



March 6, 2018

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to share that the Montgomery College Board of Trustees approved a contract for the Washington, DC-based integrated design firm (architect and engineering firm), SmithGroupJJR to design the replacement math and science building on the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus of Montgomery College. The project is expected to last four years, two for design (including the time already expended to acquire the architect firm) and two for construction.

With the experience and talent that this design team brings to this project, we are confident that our math and science building will meet the academic needs of our students and complement the character of the community.

SmithGroupJJR successfully designed the Cultural Arts Center on the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus and the Holy Cross Germantown Hospital located on the College's Germantown Campus. They also have experience working on historic properties located in a residential neighborhood—a key requirement for MC of any successful firm—having designed American University's Washington College of Law. The College selected SmithGroupJJR after reviewing technical proposals submitted by 14 firms. The next steps involve state approvals of the contract, likely to be fully approved by April.


Given the College's continued commitment to community engagement, SmithGroupJJR has retained LINK Strategic Partners, a Washington, DC-based strategic communications and stakeholder engagement firm, to help lead the charrette process to begin in the spring, and ensure a robust and productive exchange of ideas from stakeholders as the design takes shape. The charrette process will be an intensive planning activity—an iterative design process—where neighborhood residents, designers, and other stakeholders will collaborate on a vision for design of the building.

The design phase will begin in the spring with the charrette process. SmithGroupJJR and Link Strategic Partners understand our deep commitment to community engagement and stakeholder participation. They have been provided access to all the Community Conversation materials along with the design and construction mitigation directives issued by Dr. Pollard in her September 29 letter. Once the schematic design is completed—a design that has been vetted through the charrette process—it will be submitted to the Montgomery County Planning Board for review likely eight to ten months after the SmithGroupJJR contract is approved and executed. This planning board process will provide for additional community input. Subsequently, the College will seek input as we complete the design details and set the construction timeline and mitigation strategies. The College anticipates construction of the new math and science

building to start in December 2019, and expect it to be fully operational and open for classes in the fall semester of 2022.

This project will replace woefully out-of-date classrooms and labs in existing aged buildings and will enable our students to complete courses for a degree in 21st century facilities and prepare them for careers in highly demanding and competitive fields. We greatly appreciate your patience and commitment to ensuring we design and construct a building that balances the needs of our neighbors, our students, and fiscal prudence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. D. Mills". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Marvin D. Mills  
Vice President of Facilities and Public Safety