

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY

DECISION ON THE SITE FOR THE COMBINATION HARFORD ACADEMY AND NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROJECT

February 26, 2024

Background Information:

Built in 1971, the existing Harford Academy (HA) is the only Public Separate Day School serving students ages three to twenty-one with severe and profound disabilities within Harford County. In 2009, Smolen & Emr Associates completed a scope study to assess the current building condition, safety, and educational program efficiency of the HA facility. It was determined that the existing building had reached a point where components and systems needed to be replaced. The scope study also concluded that the instructional needs, as well as the support service requirements of the students attending the school, have changed since the construction of the original building. Due to the medical fragile nature of the students attending the Public Day School, modernizing the facility through a phased occupied renovation is not an option.

Due to fiscal constraints, the HA project was deferred. Thirteen years have passed since the original scope study, and the HA Project is now the highest major capital priority. On August 10, 2020, the BOE approved a contract with FLO Analytics for the Balancing Enrollment project and an update of the site location study for HA. FLO Analytics partnered with Banta Campbell Architects to conduct a site location study as part of the overall Balancing Enrollment project.

At the BOE business meeting on August 16, 2021, the BOE voted in favor of completely replacing the school and building the replacement school on the Campus Hills site, located at 301 Schucks Road.

At the business meeting on February 14, 2022; the BOE of Harford County approved a Balancing Enrollment plan for HCPS that included adding an elementary school to the HA project to increase elementary capacity within the County's growth envelope and to help meet the needs related to expansion of Pre-Kindergarten and Special Education programs. Building a combined special education and elementary school facility would:

- assist with addressing current and future capacity issues within elementary schools.
- keep HCPS in line with the current county administration funding trends of completing one major capital project at a time.
- prevent the current major capital priorities from being deferred.
- provide HA students direct access to learning opportunities with their typical developing peers.

The Campus Hills site is located just outside of the Maryland Priority Funding Area (PFA). In the "Regulations for the Administration of the Public-School Construction Program", COMAR 23.03.02, require school projects to be within a Priority Funding Area (PFA). HCPS

submitted a waiver request to the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) on December 07, 2022, for the Campus Hills site based on three factors.

- The existing Harford Academy is not within the PFA and less than a mile away from the current site.
- HCPS completed a site study of existing BOE properties, and this was the best location.
- The Campus Hills site is just outside of the PFA; less than a mile and will serve students living within the PFA.

MDP reached out to HCPS and requested HCPS to work with the local government to complete one of the following.

- The local government extend the PFA to this area and commit to updating the master plan to extending public water and sewer to the site within 10-years.
- or
- Work with local planning department to locate a property within the PFA.

HCPS has been working with our local government to develop a solution. Harford County Government (HCG) will not update the master plan and commit to extending public water and sewer to the area due to the vast area it will open to development. However, HCG has been working with HCPS to identify and obtain new property for the school.

Discussion:

The HA serves our most medically fragile and severely disabled students countywide; therefore, determining the best location for a replacement school is crucial for travel times and student's access to services and programs. The location considerations include identifying a central location within the County, proximity to the Town of Bel Air, Upper Chesapeake Medical Center, and travel distances from edge points of Harford County like White Hall, Whiteford, and Havre de Grace. HCPS also evaluates all school sites based on accessibility, size of site, terrane, soil conditions, proximity to communities, and access to utilities.

HCG provided HCPS with a list of properties within the development envelope as potential school site locations. Only one site met all the needs without major upgrades being needed to County infrastructure. The identified property is made up of two parcels (Plat Book No. 210, folio 89 and Plat Book No. 203, folio 20) and is located at 301 N Fountain Green Road., Bel Air 21015-2703 adjacent to the Eva Mar Community. The site is less than 2 miles from the Schucks Road site. The site allows the Harford Academy school to continue with the partnerships already established with Harford Technical School High School, Harford Community College, and Towson University Northeast. Additionally, construction of the new facility would not impact any current school operations with only minimal impact to transportation routes and times. Ongoing traffic improvements in the area will also help with transportation. The location will also help alleviate overcrowding at the elementary schools within the development envelope.

HCG reached an agreement with the property owners, Presbyterian Home of Maryland, Incorporated (Presbyterian), to purchase the property for the Harford Academy school construction project. Presbyterian has made significant improvements in the amount of

\$2,168,031.53 to the site, including infrastructure improvements that benefit the Property and future construction. HCG has agreed to purchase the property. As part of the agreement, HCPS would have to pay for the infrastructure improvements. Presbyterian agrees to accept from the Board, \$1,660,000 for the improvements. The \$1,660,000 will come from the \$16,000,000 funded by the HCG in the FY 2024 Capital improvement program for planning and design of the Harford Academy School. Subsequently, the HCG will fund the project in future Capital requests to ensure the project is fully funded.

Superintendent's Recommendations:

Recommendation 1: The Superintendent of Schools recommends that the Board of Education approve the site located at 301 N Fountain Green Road, Bel Air 21015-2703 made up of two parcels; Plat Book No. 210, folio 89 and Plat Book No. 203, folio 20, as the location for the new Harford Academy and Elementary School combination facility.

Recommendation 2: The Superintendent of Schools recommends that the Board of Education approve payment to Presbyterian, in the amount of One Million Six Hundred Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$1,660,000) for the infrastructure improvements on the site located at 301 N Fountain Green Road, Bel Air 21015-2703 made up of two parcels; Plat Book No. 210, folio 89 and Plat Book No. 203, folio 20.



NEW SITE LOCATION

Harford Academy

HARFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Presentation to the
Board of Education
February 26, 2024



Background

Initial Scope Study - Completed 2009 (14 years ago)

- Components and systems needed to be replaced
- Does not meet instructional needs
- Lacking support service space for the students
- Phased occupied renovation is not an option

Site Study - August 2020 – Campus Hills Site

Balancing enrollment plan - February 2022 - add elementary capacity

Updated Scope Study - September 19, 2022 - build a new 201,000 sq. ft. school, to replace the current Harford Academy with a 250-student state rated capacity public separate day school and add new elementary school capacity (598 state rated capacity) within Harford County Public Schools.

Education Specification - BOE approved June 26, 2023

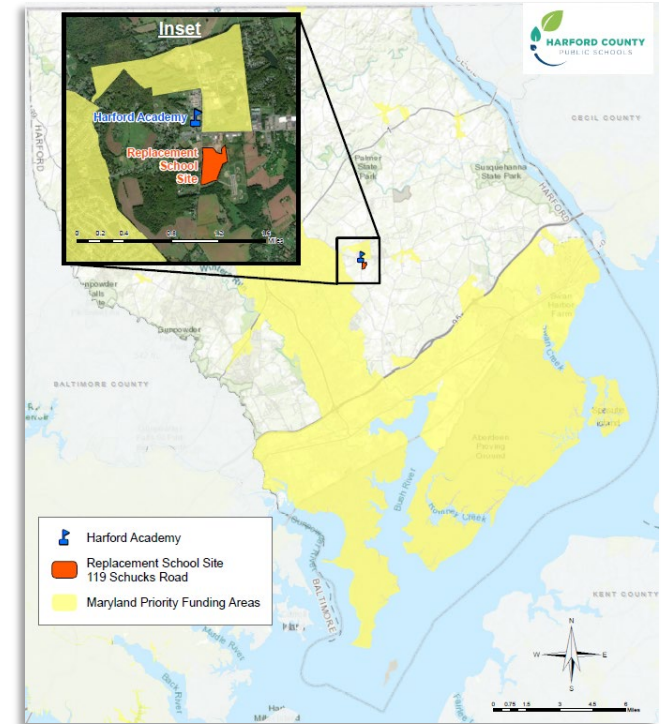


Priority Funding Area

- Maryland Priority Funding Area (PFA) - limits the approval of state growth related funding for the construction of a new school or replacements with additional capacity
- Campus Hills site - just outside of the PFA.
- Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) directed HCPS to work with the local government
 - Extend the PFA to this area and commit to updating the master plan to extending public water and sewer to the site within 10-years.

or

- Work with local planning department to locate a property within the PFA.
- The decision was made to locate a new property





Site Search

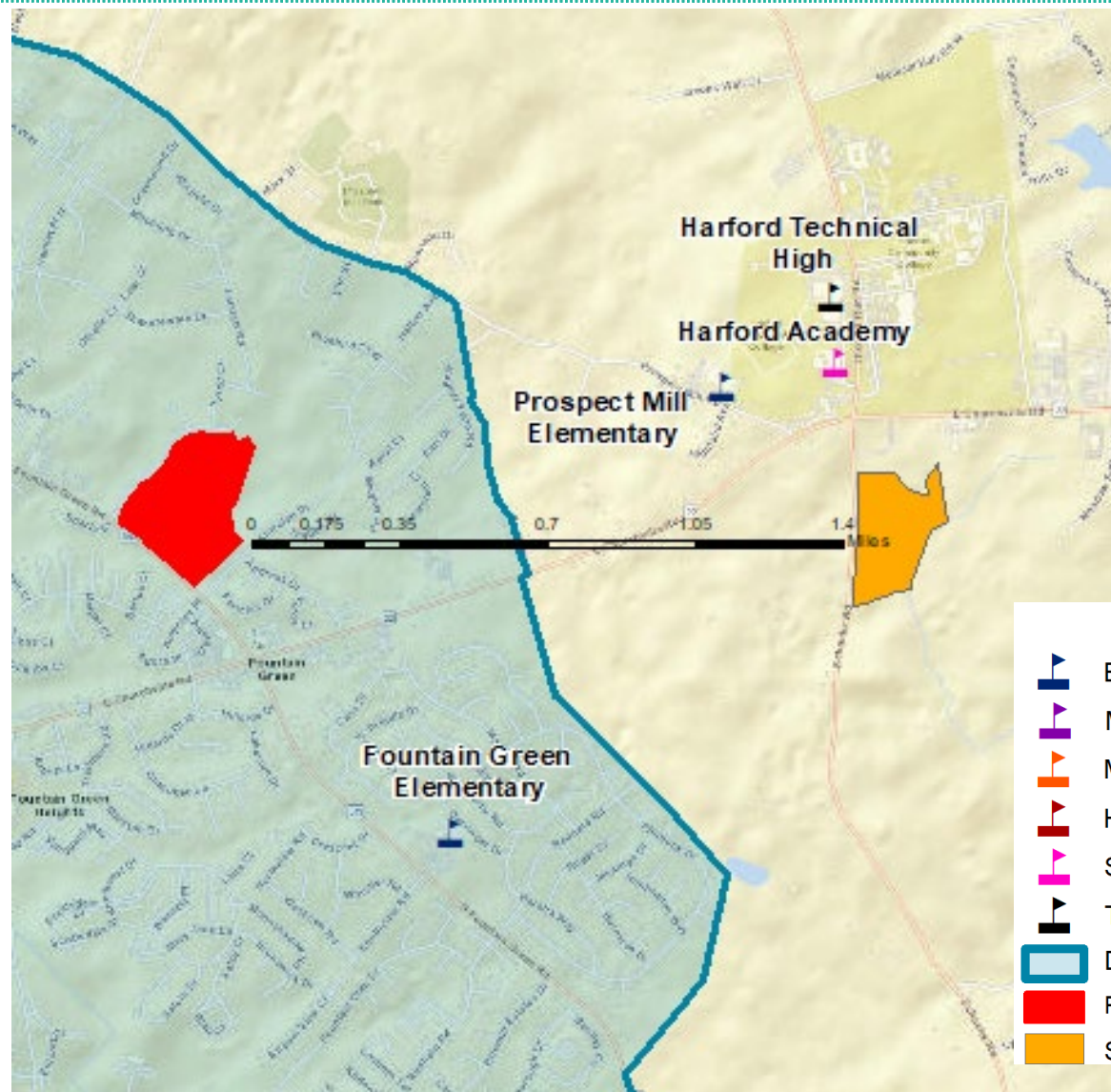
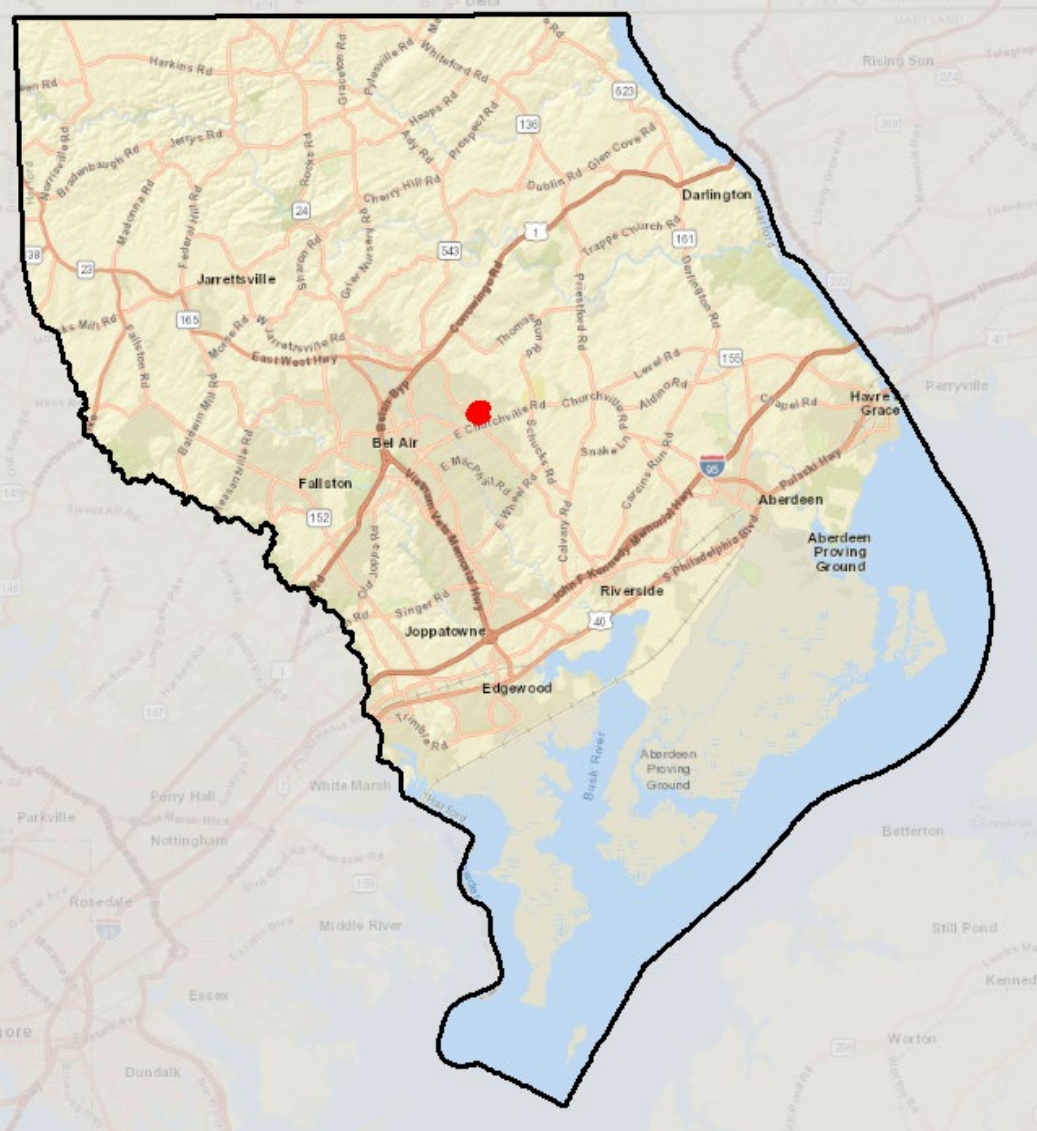
- Harford County Planning and Zoning provided HCPS with a list of properties.
- HCPS reviewed the properties
- Limited inventory centrally located within the PFA
- Only one property met all criteria
- 301 N Fountain Green Road, Bel Air 21015-2703
 - 44.49 AC
 - Adjacent to Eva Mar Community
 - Off Route 543

Harford Academy Criteria
Central for transportation
Proximity to Town of Bel Air
Proximity to Upper Chesapeake Medical Center

General School Site Criteria
Acreage
Terrane
Accessibility
Safe site
Soil conditions
Environment
Utility



Site Location



- Legend**
- Elementary School
 - Middle School
 - Middle/High School
 - High School
 - Special School
 - Technical High School
 - Development Envelope
 - Proposed Site
 - Schucks



Questions & Decision

The Superintendent of Schools recommends that the Board of Education approve the site located at

301 N Fountain Green Road

Bel Air 21015-2703

made up of two parcels; Plat Book No. 210, folio 89 and Plat Book No. 203, folio 20, as the location for the new combination of Harford Academy and Elementary School.





Property Improvements

- Harford County Government (HCG) has reached an agreement to purchase the property.
- Presbyterian Home of Maryland, Incorporated made improvements to the property in the amount of \$2,168,031.53.
 - Installation of an entrance into the Site and the Property from Maryland Route 543
 - Eva Mar Boulevard designed with the capacity to service traffic to the Property and the Site, regardless of intended use of the Property, including the associated curb, gutter, drainage, stormwater management and sidewalk that accompany Eva Mar Boulevard
 - Installation of sanitary sewer main, water main, stormwater management, erosion and sediment controls, overhead and underground utilities from Baltimore Gas and Electric
- HCG requested HCPS to pay recoupment costs for the improvements made by Presbyterian.



Recoupment Payment

Presbyterian Home of Maryland, Incorporated agreed to accept, \$1,660,000 for the improvements.

HCPS received \$16,000,000 from HCG in the FY 2024 Capital improvement program for planning and design.

HCG agreed to fully fund the County Share of the project in the FY 2026 and FY 2027 CIP.

HCPS could utilize FY 2024 funding to pay for recoupment costs.



Questions & Decision

The Superintendent of Schools recommends that the Board of Education approve payment to Presbyterian Home of Maryland, Incorporated, in the amount of One Million Six Hundred Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$1,660,000) for the infrastructure improvements on the site located at 301 N Fountain Green Road, Bel Air 21015-2703 made up of two parcels; Plat Book No. 210, folio 89 and Plat Book No. 203, folio 20.

