

- **Question**

HCCC Response

- **Where will it be built?**

The proposed Hillsmere Community Center would be built at the corner of Harbor Drive and Great Lake Drive, on the site of the current community owned white house – 119 Great Lake Drive.

- **What is the cost?**

Cost will be calculated when final size, parking, finishes, and location are identified. Budget will not exceed \$750,000 for the project.

- **How will we pay for it, initially and annual cost to me?**

Community Special Benefit Tax, which would not exceed an increase of \$50 annually for each property.

- **Why do we even need it and what is its purpose?**

A Community Center would enhance Hillsmere's amenities by providing a space for Board, general and committee meetings, as well as a place for the community to gather socially.

- **Why has \$22K already been spent if this is still "preliminary?"**

HSIA Board of Directors voted to approve spending \$15,000. (not \$22,000.), for preliminary feasibility work by a licensed architect and civil engineer. This fee is a reasonable amount, based on the work which was needed and performed.

- **What are the expected operating costs of this Clubhouse? And are you expecting residents who are 100% against the building of the Clubhouse to contribute?**

The annual operating costs are estimated to be approximately \$100,000, about 88% of which is projected to be offset by fees and other revenues. Of the not-to-exceed \$50 per property Community Special Benefit Tax increase, approximately \$9.27 would be allocated for operating costs. Special Benefit Tax does not divide or separate individual use of community amenities for which it is collected. As it is done for all projects, maintenance and operating costs are included in the HSIA Special Tax budget, which is presented to the membership yearly, as part of our annual budget process.

- **Please explain the relationship between these plans and the site plans for the county-funded rain garden. County funds are currently allocated for the rain garden and if not used as appropriated, they will go away?**

The Community Center Committee and Environmental Committee are working together to ensure both projects complement one another. Our Engineering firm will work closely with the County, and the Environmental Committee, as the plans for the rain garden develop.

- **Describe parking lot lighting. How will it operate to keep the area lit, while not disturbing neighbors?**

Parking lot lighting will be determined once a final plan for parking is set. If the project moves forward, our architect and engineer will work with a lighting professional on options that consider the potential light disturbance to the surrounding neighbors.

- **How will the deck be positioned so that noise and light from evening events not disturb neighbors?**

HCCC's preliminary plan has the deck positioned towards the pool. The current design is just a concept. The community will be able to comment on aspects the design, if the project moves forward.

- **Have alternate sites been considered to provide more buffers to the neighbors? What research was performed in choosing the current proposed site?**

The HCCC has investigated other alternatives, including renovating the existing house, adding onto the pool, and building at the beach. HCCC feels the option presented is the most desirable, based on environmental, financial and aesthetic factors. HCCC consulted with AA County, RPH Architects, and Bay Engineering in choosing the location for the proposed Community Center.

- **If facility is rented during swim meets or other large events, how will overflow parking be handled?**

The Hillsmere Hammerheads swim team hosts a total of 3-4 home meets per year, in June and July only. The meets take place between 8am – 1pm, if held on Saturdays, and 3pm – 8pm, if held on weeknights. The pool hosts 3 large events per year on Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day. Schedule coordination will need to be taken into account during summer months when the pool is open. Some solutions could include not allowing overlapping events to be scheduled, implementing a maximum size event at the Community Center during large pool events, or, other specific operating rules that would address overlapping events.

- **Is there an operations budget? Before voting for a community center I would need to see a fully fleshed out operations budget.**

An operating budget will be required by the Board for the Community Center, just like the pool and marina. The budget will be reviewed and approved annually by the Board. An operating budget will be presented to the community to review, prior to a formal vote regarding a Community Center project.

- **The initial budget numbers for a "shell" seem extraordinarily high. Please give us a complete budget that includes sewer, water, appliances, fixtures etc.**

A more complete budget will be presented, if the project moves forward and the size of the building the community supports has been determined. The HCCC continues to work on a more comprehensive preliminary development and operations budget, as we work with our engineer

to determine if the proposed Community Center will be able to use the existing well and sewer hookups, which may help mitigate some of the capital connection costs.

- **Are you planning on securing 51% of property owners affirmative votes to move forward?**

According to the Anne Arundel County Office of Law and Budget Office, for Special Community Benefit Districts, Section 4-7-201(a) of the County Code requires the favorable vote of a majority of property owners only for the acquisition of property. Since acquisition of property is not part of the Community Center proposal, a majority vote of all property owners is not required.

- **The survey was conducted by proponents of the community center, and NOT by an independent party. What is the plan for a fair and unbiased survey in the future?**

A second survey, created and approved by the HSIA Board of Directors, with no input from the HCCC, is currently underway (sent June 2017) in order to gauge the interest level of the community regarding a potential Community Center. The 2nd survey consists of 2 questions, one gauging the overall interest in a potential community center, and the second gauging the overall interest in the Community Center Committee's proposed plans for a Community Center. The results of the 2nd survey will help the Board determine the direction of this project.

- **What assumptions did you make re: costs, debt, and other income that will be generated in order to determine the cost won't exceed \$750,000 and the special tax related to it won't be more than \$50/household?**

Exceeding the \$750,000 budget and the potential increase of \$50 in Special taxes is not an option. In fact, the HCCC is vigorously exploring ways to build the proposed community center well below the allotted budget.

- **What interest rate did you assume and what will you do if they increase before you can enter into a loan? This is a multiyear project, and interest rates might well be greater whatever rate you've assumed today, unless you've built in an increase over current rates.**

The 30 year fixed interest rate that we used was 5%, which is a realistic current figure based on market research, including financing costs on a conforming basis, with approximately 20% down payment.

- **If this moves forward, will the building be put up as collateral on the loan? If so, will you put the loan up for ratification by the general membership as required by Section 12 of the HSIA bylaws?**

Collateral for any loan is still to be determined. If the building is pledged, yes, we will abide by the HSIA bylaws requirements.

- **If the building won't be put up as collateral on the loan, will the Board publicly commit to putting the final proposal before the general membership for ratification, even if they aren't required to by the HSIA bylaws or County law?**

Yes. We will abide by the HSIA bylaws requirements.

- **Why did Paul Barnes terminate the Survey Committee on 12 December 2015? The Committee's work was discarded and the survey was fully under the control of the primary proponent of the Community Center. Paul's email: 12/12/15: "We are still going to pull together a survey that gauges the interest of Hillsmere to build a community center, but the committee has been terminated." 12/13/15: "There is no more need to provide any additional input for the survey. There is a draft that Joanne Brew will submit to the board at Thursday's board meeting."**

The survey committee was terminated because the parties involved were unable to work constructively together. The initial survey was reviewed and approved by the Board prior to execution.

- **What percentage of survey respondents who indicated a high level of interest in a Hillsmere Shores Community Center are opposed to the center? Their interest stems from their opposition.**

The results to the initial survey can be found on our website

http://hillsmershores.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CCS_Survey1-Final-1.pdf

The original survey did not specify if high level of interest in the project was in support of, or, opposition to the project. The Board felt that the level of interest was enough to approve funds to work with an engineer and architect to obtain more detailed information on a potential community center.

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- **What issues on "personnel, legal matters and matters that would materially affect their outcome if addressed in an open meeting" justified the Board of Directors holding a closed meeting on Sunday, March 26, 2017?**

A group of Board members met on Sunday, March 26, for training purposes, to discuss how to run meetings more effectively and to review Robert's Rules of Order. The meeting was not intended to be a formal Board meeting, was not convened as an open or closed Board meeting, and no personnel, legal, or other matters that would materially affect their outcome if addressed in an open meeting were discussed during this gathering.

- **At least two other options for a community center have been considered - remodel the existing house, and/or add a second story to the pool building with an entrance outside the pool fence. Why were they not presented to the community for consideration?**

If the results from the June 2017 survey indicate support for a community center, but not in the proposed location, other options will be (re-)considered.

HCCC has investigated other alternatives including renovating the existing house, adding onto the pool, and building at the beach, but feel the option presented is the most desirable based on environmental, financial and aesthetic factors. The community committee consulted with AA County, RPH Architects and Bay Engineering in choosing the location for the proposed Community Center.

2 years ago, a group of residents approached the HSIA Board of Directors with a vision to build a Community Center in place of the existing 119 Great Lake Drive, HSIA owned house. This group of residents formed the Hillsmere Community Center Committee (HCCC), to research and present this option to both the Board and the Community.

As discussion of a potential Community Center has progressed, questions have been raised by residents about pursuing alternative locations and different options for a Community Center than presented by the current committee. The Board welcomes ideas of alternative sites/options of the project, and would be happy to form subcommittees of residents who are willing to research and present alternative options to both the Board and the Community. Please email boardonly@hillsmershores.net if you have interest in leading a subcommittee on Alternative options.

- **What responses in the survey led the committee to make providing space for either 156 or 226 people at a sit-down dinner a driving requirement? How many such events are anticipated annually?**

Our directive from the Board was to design a community center with space for 100 or 200, in order to compare costs.

- **The plans presented show that the anticipated county storm water remediation plan for the west side of the community and Lake Hillsmere occupies the same piece of land as the proposed community center, and that the county project will be "relocated". What does that mean, and is Hillsmere in danger of losing county funding for a much-needed storm water project?**

The HCCC and Environmental Committee are working together to ensure both projects complement one another. Our Engineering firm will work closely with the County, and the Environmental Committee, as the plans for the rain garden develop.

- **What resources will this community center have other than space? Will it have a food pantry or another way of providing food and services to people in need?**

There are no such plans at this time. We are anticipating input from the residents on activities and services that can make us a better community. We welcome your ideas!

HCCC@hillsmershores.net

- **Will Hillsmere residents be charged a fee added on to their membership fees?**

There will only be a usage charge if you rent the community center for an event. There will be no membership fee, other than an increase in special taxes.

- **Is it possible to have a cc design that is better incorporated with the pool? The current design doesn't seem to take the pool into consideration except for the hope of having the parking spaces count toward the required number.**

The HCCC has investigated other alternatives, including renovating the existing house, adding onto the pool, and building at the beach. The HCCC feels the option presented is the most desirable, based on environmental, financial and aesthetic factors. The HCCC consulted with AA County, RPH Architects and Bay Engineering in choosing the location for the proposed Community Center.

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- **What made the board decide to allocate money to pursue concept drawing?**

The Board approved funds to work with an architect and engineering firm to provide more detail to the proposed concept, so that tangible plans and sketches could be presented to the community for review and input.

- **Is there a survey that specifically asks if you are in favor or against a community center? Our Association has trouble getting the community to support the pool and we struggle to break even on the pool, how do you expect to cover the operating cost of a community center?**

According to the pool committee, the pool is doing very well financially with strong membership numbers. The pool Profit & Loss is disclosed in the Treasurer's Report during all Board meetings. [Treasurer's Reports are available to view on our website.](#)

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gauging the overall interest in the Community Center Committee's proposed plans for a Community Center. The results of the 2nd survey will help determine the direction of this project.

A budget will be included in the final proposal, should the project move forward.

- **What will be the impact of the proposed Community Center on the county's storm water mitigation project at the same location?**

The HCCC and Environmental Committee are working together to ensure both projects complement one another. Our Engineering firm will work closely with the County, and the Environmental Committee, as the plans for the rain garden develop. Hillsmere is not in danger of losing county funding for storm water remediation.

- **Will the ballot for the final community vote on the Community Center include an option to not build it? Has the committee considered less expensive options with a smaller footprint and less financial risk (e.g. expanding the building at the pool or the home at the site)?**

Not building a Community Center will continue to be an option. For example, in the recently closed July survey, property owners were asked for a yes/no response on whether they supported building a Community Center. If it is proposed to move forward with a Community Center project, residents will have the opportunity to vote against building it.

HCCC has investigated other alternatives including renovating the existing house, adding onto the pool and building at the beach but feel the option presented is the most desirable based on environmental, financial and aesthetic factors. The community committee consulted with AA County, RPH Architects and Bay Engineering in choosing the location for the proposed Community Center.

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- **Environmental preservation is a concern of mine. I have heard that green space will be preserved around the community center site. What percent of the current green space will be preserved?**

Notwithstanding the joint effort to design storm-water remediation and this proposed

community center (dovetailing projects), it is impossible at this time to give a percentage.

- **Why hasn't the committee pursued a design for a clubhouse that is an extension or renovation of the current pool facility? Building there could save money, reduce parking issues, create less of a nuisance to neighbors, and be less disruptive to the environment.**

HCCC has investigated other alternatives, including renovating the existing house, adding onto the pool, and building at the beach. The HCCC feels the option presented is the most desirable, based on environmental, financial and aesthetic factors. The HCCC consulted with AA County, RPH Architects and Bay Engineering in choosing the location for the proposed Community Center.

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- **I met with AACo Department of Planning & Zoning officials this week and it is possible to make an addition or renovation to the existing structure.**

As mentioned above, the HCCC has investigated other alternatives, including renovating the existing house, adding onto the pool, and building at the beach. The HCCC feels the option presented is the most desirable, based on environmental, financial and aesthetic factors.

The board would be happy to review your research/proposal of renovation of the current structure.

- **Why hasn't the Committee pursued a clubhouse on the beach property? I met with AACo Department of Planning & Zoning officials this week and it is possible to build there and A building on the beach property would be beautiful, would take advantage of existing parking and road systems, and would create less of a nuisance to the neighborhood as water and field borders buffer its effect.**

As mentioned above, the HCCC has investigated other alternatives, including renovating the existing house, adding onto the pool, and building at the beach. The HCCC feels the option presented is the more desirable than the beach for a few different reasons. The beach property is in the critical area (within 1,000 ft of tidal wetlands), which presents environmental and permitting challenges. The beach property is approximately 2 acres and currently occupied with playground equipment, pavilions, rain gardens for storm water management, bike paths, etc.

Building at the beach property would eliminate some of these amenities, which are widely used by community members. The proposed Community Center site sits on approximately 7.2 acres, and is proposed to be built where an existing structure sits. The proposed site will not eliminate currently used community amenities, as the building is only being used for storage, and sits on a much larger piece of property. The Board would be happy to review your research/proposal of building a Community Center at the beach.

All questions were submitted to the Hillsmere Community Center Committee (HCCC) via the Community Center Feedback Form, found [here](#).

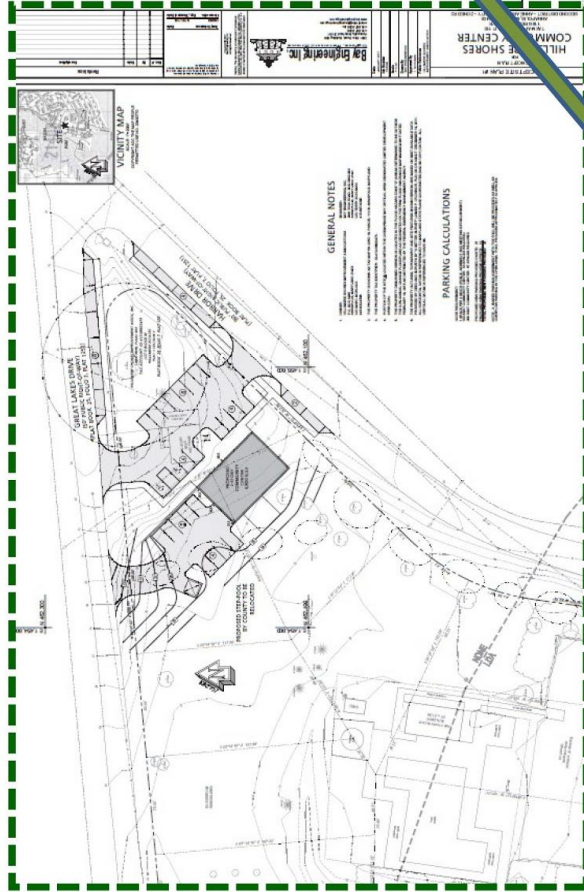
Please visit the [HCCC's page](#) on the Hillsmere Shores website for more information.

For HSIA Board and General Membership meeting dates, click [here](#).

See page 10 for Bay Engineering's Proposed Preliminary Site Plan.

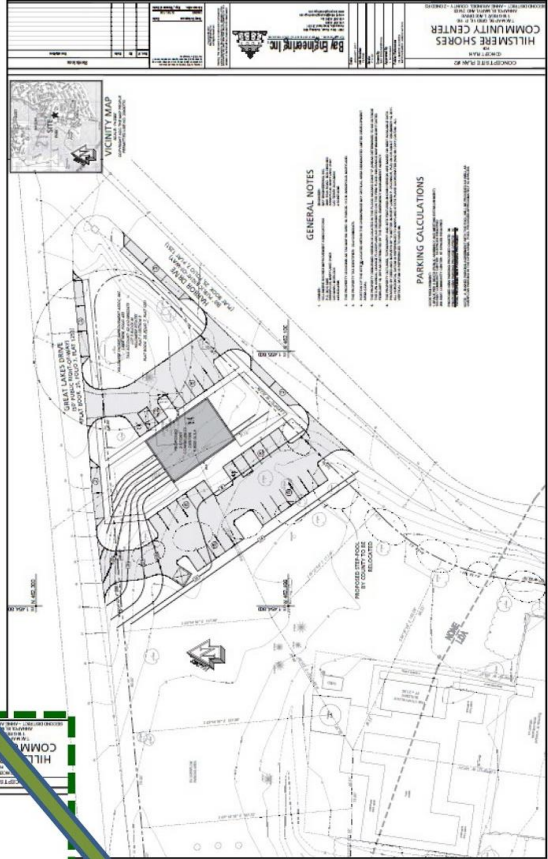
Bay Engineering Proposed Preliminary Site Plan Design

Proposed Preliminary Site Plan #1



- Goal is to mitigate parking and parking cost, and limit spaces to preserve green/open space, trees and pervious surfaces, while utilizing shared parking (pool, beach, etc.)
- Committee and Board presented two preliminary site designs by Bay Engineering for review, input and discussion
- Of two preliminary site plan designs, preference is towards Site Plan #1 with added updates

Proposed Preliminary Site Plan #2



Site Plan #1 Updates

- ✓ Flip lower level side parking to SE corner to have two entrances on Harbor Dr., and one on Great Lake Dr., and shift site towards NW, if feasible
- ✓ Preserve green/open space from south/ southwest side of facility . Allow connecting green space from community center to swimming pool to preserve space for foot traffic, outdoor function and sports activities
- ✓ Coordinate with Kevin Green on rain garden project
- ✓ Work with AA County to reduce parking per shared joint parking and overflow plan

Preliminary & For Discussion Purposes Only