



Our Harborplace



**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
REPORT ON FIRST 30 DAYS**

THE FUTURE OF HARBORPLACE

Public engagement on the future of Harborplace is critical to establishing the Inner Harbor as a welcoming, proud, local asset. Redeveloping Harborplace for Baltimoreans and to showcase Baltimore to visitors requires a focused public engagement process to bring as many stakeholders to the table as possible. To that end, MCB Harborplace, working with Just Economy, is deploying a first-of-its-scale public engagement process. That process includes a variety of avenues to solicit input, generate ideas, and seek feedback:

- Public forums, the first of which happened on 6/3/2023, where members of the community can come to brainstorm, vision, and share their hopes for a new Harborplace.
- Dinners with the Developer, the first of which happened on 5/30, where smaller groups of residents can have deeper conversations with leaders at MCB Harborplace about what Harborplace has, could, and should mean for Baltimore.
- Neighborhood Association engagement, which started with an informational zoom call and will extend to discussions at Neighborhood Association meetings citywide.
- Community canvassing, which is set to begin in July.
- Web-based engagement, through both OurHarborplace.com and info@OurHarborplace.com.

For the remainder of 2023, the Our Harborplace team will continue to gather as many community inputs as possible: how to make Harborplace inviting, vibrant, exciting, and successful. As Our Harborplace gathers all of Baltimore’s aspirations for the site, the team will provide updates on what is being shared by the community. Only through open engagement can Harborplace achieve its potential.

To date, Our Harborplace has received hundreds of comments and ideas through its various channels of engagement. The team has heard from residents of more than 50 neighborhoods across the city, and is working to hear from communities across this city.



FIRST PUBLIC FORUM



On June 3, 2023, Our Harborplace convened its first public forum at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture. 266 Baltimoreans registered for the event, representing over 59 different neighborhoods across the city.

Community members were asked the following questions:

- What is one of your favorite memories from spending time in and around Harborplace in the past?
- When you walk into the new Harborplace what might you see that would make you feel proud that this is your home city?
- What might we want to highlight to tourists or visitors that helps them to see and celebrate the beauty of Baltimore?
- We know this is a large area and needs to include a wide-range of uses (stores, restaurants, residences, outdoor space, gathering space, etc.), can you be specific about what types of recreation and gathering space might you want to see?
- What needs to happen to make it easy and accessible for you to come enjoy Harborplace?
- If you had a magic wand and could make one thing appear at Harborplace right now, what would you wish for?

Notes were captured through the event by participants and facilitators and have been synthesized in the pages that follow.

“When I first relocated to Baltimore from New Orleans, coming to the inner harbor, for the first time off 95 and seeing the infrastructure and landing in the inner harbor, was kind of magical. Felt like I found a secret. Looked for property for several weeks all over Baltimore, the county and Annapolis and landed in the Inner Harbor as our home.”

What is one of your favorite memories from spending time in and around Harborplace in the past?

- Theme of the Inner Harbor as a destination and somewhere special that you would go with friends and family.
- Lots of memories of concerts, performances, and field trips (e.g. Light City, Sailibration, 4th of July)
- People value a close connection to the water



“There should be a memorial to those Africans enslaved in Baltimore whose labor and intellect built the primary wealth of the city and state.”

When you walk into the new Harborplace what might you see that would make you feel proud that this is your home city?

- A place that feels safe, friendly and welcoming to all generations and families
- “blue collar Baltimore crab house vibe” (e.g. Nick’s at the old Cross St. Market)
- Renewable energy, solar panels, caring for the environment
- Documenting and celebrating the history of Baltimore and of the Harbor in particular
- Unique art piece or monument
- Local restaurants, pop ups, local vendors
- Formal and informal performances (busking, street performers)
- Embrace and enhance the water
- Highlighting all neighborhoods of Baltimore, and not just appealing to the “white L”

What might we want to highlight to tourists or visitors that helps them to see and celebrate the beauty of Baltimore?

- Lots of overlap with previous question
- Places to sell art
- Spaces for learning
- Large, illuminated structure
- Rotating events, festivals, reasons to come together
- Use Harborplace reflect the whole city and to serve as an introduction to the rest of Baltimore
- Make the water viewable from the road and allow the space to highlight the natural features, rather than just the walls of businesses
- Clean harbor water, natural & protected wetland areas

We know this is a large area and needs to include a wide-range of uses (stores, restaurants, residences, outdoor space, gathering space, etc.), can you be specific about what types of recreation and gathering space might you want to see?

- Outdoor bars and places to watch the O's and Ravens
- Most groups spoke about affordable options for food and recreation
- Many want live performances and events
- Ways to be close to and on the water (e.g. love the walking bridge over by the Aquarium)

“Make it a transit hub — a connection point to other parts of the city and a teaser for all that exists across the region. Include space for food that reflects the multicultural community of Baltimore.”

What needs to happen to make it easy and accessible for you to come enjoy Harborplace?

- Primary economic benefit to the black butterfly
- Almost 100% of people mentioned affordable parking, easy public transit, and shuttle buses
- Needs to “feel safe”
- Remove walls along Light and Pratt to create open views from the street. Reduce street size and traffic to make it easier to cross.



If you had a magic wand and could make one thing appear at Harborplace right now, what would you wish for?

- Make it swimmable and build a beach for everyone to enjoy the water
- Highline
- VR experiences
- Vertical gardens and green spaces
- Grocery store
- Amphitheater and performance spaces
- A large crab that lights like the domino sugar sign only a building structure like the Eiffel Tower that you can go up and see the whole city.
- Underwater restaurant surrounded by an aquarium with an underwater tube that connects to the National Aquarium.
- Pedestrian bridge from Federal Hill to Locust Point

“Make Harborplace the centerpiece of the Waterfront Promenade – supercharge promotion of the 8-mile waterfront walkway from Locust Point to Canton.”

DINNER WITH THE DEVELOPER

At our first Dinner with the Developer, Dave Bramble, CEO of MCB Real Estate, met with a handful of community leaders to discuss Harborplace. The small dinners give the development team the opportunity to have deep, meaningful conversations with Baltimoreans about their experience at Harborplace and in the City, and what the future of Harborplace means to them.

Key themes emerged from the community members at the table:

- Reimagining Harborplace the right way requires:
 - Highlighting local. Entrepreneurs, restaurateurs, artists, and makers.
 - Integration of more green space.
 - Crabs!
 - Premier event space
 - All kinds of big and small events: AfrAm and Artscape and Light City and farmers markets
 - Premier dining. Where do the Ravens have dinner after a game?
 - Residential and density. “We need a proper tall residential building. 65+ stories.”
 - Native and resilient landscaping.
- Safety is important, but it will come from getting buy-in from all the stakeholders and building the base of stakeholders. More of a draw to Harborplace means more business, more residents, more foot traffic. More stakeholders brings more safety.

“When I travel, I want to see where people really live. I don’t want to visit the tourist areas, I want to authentically experience the place I’m visiting. We have to capture that.”

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Through OurHarborplace.com, hundreds of residents have submitted information, many including ideas, suggestions, or hopes for the new Harborplace. Community members shared:

- Connectivity to neighborhoods, safety and security by design, transit and parking, 24/7 activity which should include housing
- mixed food and retail
- a rooftop beer garden would offer amazing views you can't get in other locales
- a footbridge to connect east Fells Point and the Inner Harbor.
- Keep it local. Local bands, farmers market, museums, small kid park. Local only.
- more entertainment, aside from eateries.
- We need to ensure the whole area is walkable for visitors and workers at lunch alike.
- We must improve the squares so events like the Baltimore Christmas village are less sparse.
- An easy, direct path to get to Federal Hill from Rash Field without crossing a busy street or walking cramped sidewalks. Is it possible to move sections of Pratt St (north) and Key Highway (South) underground into tunnels? Then we could have a massively larger area for more plazas, pedestrian activities and areas or businesses where traffic used to congest.

"What I would like to see is a 'Livable Downtown'. I would like to see shops on the street level and apartment and condos above... If you have (let's, say 1,000 units) at the Inner Harbor, you have a year-round taxable income (currently no parents are bringing their kids to the Aquarium during the week in October in the dark...so the Inner Harbor is seasonal)... Making the Inner Harbor mix of Apt/Condo and Retail on the 1st Floor is the Future! These people will need Dry Cleaning, Restaurants, Entertainment, etc. Hopefully they will use Public Transportation, our Schools could improve."

"Create intoxicating romance- I often imagine the promenade/amphitheater as Piazza San Marco in Venice, with vaporetto (water taxis) gliding in and out, outdoor cafes and salon orchestras playing upbeat, lively but sedate live music drawing crowds well into the evenings adjacent to stores/commerce. Partnership with Peabody/BSO/Park Orchestra/Ravens/etc? Harborplace pavilions once had magical Tivoli lighting outlining the roof shapes- simple but MAGIC! Rotate a weekly/monthly 'free space' for established cultural/recreational organizations to have temporary pop-up promotional branches. Looking forward to the convenings! Just the beginning!"

- I think this is a great opportunity to undo the 90's shopping mall look of the old Harborplace and rebuild reminiscent of the harbor back when it was a working port in the early 1900s. Low rows of brick buildings in the classic Baltimore style, but set up for shops and restaurants. Baltimore is a port with a very rich history and we should embrace it by building a harbor to complement the Constellation and the Pride.
- interactive seafood market like Pike Place Market in Seattle
- someplace to sit and read and enjoy the scenery
- architecturally significant/iconic features, like a fountain
- European town square
- Test kitchens
- Local RESTAURANTS (like the former Wayne's barbecue) are a must, as harbor place is now filled with chain restaurants or less-frequented shop. Rent must be reasonable so locals can use the space.
- something for the arts like the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria or the River Arts District in Asheville or the Central Arts District of St Pete, FL.
- The roads are a massive problem. Lanes need to be reduced, pedestrian bridges need to be brought back. At the very least, drop Light to 3 lanes, get rid of the spur, and convert the lanes of both Light and Pratt closest to the harbor into dedicated bike/scooter/walking/running paths with ADA-compliant access to the harbor. They should be separated from traffic by a lane-wide planted median with art installations by local artists—rain gardens with all native plants, including trees and evergreen shrubs to block the noise and eyesore of the traffic and sculpture to add visual interest would be a game-changer.
- We love visiting places like Reading Terminal in Philadelphia and the York Central Market in York, PA, where local vendors set up in stalls and serve a range of cuisines. In Portland, OR, food trucks serving a range of cuisines park permanently on parking lots next to canopies spread above picnic tables for outdoor dining. If you could apply these models and create something similar to the German festival that happens in Harborplace at Christmastime but featuring a range of cuisines, I think people would flock to take part. But the key would be to keep it affordable for the vendors and patrons alike.

- A zero-waste or otherwise sustainable model micro-brewery somewhere in the harbor would also be a great idea, if there is a credible partner interested in taking it on.
- There should definitely be established areas, with seating etc., scattered throughout the area for daily performers. In terms of festivals, I think that the Harbor can be a good setting, but that you need to be careful about taking things away from other neighborhoods. the Baltimore for Baltimore concept is great and should be continued and ultimately expanded, as it is designed for an conceived by the downtown neighborhood; the suggestions of moving the Sunday Farmers Market to the harbor are not, as it would take one of the last major city events away from the neighborhood that supported it from the start (the same can be said for what the Book Fest turned into when it was moved to the harbor—it was awful and lost all of its quirk and charm).
- Everyone wants a ferris wheel and a zip line. I think the former is basically an expected feature nowadays; the latter seems a bit much, but people like them.
- I hope the existing pavilions at Harbor Place will provide local merchants a space to sell their goods
- I think the Pratt Street pavilion should be torn down and re-imagined as a series of stalls, similar to the summer boutique stalls in Montreal's Old Port (very similar conceptually to the Christmas Market set-up—which is now being repurposed for the wine thing, I believe). These could be built in a way to allow year-round use and could be double-sided (facing both the water and the road). Again, the architecture should reflect historic Baltimore—these could be constructed to look like mini rowhomes, potentially taking examples from around the city of different types/styles. These could then be rented out/doled out by lottery on a weekly or monthly basis by local artists, performers, craftspeople, makers, CBOs, etc.—the process could potentially managed by Made in Baltimore, BCAN, or similar. This, combined with the above-mentioned separation from traffic, would also allow the nasty, nasty loading dock area facing Pratt to be turned into something useful and attractive, including potential locations for permanent al fresco dining options. These stalls could also allow for a monthly or weekly night market type event. Also look at Japanese Yatai as well—gas/electric facilities to enable folks to bring in carts/stalls for night markets/evening dining pop-ups would be super cool and provide a relatively low-cost entry point for aspiring restaurateurs.

"[Harborplace] should be heavily renovated to add outdoor seating all around the building perhaps utilizing garage-door type replacements for the windows to allow for indoor/outdoor dining and flow during the warmer months (assuming the above street re-design happens) and, if feasible, an exterior redesign that reflects traditional Baltimore architectural styles (aka, brick, not glass). Bottom floor should be for dining."

- Invest the time needed for place (re-)making. Work to make the Place of the Inner Harbor and the abutting areas a place that Baltimoreans feel is our own, a place that all Marylanders are attracted to and comfortable lounging at for the day away from their towns away from Baltimore, as well as a place recognizable throughout the world that people can identify with Baltimore
- Make Pratt street pedestrian only from Charles (or Light) to President. If not permanently then at least on weekends. Consider turning the entire street to a curbless street (similar to what is now near the Pratt St. entrance to the aquarium, Port Covington, and many other areas in the world) to create a seamless feel and pedestrian character from north of Pratt to the water.
- Reduce the lengthy setbacks that buildings have from Pratt street so to further pedestrianize the street (It currently looks like a Highway). Either extend the frontage of harbor place right up to the current roadway and/or encourage pop ups right near the street on the north side of Pratt St.
- Work with DPOB and master planners to promote more commercial activity on Pratt Street to complement what's at harbor place. We might never achieve the pedestrian plazas of Europe but it would be great to get a little bit closer. In fact we could be one of the few cities in the world that have a sizable pedestrian plaza with limited vehicular traffic right on a waterfront.
- Consider orienting any future pavilions or commercial structures so that people can see the water as they are coming to the harbor. So orient structures on Pratt Street running north-south for example, taking advantage of space obtained by reducing setbacks to Pratt st.
- Light street between Lombard and Conway could also be made pedestrian only, utilizing what seems to be ample ability to make Charles street 2-way in that section. But if not, make this part of light street a slower and purposeful curbless street so that it's very explicit that people have arrived at a more pedestrianized harbor place.
- Consider making Lombard a 2 way street. There are already enough parking lots on that street to serve people that would want to come to harbor place by car. It's not a long walk from there to the harbor. Keeping some of the north-south streets (like South and Commerce) open to vehicular traffic could allow access to parking and very large businesses/hotels where in the past they might have entered via Pratt Street. Create and needed roundabouts so they can exit these north-south streets if they come south to Pratt and want to return north.
- Support MDOT plans / alternative to make Baltimore street a fully transit street, as part of the East-West Transit Corridor Project.
- Ensure Conway is exploited as a connection between stadiums and Harbor place. Possibly remove the berms in the median to reconstruct roadway to create either more commercial space or more attractive and permanent pedestrian walking space.
- Take inspiration from the natural Maryland habitat reproduced at the aquarium and Rash field. Consider this for the entire harbor place.

"What do we need to bring to Harborplace to improve the experience for a low cost? Easy. A zipline. A zipline across the harbor would be something that is not in any other East Coast city currently. Tourists who come into Baltimore would be attracted to do a zipline one way (and potentially back) across the harbor. It is a good date idea, brings foot traffic, and could be a city landmark. The Zipline would have to be on a pulley system so it could be pulled up like a bridge so ships could cross underneath it when needed. They are relatively cheap to install in, and, could be 'Baltimore's' thing."

- Integrate Harbor place with downtown and points west. Have strong leading signs for harbor place as far north as the Baltimore transit street and as far west as Camden Station. When someone steps of a train at Camden Station, they should start to feel that they are “at the harbor” as opposed to waiting until they are at light street or physically on the promenade. Relatedly consider signs on 395 and I-83 referring to harbor place. Consider referring to Harbor place on same sign that announces Camden Station.
- Consider the movable pedestrian bridge between rusted scupper and pier 5 / pier 6 / Marriott hotel as has been proposed in the past, to create a loop and more mobility around harbor place.
- Consider a tall but slim lighted sculpture, work of art, or other structure positioned properly that can be seen (and not blocked by the skyscrapers downtown or Federal Hill) as far north as Mount Vernon, as far west as the upper floors of Union Square and Hollins Market, as far south as the upper floors of Sharp Leadenhall and as far east as Broadway. Something with a Baltimore, Maryland, or maritime theme that people can point to and say “the harbor’s down there”.
- Support the Launch of a long-term plan to expand Camden Station using the original station building on Camden St. and taking over the parking lot south of it (and maybe the area/lot slightly west of the tracks) such that it becomes a covered concourse for MARC train and light rail passengers. The current roadway west of the tracks as well as parking lots could possibly be moved underground or relocated elsewhere. The space between the proposed covered concourse and warehouse offices could be pedestrianized for easy movement between the expanded Camden Station and the ballpark and warehouse offices. Expand Marc service from Camden Station. This can support easy access to the harbor from Marylanders and DC folks from the south and maybe from BWI if the Penn-Camden connector works how I think is being planned.
- If not already happening, consider sponsoring crew races starting in lanes on the water at harbor place (if the waterway is wide enough). Fund training of youth with slots by neighborhood or side of town. Go through Baltimore Community Rowing. Host other competitive maritime sporting and athletic events that could draw crowds.
- All of these actions may not be within the purview of MCB. But they could help sustain the success of Harbor place for generations to come.

"It would be nice to see more artist experiences near the Harbor!"

- People in this city love their craft beer. I call it Baltimore Brew Hub. It is like a beer garden of breweries in the Baltimore area. We build a nice area with 8 nice beer stands. Breweries in the area will sign up for a residency of like 6 months to whenever. We supply the place, refrigeration, and whatever they need. We will build the stand however they want. They supply their beer and staff to work it. Would we need a liquor license? In the Brew Hub beer garden we would have an indoor, outdoor setting that people can go get their beers from their favorite brewery then meetup with friends and hang out. We can even add areas for food trucks or even make a few food stands. All local, all going back in to the Baltimore economy.
- Some suggestions for the redevelopment of Harborplace include a black box theater, gallery space large enough to host traveling art exhibits and local exhibits in between, winery, winter garden, rooftop bars, a Hong Kong like symphony of lights show. Flying theater or other types of immersive entertainment.
- I'd like to micro learning and cultural lab neighborhoods along the water:
 - Bmore Cuisine (food trucks, cooking courses such as "Feeding a Family on Fifty"), Bmore Arts (graphic designers, tattoo, painters, sculptors, graffiti artists),
 - Bmore Move (Yoga, dance, jazz, tap, hip/hop, line dancing)
 - Bmore Writes/Reads (poetry, short story, book club, hosting authors, readings), Bmore Music (DJing, music composition, music theory, w/ cheap instruments -recorders, keyboards).
 - Bmore Support (host city social service agencies, legal pro se available). For activities -all age inclusion where appropriate and family group participation is encouraged. These activities will get the community engaged and connected with each other and invested in the activities. This will be an opportunity for all 80+ communities to come together and form relationships with each other.
- A recurring competition for MD artists to create and install installations around the harbor would be fantastic, and would provide an opportunity for a festival to unveil and honor the work. Maybe even add a public vote over the installation period to determine which work from each cohort will become permanent.

Have a question? Have a story to share? Have an idea?

We want to hear from you.

CORE PILLARS OF THE DEVELOPMENT



BUILD FOR ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY.

EMBRACE CONNECTIVITY WITH THE WATER



MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE

KEEP IT LOCAL



DESIGN FOR RESILIENCE

MAKE IT SAFE AND WELCOMING



BUILD EQUITABLY

JOIN US.



Our Harborplace