**Elkridge Community Center Community Meeting 3/27/25**

**Monica Pascatore:** We’re going to get started when we have Nick back up here. There is a sign language interpreter over here if anybody needs it.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** OK. Good evening everybody. My name is Nick Mooneyhan, I’m the director of Rec and Parks for Howard County. Welcome to what is our fourth community meeting for the exciting Elkridge Community Center and Fifty Plus Center project. We're happy you could all join us tonight. I see some familiar faces. This is your number four, right? This is four for you. And we're going to be presenting with Canon design here to present the concepts and renderings. At the end of the presentation, there will be an opportunity for some questions. But if you don’t get a chance to provide feedback or ask a question at the end, we have a QR code over at the table over there at the entrance that links you to our project page where you can access all the prior presentations. This presentation would be added to that within a few days, and then you can also access the Elkridge Community Center e-mail to provide feedback. And then of course you can reach out to anybody in Rec and Parks, or DCRS, Office of Aging. Pass along feedback comments and questions. So we're excited to get the presentation underway. But before, I'll hand it over to my counterpart, Jackie Scott.

**Jackie Scott:** Good evening everyone. It's a pleasure to be with you this evening. I'm Jackie Scott. I'm the director of the Department of Community Resources and Services, the umbrella agency under which the Office on Aging resides. And hence our fifty plus center being designed here as a part of our Community Center. I just want to say that we are excited because we have been listening. We have been talking. We have been exhanging. There are a number of people in the room from DCRS here. And your illustrious center director Jeannie is in the room and has been every step of the way our resource for you. We’ll continue to be that resource. We are hoping what you see here this evening from Canon design reflects those pieces of feedback and suggestions that you've given to us and yet know that we are still listening and we're still working and we will continue to do that on this journey. So as was just mentioned by Nick, if you don't get a chance to get your question answered tonight about the fifty plus center or anything under the umbrella of DCRS or in this project together with Rec and Parks, you are welcome to reach out to me directly or anyone on the team today, and we'll try to make sure we answer your questions. With that, I know we want to get on to the important part. And so I'll turn it over to our colleagues at Cannon.

**Monica Pascatore:** Alright. Thank you guys for coming in, I know you’re excited, maybe a little anxious even to see what we've been doing. So thank you for letting us come in to the community again, for your thoughts, and share where we in the process. We're going to cover tonight, looks like a long list, but we’re going to go through it fairly quickly. Where we left off - what we heard. A little bit about site and the transportation pilot program and current site plan. The building. We'll talk quickly about the concept and then the current plans. We’ll walk through some of the program. We’ll talk about arts for all. And then give an overview of the project schedule. Alright. Where we left off was engagement with you. We had two community meetings about within a month of each other. One- were they both at the fire station? No. Yes? No. The one was at fire station, the second was at the library. So we collected some feedback on the program that you want to see in there and concerns and issues you guys brought to the table. That was the last meeting in the gray box. We went away, took that information, did some synthesizing of that. Showed some concepts, brought up some concepts and some ideas and then are back tonight to show you where we are to get, again, your feedback. We will be coming back again in the future to let you know where that evolved to as a next step. Where we left off last time, we had stations. We heard a ton of feedback from these stations. You see we don’t have stations tonight. We're going to give you kind of where we are as that develops. We had one hundred and twenty six participants over those two meetings. Three hundred and ninety four green dots. You remember those? Not just green, but the dots that indicated things you want to see and you’re in support of. One hundred and ninety seven post-its with lots of different notes. Fifty nine voice cards. And the voice cards, you guys- some of you put one or two things on there and some of you burned through and put the entire- filled the entire card, and that's fantastic, because that's what we need to see. When we colate that and divide everything out- What we heard the big chunks of what we heard were that Route One has major traffic concerns. Pedestrian safety is a huge issue. There was an interest in shuttles and a need for parking and access and walking and bike paths. This is in addition to other amenities that are part of the program. And in the building program, again, things that rose to the top were teens and kids programming, being age friendly. An indoor pool. A cafe, something that's more than just a vending machine. Indoor walking or running track. Joint programming. Joint programming to connect ages. And then dedicated fifty plus fitness area. That's not to say that we didn't hear all the other comments, but we can't list them all here. These were, again, the ones that were kind of the loudest and most- not loudest- but most commented on. Site being one of the biggest things. I'm going to turn it over to Nick to talk about the transportation pilot program that's here.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** Thank you Monica. As Monica said that some of the feedback that we got were concerned with, you know, transportation and getting to the fifty plus center and the Community Center. So we're excited to announce that the County Executive announced just last month that the Rapid Ride HoCo Transit program kicked off. It kicked off on March seventeenth. And this is low cost rides through an app. We have some brochures that Mary Laituri from council chair Walsh's office were kind enough to bring. Thank you, Mary. Thank you for joining us tonight. So you can pick up one. We are right- the center will be right in between stops nine and ten, but on the other side of the little squiggly road you see there. That's route one. We think this will be, you know, certainly offer some opportunities to get people to the center in a convenient way if they're looking for, you know, not driving themselves.

**Monica Pascatore:** All right, so site development, these are images we had on the slide the last time that we presented and showed you, you see in the red outline the actual extent of the site. It’s working around some pond and stream area. And then on the right hand side, just bubbles of program. So we take the feedback from you that we've heard about the program and we marry that kind of to the site, basically what fits. It's a balance of what can fit on the site and how we can put that together into a building. First, let's look at the site. Right now, this is the current site plan and we're seeing up at the star, at the top in the red, Old Washington Road and the entrance to the site. We're showing this big portion, and I’m going to zoom in on these in a minute, but the top portion- I’m going to try to point with my finger here, maybe. Can I get that? There's a little pinch point in the middle of the site. I don’t think you can do it with the mouse. Can you do with the mouse? You can do it with your finger, Joe. There's a pinch point, the top portion and down through to the middle portion and then that southern portion. Yay! Okay, good. So we're going to zoom in a little bit the top and then we're going to zoom in and look at the bottom. At the top north portion, the gray box you're seeing is where the building will be. And the building is a two-story building. It’s into the hill, set into the hill. Well, if you're unfamiliar with the site, there's a lot of topography on the site. The site is a very complicated site in that way, but those can be the most rewarding, spatially, at the end of the day. You're seeing parking in the white zones and the drive. So why don't we just zoom into the north section? Alright, so there's a simple single in and out of the site and that's where the red star is at the entrance. To the north portion there's parking that serves future amenity spaces and those are in yellow. Then you move down and there’s a- in the middle section, there's dedicated parking. That's a fifty plus area with dedicated parking. There's also a couple spaces potentially in front of the fifty plus entrance. And then to the South, there is the main parking zone. One caveat to all of this. All of this, big caveat. However, this thing can be out. This is the overall plan of the whole site that will come in phases. We are still working to balance the budget with those phases and still determine what will be in any one phase. So again, this is the overall site plan to give you an idea of what's coming, but we're still working with the county and agencies to figure out how to balance the budget to make it work within each phase. If you go to the next. To the south portion is additional amenity space likely in the future with some additional funding. Okay. Alright, so we're going to go into the building. What we do when we are designing is we like to start with a concept, or with an idea, and so we came up with a couple of ideas. The one we landed on is what we call the gears concept. We're thinking about the idea of a community and how it works and can work so well together. Like almost like a well oiled machine, like the gears of a machine. People, businesses can come and go, but they always fit together and work together. And so as gears can expand. Parts can go in and parts can go out. So that was our sort of inspiration was thinking about the community of something that's ever-evolving and flexing. So we take sort of this idea of gears and we think about the big pieces of the program. Fifty plus. Rec and Parks. Maybe the gym, the pool. And we put that sort of in adjacencies to one another. And we put that on the site and we think about how that might orient on the site, what makes sense with our solar orientation, what makes sense with arrival, what makes sense for visual as you come over the hill, and as you with the topography. And then what we do is we sort of regularize that. We don't want to be in all curved spaces. It's not particularly efficient, to be honest, but we try to regularize it to find that efficiency and to help these things sort of lock together. We translated that into the building plans. Okay, I know, look at the phones, the phones come out. On the left hand side is the first level. That is the entry level. There are two entrances. There’s the main entrance for Rec and Parks. And there is a separate entrance for connections and potentially fifty plus. I say potentially, it is a separate entrance for that. What you're seeing in the sort of red-y pink color is the fifty plus dedicated program and we’ll have a program slide that shows- that talks about what programs there are in the building in general. And then the yellow is Rec and Parks dedicated program. Doesn't matter if there's not ability to share those spaces, but right now there are actually dedicated so you can see the space that you’ll occupy. Gray is mechanical and storage. And then on the second level, is a track around the gym, and then Rec and Parks spaces. In the blue, you're seeing what we anticipate right now as a phase two, is the pool. So, beyond that red line. Blue, to the to the right hand side of that is a future pool at this time. On the site- again, this is the overall program, parking with dedicated fifty plus parking, playground, walking trails, picnic areas, fitness equipment, outdoor dedicated fitness equipment, gardens and event lawn, bocce, shuffleboard, horseshoe courts, tennis and pickleball courts, basketball courts, and a skate park. That’s a lot to fit on this site and the team is doing, I think, a great job trying to organize that on the site and have it- adjacencies as they need to be and solar orientation where it needs to be, and work with the existing landscape that's there and the existing ponds that are there. The building program itself. Fifty plus center with the connections program, gymnasium, the walk and running track on that second level, maybe on the first level. It will evolve. Multipurpose rooms, kitchen classrooms, dance, fitness, teen rooms, game room, lounge and café, indoor pool, admin and office space. We’re not dissecting and telling you every little bit of storage that may be down or every specific office. So you can see on the right-hand side the big components are the fifty plus some, the Rec center, the gym, and the indoor pool, that's a total of around ninety five thousand square feet. That’s a big facility. I'm going to jump now to the arts for all program. Colleen is here, and she's going to tell you about that.

**Coleen West:** Thank you. Good evening. I'm Coleen West, the executive director of the Howard County Arts Council and I'm delighted to be here this evening. This past Monday, County Executive Calvin Ball announced that Elkridge was selected to participate in the arts for all program. Which is a new initiative in partnership with the Arts Council. The new Elkridge Community Center will be one of two locations in the county to receive a five hundred thousand dollar arts for all grant to commission public art of County owned facilities. I'd like to thank our County Executive Ball and the County Council for their leadership and commitment to the arts and integrating them into public spaces in a meaningful and lasting way. Arts for all in Elkridge is a major investment in the county 's cultural landscape, providing us with an opportunity to commission one or more permanent public art installations at the Elkridge Community Center. These installations will showcase the creative talent and visions of artists, celebrate Elkridge, Bring people together and make public spaces more vibrant and engaging. Bringing public art to fruition in a thoughtful multi step process that starts with you, the people of Elkridge. The first step is to bring the community together to hear your stories and ideas. This ensures that the artwork we commission is not only visually compelling, but also connected to the identity of Elkridge. A steering committee is being put together to guide the process and ensure that the public art that is commissioned aligns with the community values, reflects Elkridge’s identity, and enhances the space in a meaningful and inclusive way. To that end, we are seeking three to four community members from Elkridge to serve on this committee. And if you're interested, just come to the back over here and sign up. We've already got one volunteer right here, Wendy Yang, is going to be serving on the steering committee. And in the in the coming months that we will be hosting public engagement meetings, online surveys, interactive workshops. To give residents a chance to shape the vision of the artwork. Following the public engagement, we will launch an RFQ and put together an artistic review panel to identify talented artists who can bring this vision to life. So my call to action to all of you is to- I encourage you all to get involved in this exciting project. Your input is essential in making the artwork a true representation of the community, and again, I'm going to be right back there. I’m happy to talk to you a little bit further about public art and this project, but I just- I'm very thrilled to be here and excited to be starting this project with you all.

**Monica Pascatore:** Alright. Two more slides. Project scheduling. You’re probably wondering when is this all happening? Where are we? Where are we in it? We’re around spring of twenty twenty five. Right now we're in the design development stage of the process. We're just starting that phase. Construction documents, for us, at this in time are due at the end of fall twenty twenty five. This coming. Ground breaking is planned and anticipated, at the moment, for spring of twenty twenty six. And again, fall of twenty twenty seven is the anticipated opening of the facility. There’s a lot that needs to happen and align to meet this. This is an aggressive schedule for us. But we’re working as a team fully to make sure we can do our best to hit this. So as I'm saying, anticipated, but this is our goal. On the final slide is, and I'm going to give you a caveat of this, this is more about kind of showing the massing volume on the site. Determination of colors and materials on the building exterior is still in flux. We're still determining that, but happy to have thoughts and feedback. And we're going to ask Nick to come back up here to field a few questions and that will wrap us up.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** OK so. Yeah, as Monica mentioned, the color scheme is still under consideration. So certainly, if anybody has any feedback around that, this was just one of many choices that was colorful on the slide. That's the only reason why it looks like it does. That is the Elkridge Community Center at Howard County MD dot gov email address and the project website right below that. That is how you can provide ongoing feedback to us. We certainly anticipate coming back to the community. We will have to do some additional public meetings to fulfill environmental design requirements, and there'll be an opportunity to get- stay informed of the progress. So with that, I'll open it up again, just, we have time for a few questions and some feedback.

**Audience Member:** I just had a question about that drive that goes to the back. It kind of looked like it connects Merle Street. But it doesn't?

**Monica Pascatore:** So the question was about the connection to Merle Street. It looks like it connects through, that is an emergency only connection. It's required by the Fire Marshal to have a connection back there. And it will be gated, by their standards.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** Thought that would be a question. Ma’am?

**Audience Member:** How much money in the fiscal year twenty seven capital budget is projected to go towards completion of this project?

**Nick Mooneyhan:** So we're to schematic design. So we're still- the design isn’t fully complete and to be able to answer that completely, I can say that the twenty five million dollars in fiscal year twenty six does a lot of the site work and starts the project but-

**Audience Member:** It starts at construction of the project?

**Nick Mooneyhan:** It starts the construction of the project, yes.

**Audience Member:** Thank you.

**Audience Member:** Is the charge of going to be the same as other centers?

**Nick Mooneyhan:** For the fifty plus center portion of it, Jackie, you want to join? You should be up here.

**Jackie Scott:** What was the question? I didn’t hear it.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** Is the charge for the fifty plus center going to be the same? As other centers?

**Jackie Scott:** The charge? The fees? We don't- there's no fee for membership at the center. It’s all free. Yep.

**Audience Member:** For the gym and things like that?

**Jackie Scott:** Oh, for the gym and things like that. Just as we- yes, because we do the joint membership for the gyms that are across the other centers and Rec and Parks sites. So those- that charge at this point is planned to be, absolutely, yes.

**Audience Member:** Any plans for that to increase?

**Jackie Scott:** No, going forward. I mean, the current charge for the- eighty nine dollars? It’s eighty-nine dollars right now. There’s no intent right now for us to raise any fees as a result of the opportunity.

**Audience Member:** One comment and one question. My comment is it does not look like there's enough parking. And my question is they said the pool would be in the future. When in the future, five years, ten years, twenty years?

**Monica Pascatore:** I’ll handle the parking. We have gone through code and it's basically, it's based on code but also based on what's happening at all of your other facilities. And so we, because this is also a LEED facility, so it needs to be sustainable. We're basically, there are limits and you kind of can’t go over what's required by code, even by a single parking space. Yes. So we're doing a very fine balance to right size this based on use at other- at all the other facilities. A study is going on right now about that and we think we have it right sized right now. All we can do is right size based on information that we have and what's required by code and balancing with LEED. I'm gonna let Nick take the future pool.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** Yes. So we want parking. Definitely. We always need parking, so we'll continue to study that and make sure there's adequate parking within the site's capabilities. Regarding the pool, it's really undetermined right now. We do not want it to be- I think at North Laurel it was ten years. We do not want it to be ten years, but it's going to come down to just funding and, you know, certainly advocate for the pool to be my suggestion. Yes, Ma’am.

**Audience Member:** If the pool is going to be on the second level, suppose there was a problem?

**Audience Member:** There’s nothing under it.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** Yeah, it's, it's actually in the in the back portion. So it's actually not- There's nothing underneath it right now. It looks like it is just because of the elevation of the site.

**Audience Member:** So it’s on the second level?

**Monica Pascatore:** Yeah. It's up toward the- it's on the backside of the hill and up on that second level. Part of the reason we’re doing that, it’s twofold, but one it works well with the site, so we can minimize the disturbance to the site and having to dig out additional parts of the hill. We're good place there. The other thing is- has to do with glare inside a building. Pools generally want to be on that north and east side to minimize glare.

**Audience Member:** I thought maybe it was going to be on the first floor.

**Monica Pascatore:** No.That's pretty fancy.

**Audience Member:** The list of the outdoor amenities like playground, I think. Sorry, yeah. I’m just curious, like what's like which ones of those are phase one and phase two?

**Monica Pascatore:** We're still determining that, to be honest. I don’t know if you want to speak to that one.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** I mean, I'll speak freely about it, we really feel like it's important that the playground is in an early phase and because where the playground is likely the tennis/pickleball courts and some of the pathways would be in an early-ish phase.

**Audience Member:** About how many multi-purpose rooms are you proposing?

**Nick Mooneyhan:** So it's- you're familiar with some of the other combined centers that house the fifty plus and Rec and Parks? So it'll be the three- for Rec and Parks, just the three individual multipurpose rooms that can open up into one big room, and on the fifty plus side it’s two rooms to rent, yeah.

**Monica Pascatore:** The fifty plus right now is two activity rooms, two classrooms, and one larger multi-purpose room. Plus the fitness room.

**Audience Member:** How many square feet?

**Jackie Scott:** Approximately fourteen thousand.

**Audience Member:** I'm sorry, what did you say?

**Jackie Scott:** Fourteen thousand square feet. Yes, yes.

**Audience Member:** How much is the total square footage of the facility, including the fourteen thousand square feet of the fifty plus center?

**Monica Pascatore:** The total build is ninety five thousand square feet.

**Audience Member:** What about the total for the first phase without the pool?

**Monica Pascatore:** About seventy thousand, the pool is about twenty five thousand square feet.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** And the caveat is they’re- we're still working on that.

**Audience Member:** So it’s seventy or so for the whole thing, of which fourteen is the-

**Monica Pascatore:** Correct.

**Audience Member:** There are like, three residential houses around that area. Have you bought these people out and will those houses be torn down?

**Nick Mooneyhan:** Yeah, I mean, the entire property was acquired. Two of the homes most certainly will need to be removed. There's one- if we could go to the site map. If you're familiar with the brick house that you can see from Old Washington right there, we are exploring using that as the, you know, standalone restroom facility and some storage for outdoor programming so we are evaluating that currently.

**Audience Member:** Where that star is at the top there, what is that cross street there? Is that Abel?

**Audience Member:** It’s right before you get to Abel, the light right before.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** Yes Sir.

**Audience Member:** So, I know there's concerns about the traffic. What's the traffic flow supposed to be after you come out of the center to get onto route one, especially going South because that little tiny feeder street is not really a good place to turn. And so, I mean, how are you-?

**Monica Pascatore:** Yes. We have a traffic study that's current underway that's looking actually a little bit further than the extents of our site to address these, we don't know what the resolution is going to be at the moment, but they're doing a study on traffic coming in and out of and working with department of transit, figuring out how to move safely, move in and out and around the site. So that's out of our expertise, that's why we have to rely on a traffic consultant for them.

**Audience Member:** Is there any potential for a farmer’s market site as part of this?

**Nick Mooneyhan:** Yeah, we- I mean, what's exciting about this project is, you know, it started out finding a site for the Community Center and fifty plus center and it's turned into, you know, what's going to be a fantastic site, home of the Community Center, Fifty Plus Center, but also a park. A full-fledged park so really serving as a vibrant community hub where things like you know, farmers markets and really whatever the community desires, we do some different types of events at North Laurel. Not necessarily a farmer market, but you know, think within that theme.

**Audience Member:** A farmer’s market is another thing that many places in the county, but not Elridge have.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** I think we’d be able to pull that off here.

**Audience Member:** How about a dog park?

**Nick Mooneyhan:** A dog park has not been discussed, but we can take that under advisement.

**Audience Member:** Back to parking, you said that was an issue?

**Nick Mooneyhan:** Parking is generally, you know, can be a challenge at all sites, a lot of facilities. So my making that comment was only to indicate that we will really look at that hard and make sure that this facility has adequate parking.

**Monica Pascatore:** I'm just going to add on that if a facility’s really successful and everyone wants to be there, there’s never enough parking. So we have to right-size it for what we think is the most appropriate, but we can't deplete the site and mow it all down for parking, because then it won’t be as successful because you need those exterior amenities, you need that space. We're working really hard on this parking issue.

**Audience Member:** That’s what Rapid Transit is for.

**Monica Pascatore:** And yes, that’s what Rapid Transit is for. And sidewalks.

**Audience Member:** So it looks like there's a lot of surrounding houses. Is there- Can there be access from those houses to there? Because I imagine you don’t want kids to just walk on through.

**Monica Pascatore:** So we have- Yep, we have two locations for pedestrian access, and Joe is pointing out- go back one. Yep. Joe is pointing out one. Currently in a gap in the home of HOA that's to the east.

**Audience Member:** Is that Abel there?

**Monica Pascatore:** Yep, that's Able street. And then down in Merle there's also will be access around that fire exit, that fire entrance/exit. Along there where Joe’s showing now. So we are planning for that because we have heard that it's been an issue with some other facilities where kids will just go through the neighborhood and mine would too. So we're making dedicated places so they, you know, they have a place to get there, a way to get there.

**Audience Member:** I've been working for several years trying to get signage from SHA for the library, but it violates their policies. Community signs they will have recycling standards and ferries, but not libraries and fifty plus and community center. So I urge you to put pressure on state delegation people to have appropriate signage for all the amenities on Route one so that people know when to turn off coming from both directions. From Washington to get onto Old Washington.

**Monica Pascatore:** That's a good comment. Thank you.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** OK. One more, one more.

**Audience Member:** Some of the people that come to the fifty plus center live across the street in the development that is for fifty plus community. A lot of those people don’t drive, but they come to the center. So, are you going to have shuttle buses take them to the center?

**Nick Mooneyhan:** So my understanding about the Rapid Ride program is, you know, it collects- Basically you go on the app and you would- say you want to leave from say the library, the existing fifty plus center, and you want to travel to the new community fifty plus center, and then it groups you with other individuals who also want to, so, you know, I can imagine that even if we did nothing, that would automatically kind of happen and the library would be a destination for the rapid, you know, pick up and then drop off app.

**Audience Member:** Is there a cost to use it?

**Audience Member:** Not for two dollars a ride. Not for seniors. It's free for seniors. Otherwise, two dollars a ride. For the first month it’s free.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** Yes?

**Audience Member:** Some comments about the Rapid Ride. So yes, it will be free for students. And it will be free for disabilities and seniors, always. It’s free right now for everybody for the first month, even though, you know, we’re already past the date of April seventeenth.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** April seventeenth, yes.

**Audience Member** However though, it's only a one year pilot. So we have to start taking it. And give them feedback or this will not be in existence by the time this is built. This is something we desperately need because busing is not really an option here and my dad lived at Parkview and he would totally get on that and take it back and forth. So yes, so that's why a lot of seniors move to Parkview because it’s near Washington Road. So it’s essential. But we won't have it if we don't start trying it out. So our kids down at the high school will take it, for example. It should be something we are trying and give feedback as to what it was working for us in the time period, but see it as a positive.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** Excellent.

**Audience Member:** So what happens in a year?

**Nick Mooneyhan:** I think you should advocate for shuttles and, you know, I think that just needs to be part of the continued conversation. We acknowledge it as a challenge. And again, there's a pilot of a program that I think could be the solution, but it does require use of that service and continued advocacy.

**Audience Member:** I just want to make one last comment, even though it's an app, you can also make a phone call to get a ride, too.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** I didn't know that. Thank you.

**Audience Member:** And I called the other day and there was a very friendly voice.

**Sharon Walsh:** Before everybody leaves, if anyone's interested in being part of that Arts for All, there's a sign-in where Coleen’s sitting in the back.

**Nick Mooneyhan:** OK. That concludes the meeting. But if you have any feedback or thoughts or want to catch me or any of my team or facilities team. Special thanks to the Bureau of Facilities, Cannon, Jackie, our friends at DCRS and Office of Aging. And thank you all for being here. Thanks.