Leggett Breaks Ground for Bold Wheaton Revitalization

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Today during the annual “Taste of Wheaton” county festival, Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett broke ground for the Wheaton revitalization project that will transform the existing Mid-County Regional Services Center building and adjacent parking lot into a County office building, Town Square civic space, underground parking garage, Triangle Lane retail space and ultimately, a residential building.

“The Wheaton revitalization project includes offices, retail and a new Town Square to help make Wheaton an even more dynamic urban community,” said County Executive Ike Leggett. “This project also will save money by moving hundreds of County employees from leased space to a more cost-effective publicly owned building.”

Officials joining Leggett at the groundbreaking ceremony included: County Council President Roger Berliner, County Councilmembers Nancy Navarro, George Leventhal and Hans Riemer, Montgomery County Planning Board Chair Casey Anderson, Maryland State Delegates Al Carr and Jeff Waldstreicher, Department of Transportation Director Al Rosdheld, Community Use of Public Facilities Director Ginny Gong, Department of Environmental Protection Deputy Director Patty Bubar, Health and Human Services Director Uma Aholuwalia, Department of Recreation Director Gabe Alborno, Department of Permitting Services Manager Simin Rasolee, Mid-County Regional Services Director Luisa Montero-Diaz and StonebridgeCarras Principal Jane Galbraith Mahaffie.

“This project will bring office workers, a new community gathering space and more activity to the center of Wheaton, benefitting residents and longtime small businesses,” said County Council President Roger Berliner.

The mixed-use development will promote a vibrant daytime and nighttime street life with a centrally-located public space, boosting Wheaton’s downtown economy. The project also will improve mobility, encourage Wheaton Metro Station use, enhance the environment and increase the diversity of employment opportunities and services in the Wheaton area.

“The groundbreaking for the redevelopment of Lot 13 is a pivotal moment in the revitalization of Wheaton,” said Councilmember Nancy Navarro. “Along with the first-of-its-kind Wheaton Library and Recreation Center, and the modernization of Wheaton High School and Thomas Edison High School of Technology, the County is making a tremendous infrastructure investment in Wheaton. Last year, the State re-designated Wheaton as an Arts and Entertainment district, achieving yet another milestone in the ongoing process to promote community revitalization and economic vibrancy. To protect our small businesses and help alleviate the impact of the redevelopment of Lot 13, I was proud to sponsor Bill 6-12, Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP), which provides both technical and financial assistance to eligible small businesses. We have been working collaboratively with residents, policymakers, the business community and other stakeholders to make Wheaton — and all of mid- and east-Montgomery County – a great place to live, work and play."

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) is leading the effort to remake the downtown Wheaton Triangle by replacing the County-owned Wheaton Market Place Parking Lot with a 308,000-square-foot office building that will house the new headquarters for The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPCC) and staff from six Montgomery County departments and agencies. The first level of the building will also add more than 11,000 square-feet of new retail space along Triangle Lane. The project includes an underground parking garage with 397 public parking spaces and a 35,000 square-foot Town Square at the site of the current Mid-County Regional Services Center building adjacent to the Wheaton Metro Station featuring a stage, amphitheater-style seating, publicly available WiFi, a community water feature, an art sculpture, and open space for community gatherings and activities.

“We are pleased that members of the Wheaton community could help us break ground on our new headquarters building,” said Montgomery Planning Board Chair Casey Anderson. “We are excited about our upcoming move to the neighborhood and proud of the work that went into making sure this building would set a new standard for excellence in the design of public facilities in Montgomery County.”

To execute this project, MCDOT entered into a public-private partnership with affiliates of StonebridgeCarras, LLC, a Bethesda-based real estate firm, and The Bozzuto Group, a Greenbelt-based residential real estate company. Along with the project in Wheaton Triangle, the partnership will create a new Georgia Avenue gateway to Silver Spring with mixed-use residential and retail development on the site of the current headquarters of M-NCPCC at 8787 Georgia Avenue.

The Wheaton office building is designed to meet LEED Platinum (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards. Energy efficiency features include an onsite geothermal system, the first Montgomery County office building to use the energy source, and solar panels. To enhance onsite management of storm water and treat runoff, the project
includes a green roof; silva-cells to promote large tree growth; and biofiltration pits to capture and degrade pollutants. Other sustainable elements include high-efficiency water fixtures to reduce usage by nearly 40 percent; increased efficiency of building insulation through use of exterior shading; punched windows to provide more interior light; a high-performance rain-screen, which increases building wall durability; and a garage with high-efficiency LED lighting and electric vehicle charging stations.

The building will be owned by M-NCPPC and house staff from several Montgomery County departments, including the Department of Permitting Services, Department of Environmental Protection, Mid-County Regional Services Center, Wheaton Urban District, Community Use of Public Facilities, Department of Health and Human Services Licensure and Regulatory Service and Department of Recreation.

This project will also make doing business in Montgomery County easier by co-locating three agencies with responsibility for development oversight. The tenants occupying the building provide the public with close to a one-stop experience for residential, community oriented, and commercial permitting and construction.

Together, the new government building in Wheaton and the building to be subsequently constructed in Silver Spring represent 1.1 million square-feet of smart-growth, transit-oriented development.

The general contractor is Clark Construction Group. The architectural firm is Gensler; Oculus is handling landscape architecture. SK&A is the structural engineer; GHT Limited is the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing engineer; and Bohler Engineering is the civil engineer. The construction is anticipated to be completed in 2020. The total budget for the project is approximately $170 Million.

For more information about Wheaton Revitalization, visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/wheatondev

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