

Design continues on Convention Center expansion

Design work continues on the first phase of expansion of the Roland E. Powell Convention Center. This phase of the project will enclose the existing back deck of the convention center to create an expanded bay-view hall on the second floor and will also enclose the area below the deck creating an additional 12,000 square feet of bayfront exhibit space on the first floor.

The State of Maryland will fund 50 percent of the project's phase one projected cost. The total cost for the project is estimated at \$9 million, with incremental state tax revenues projected to be \$1.1 million to \$1.6 million per year. The Town's portion of the project will be paid for by the one-half percent food tax.

Construction is expected to begin by the end of the year. Completion of the first phase is estimated in the spring of 2012.

The second phase of the project will convert a portion of the building now known as lower hall C and half of the existing ballroom into a fixed-seat auditorium with a new state-of-the-art stage facility. The new auditorium would be used for a variety of special events including concerts, plays, dance competitions and lectures. The Town is currently investigating funding alternatives for this phase and would like to begin work on the auditorium as soon as the first phase of improvements are completed. This will ensure that no existing events will be displaced during the construction of the new auditorium.