pricing & Payments**

##### **i. Bond Pricing Revisions to Reflect Current Market**

- Carl DeLorenzo gave an overview of the County's development of the NCC construction budget and financial plan.
- Peter Engel discussed bond financing options that include reducing interest rate assumptions, project costs, and lease revenue portion of bonds.

##### **ii. Revised Options for Payment of Bond Debt Service**

###### **1. Changes to Proportions Covered by TIF Revenue & Program Revenues**

- Discussed bond financing options such as reducing the amount of bonds supported by the NCC revenue and increasing the amount of bonds supported by TIF revenue.
- The amount of additional TIF revenue would depend on interest rates.

###### **2. Potential Impacts of Revisions on Other Downtown Public Infrastructure, including LIHTC Projects, Schools, Transportation**

- Committing additional TIF revenue to the project will decrease available funds for future Downtown projects. Depending on the amount of TIF revenue committed, a one-year delay in construction of the Library &/or Banneker Fire Station would result if a lower interest rate is obtained.

**c. Member Discussion**

- The members asked questions and discussed the proposed \$7M in budget cuts, specifically the proposed parking reduction of 120 spaces, as well as potential for fundraising, and contribution and costs of FF&E (furniture, fixtures & equipment) to outfit the building. It was requested that the July 30 meeting include an explanation of what it means for the building to be delivered – what the developer must provide and what is done by owner/lessees post delivery. Detail on the costs for FFE for the kitchen and the theater was also requested.

**IV. Opportunity for Public Comments**

- Joel Hurwitz, *HC Resident*, was opposed to the NCC project.
- Mary Ka Kanahan, *PATH*, commented on the critical need for the affordable housing component of the project.

**V. Future Meetings & Topics**

- July 30, 2020 - NCC Programming & Operations, including revenue, costs, & risk mitigation
- August 11, 2020 - Housing related issues and compliance with public contracting, MBE, & general oversight
  - a. Additional meetings will be added as needed (weeks of August 25, Sept 8)
- September 2020 – Housing Affordability Public Forum

**VI. Adjournment 5:00 p.m.**

**Guests**

Angela Price	Jeremy Dommu	Melissa W. Rosenberg
Ashley Alston	Joan Driessen	Michael Harris
Chelsea Hayman	Joe Willmott	Nadine Bernard
China Williams	Joel Hurwitz	Nick Mansperger
Cindy Skalny	John DeZinno	Nicole Dvorak
Claire Matheny	Josh Manley	Nicole Griffith
Coleen West	Keenan Rice	Prepare for Success
Craig Glendenning	Kelly Cimino	Quanita Kareem
Cristiana Little	Kelly McLaughlin	Raul Delerme
Del. Feldmark	Laura Wetherald	Roy Appletree
Felix Facchine	Linda Wengel	Scott Armiger
Ginnie Gick	Mark Dunham	Scott Peterson
Grace Kubofcik	Mark Minnick	Sharon Lee Vogel
Holly Sun	Mary Ka Kanahan	Tina Narr
Indian Cultural Association of HoCo	Matt Herbert	Toby & Hal Ornstein
Jackie Eng	Matt Madera	Tracy Deik
Jean Moon	Maureen Arthurs	Virginia (Ginny) Thomas
Jennifer Sager	Max Levee	