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GRAW ALLEY CONSTRUCTION BEGINS IN DOWNTOWN HAVRE DE GRACE
Yumi Hogan, Dignitaries Break Ground on Harmer's Town Art Center Interactive Park

(Havre de Grace, MD) - - Construction of Graw Alley, the interactive art park component of Harmer's Town Art Center, is officially underway following a groundbreaking ceremony this week in downtown Havre de Grace featuring the support of elected officials, civic leaders, and inspirational words from Maryland's First Lady Yumi Hogan.

The one-acre space, a private alley donated to Harmer's Town Art Center, Inc. and named in recognition of the former horse racing track that operated in the city a century ago, will become an interactive art park with landscaped pathways, artistic sculptures, outdoor seating, and interpretive signage leading visitors on a tour of Havre de Grace history as told through a series of vivid murals and public art installations. In conjunction with the groundbreaking, concept drawings were revealed depicting how Graw Alley will look and can be used by artists and art-lovers alike.

"I'm not just the First Lady of Maryland, but an artist, a teacher, and a fellow arts advocate. I'm so proud of our state and its vibrant arts community. Art has a special place in my heart and I am delighted to join you today for the groundbreaking ceremony for Graw Alley park," said Mrs. Hogan, an award-winning painter and founder of the Yumi C.A.R.E.S. (Children's Art for Recovery, Empowerment, and Strength) nonprofit organization.

"The space we are in today will become a special place for artists, art lovers, and for history buffs as well," she added.

Mrs. Hogan was the keynote speaker on a program that also included remarks from Havre de Grace Mayor William T. Martin, Harford County Council Member Curtis L. Beulah, State Sen. Robert G. Cassilly, Del. Steven C. Johnson, and Assistant Secretary of Commerce Thomas Riford.

Listing the many theaters, galleries, public art installations, and other opportunities to see and participate in the arts in Havre de Grace, Mayor Martin said he believes Graw Alley and Harmer's Town Art Center will have the greatest significance to the community.

"None of that will compare to the impact that this place is going to have on the future of the city of Havre de Grace," he said.

"The greatest thing we can leave - and this will transcend generations, it will transcend politics, it will transcend any other strife this community could ever see, good times and bad - will be this area right here. This alley will tell the story of the people who live in Havre de Grace, it already has on the walls, and when they open up the inside and construct it, it's going to be an amazing facility," Martin added.

Council member Beulah, along with fellow county council members Patrick Vincenti, Andre Johnson, and Chad Shrodes, presented a proclamation to Harmer's Town Art Center, Inc. President Allen Fair. Assistant Secretary Riford presented a citation to Harmer's Town Art Center from Governor Larry Hogan and the Maryland Department of Commerce in celebration



of the groundbreaking and recognition of the significance the project will have on tourism and the local Arts and Entertainment district.

Graw Alley is the initial phase in the development of Harmer's Town Art Center - a first-of-its-kind regional art facility, art incubator, and economic driver to be constructed in an adjacent 31,000-sq-ft space, which will bring together the arts, history, and community of Havre de Grace in a centralized location within the heart of the city's vibrant Arts and Entertainment district.

Within the visionary complex, artists will be able to work in studio space visible and accessible to the public, which offers them the opportunity to engage with guests, hold lessons, and sell their work directly to visitors. Multi-purpose areas will be used for teaching larger classes, holding special events, or art therapy opportunities. Makerspace workshops will offer artists and hobbyists alike access to specialized equipment for woodworking, ceramics, and other fabrication crafts. Harmer's Town Art Center will also house several galleries to showcase art exhibits, a museum of historic Havre de Grace artifacts, and a shop in which visitors can purchase artwork and souvenirs and where artists can stock up on supplies - all within eyeshot of historic downtown Havre de Grace and the top of Chesapeake Bay waterfront.

Concept drawings were created by Manns Woodward Studios of White Marsh and photos are courtesy of Malgorzata Baker Photography of Havre de Grace.

Graw Alley is funded by private donors and grants provided by state, county, and local governments to Harmer's Town Art Center, Inc., a federally-recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The concept drawings were made possible through the support of the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway and were financed in part with State funds from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, an instrumentality of the State of Maryland. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.

For more information about this project or additional photos and concept drawings, contact Harmer's Town Art Center at info@harmerstown.org or visit our website at <http://www.harmerstown.org>.

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Photo 1: Maryland's First Lady Yumi Hogan speaks about the significance of art on Monday morning during the Graw Alley groundbreaking ceremony in Havre de Grace.

Photo 2: The Harmer's Town Art Center Inc. Board of Directors, Maryland's First Lady Yumi Hogan, and representatives from state, county, and local government break ground Monday for the new Graw Alley interactive art park in Havre de Grace.

Photo 3: Mayor Bill Martin addresses the crowd of more than 100 guests at the Graw Alley groundbreaking ceremony.

Graw Alley Concept Drawing 1: The entrance to Graw Alley as seen from Market Street in Havre de Grace, featuring an historic starting gate and horse racing sculptures.

Graw Alley Concept Drawing 2: An aerial view of Graw Alley as seen from the rear of the property, showing potential uses of the park.



Commissioned by Allen Furr
Mural by Egon Berger







